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

Parlament Ewropew

MISTOQSIJIET BIL-MIKTUB U TWEĠIBIET

2014/C 66 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)

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

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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(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-007824/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(2 juillet 2013)

Objet: Découverte de strontium 90 dans les nappes phréatiques

La compagnie nipponne Tokyo Electric Power (TEPCO) a annoncé hier avoir détecté des taux élevés de strontium 90, une substance radioactive hautement toxique, dans les nappes phréatiques situées sous la centrale nucléaire de Fukushima.

Le strontium 90 (Sr-90) est un sous-produit de fission (uranium et plutonium) que l'on retrouve aussi bien dans un réacteur nucléaire que dans les armes atomiques. Il est également présent dans les déchets provenant des réacteurs nucléaires.

Selon l'agence américaine de protection de l'environnement, le strontium 90 est chimiquement similaire au calcium et a tendance à se fixer sur les tissus osseux et sur la moelle osseuse. C'est d'ailleurs pour cette raison qu'il est parfois qualifié de «chercheur d'os». L'exposition des organes internes au strontium 90 augmente le risque de cancer des os ou de leucémie. Ce risque dépend à la fois de la concentration du Sr-90 dans l'environnement et des conditions d'exposition.

La présence de cette substance toxique a été découverte à la suite de plusieurs analyses d'échantillons prélevés au pied des réacteurs. Elles ont révélé que le taux de strontium 90 a été multiplié par 100 au cours des six derniers mois.

Depuis l'accident de la centrale de Fukushima, TEPCO a obtenu l'autorisation de déverser de l'eau «faiblement» radioactive dans l'océan Pacifique, parce que l'entreprise ne disposait plus de suffisamment d'espace pour la stocker dans ses conteneurs étanches.

Toujours selon le PDG de TEPCO, des taux élevés de tritium ont également été détectés. Fin mai, ces taux étaient plus de huit fois supérieurs à la limite autorisée (500 000 becquerels contre 60 000).

1. Comment la Commission accueille-t-elle ces révélations?

2. L'Union va-t-elle entreprendre quelque chose pour aider le Japon?

3. Comment la Commission évalue-t-elle les conséquences de ces terribles chiffres pour l'Europe sur les plans environnemental, commercial et sanitaire?

Réponse donnée par M. Oettinger au nom de la Commission
(22 août 2013)

1. La Commission ne peut pas se prononcer sur cette question, étant donné qu'elle ne s'est pas rendue sur le site de Fukushima, et que les informations dont elle dispose à propos de la situation actuelle proviennent de communiqués de presse.

2. L'UE a proposé de coopérer avec le Japon sur diverses questions de sûreté nucléaire, telles que le suivi de l'impact environnemental de l'accident de Fukushima et les opérations de rétablissement. Des discussions bilatérales entre les spécialistes des deux parties sont organisées depuis l'accident ([1]). Si le Japon demande une assistance spécifique, la Commission lui fournira un soutien approprié.

3. La Commission estime que les constatations actuelles n'auront pas d'incidence sur l'Europe du point de vue de l'environnement, du commerce ou de la santé. Toutefois, elle a introduit un certain nombre de mesures de précaution en ce qui concerne l'importation de produits alimentaires provenant de la région de Fukushima. Elle réévalue ces mesures régulièrement afin de s'assurer qu'elles continuent à fournir un niveau élevé de protection de la santé humaine sans restreindre inutilement les échanges et prendra des mesures complémentaires le cas échéant.

([1]) À l'heure actuelle, par exemple, les chercheurs japonais, en coopération avec le personnel du Centre commun de recherche de la Commission (JRC), sont en train de mettre au point et d'optimiser une méthode pour remédier au problème de la caractérisation du combustible fondu de la centrale de Fukushima.

Les États membres sont tenus d'assurer le contrôle permanent du taux de radionucléides dans l'environnement et de communiquer le résultat de ces contrôles, conformément aux articles 35 et 36 du traité Euratom ([2]).

([2]) Les radionucléides sont également couverts en tant que contaminants par la directive 2008/56/CE du Parlement Européen et du Conseil du 17 juin 2008 établissant un cadre d'action communautaire dans le domaine de la politique pour le milieu marin (directive-cadre «stratégie pour le milieu marin»).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007824/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(2 July 2013)

Subject: Discovery of strontium 90 in groundwater

The Japanese company Tokyo Electric Power (TEPCO) announced yesterday that it had detected increased rates of strontium 90, a highly toxic radioactive substance, in groundwater located under the Fukushima nuclear power station.

Strontium 90 (Sr-90) is a by-product of fission (uranium and plutonium) found in nuclear reactors and atomic weapons. It is also found in waste from nuclear reactors.

According to the US Environmental Protection Agency, strontium 90 is chemically similar to calcium and tends to attach itself to bone tissue and bone marrow. That is why it is sometimes known as a 'bone seeker'. Exposure of the internal organs to strontium 90 increases the risk of bone cancer and leukaemia. This risk depends on the environmental concentration of Sr-90 and the exposure conditions.

The presence of this toxic substance was discovered following several analyses of samples taken from the foot of the reactors. They showed that the rate of strontium 90 had multiplied by 100 in the last six months.

Since the accident in the Fukushima power station, TEPCO has been granted authorisation to discharge water with a 'low level' of radioactivity into the Pacific Ocean, as the company no longer had enough space to store it in its sealed containers.

However, according to TEPCO's CEO, higher levels of tritium were also detected. At the end of May, these levels were more than eight times higher than the authorised limit (500 000 becquerels compared to 60 000).

1. What is the Commission's reaction to these findings?

2. Will the EU do anything to help Japan?

3. What impact does the Commission believe these terrible figures will have on Europe in terms of the environment, trade and health?

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

1. The Commission cannot comment as it has not visited the Fukushima site and its information about the current situation is based on press releases.

2. The EU has offered to cooperate with Japan on various nuclear safety issues, such as the monitoring of the environmental impact of the accident and recovery operations at Fukushima. Bilateral discussions between specialists of both sides have been going on since the accident ([1]). Should Japan request specific assistance, the Commission will provide appropriate support.

3. The Commission believes that the current findings will not have impact on Europe in terms of the environment, trade or health. However, the Commission has introduced some precautionary measures in relation to the import of food products from the Fukushima region. These measures are periodically reviewed to ensure that they continue to provide a high level of human health protection while not creating unnecessary restrictions to trade. The Commission will take further measures if appropriate.

Member States are obliged to continuously monitor and report on the state of radionuclides in their environment, in accordance with Articles 35 and 36 of the Euratom Treaty ([2]).

([1]) At the moment, for example, Japanese researchers, together with staff from the Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC), are developing and optimising a methodology to tackle the problem of characterising the molten fuel from the Fukushima power plants.

([2]) Radionuclides are also covered as a contaminant by Directive 2008/56/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 2008 establishing a framework for community action in the field of marine environmental policy (Marine Strategy Framework Directive).

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008227/13
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(9 juli 2013)

Betreft: BBC-verslaggever in Turkije door Erdoğan beschuldigd van „verraad"

Selin Gerit, verslaggever voor de BBC vanuit Turkije — zelf tevens van Turkse komaf — is door premier Erdoğan beschuldigd van „verraad" wegens het verslaan van de tegen de regering gerichte demonstraties. Erdoğan noemt haar „deel van een complot tegen haar eigen land". De Turkse journalisten zien de beschuldigingen aan Gerit als een waarschuwing voor iedereen. Zij zien zich gedwongen tot zelfcensuur, en dat is exact waar Erdoğan op uit is: critici het zwijgen opleggen.

Is de Commissie bekend met Erdoğans beschuldiging van „verraad" jegens Selin Gerit én zijn pogingen haar en andere journalisten — mogelijk middels zelfcensuur — het zwijgen op te leggen ([1])? Hoe ervaart de Commissie deze verwerpelijke praktijken in kandidaat-EU-lidstaat Turkije?

Deelt de Commissie de mening dat de definitie „heerszuchtig iemand" ([2]) van toepassing is op Erdoğan, een autoritair persoon die geen tegenspraak duldt en door middel van dreigementen resp. gewelddadig politieoptreden alle critici het zwijgen wil opleggen? Zo neen, hoe weerlegt de Commissie dit dan?

Deelt de Commissie de mening dat Turkije — vooral wat betreft de vrijheid van meningsuiting, van expressie en van pers — almaar verder is afgegleden en heeft bewezen een bijzonder repressief land te zijn? Is de Commissie er dan ook toe bereid te concluderen dat Turkije nóóit tot de EU dient toe te treden en Turkije de titel „kandidaat-EU-lidstaat" direct te ontnemen — met andere woorden: de toetredingsonderhandelingen voor eens en voor altijd te beëindigen? Zo neen, waarom niet?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(20 november 2013)

De Commissie verwijst het geachte Parlementslid naar haar antwoord op de eerdere vraag E-008312/2013 van de heer Provera en de heer Tannock over hetzelfde onderwerp en naar verschillende andere, eerdere vragen over het onderwerp, met name E-010384/2012 ([3]).

De situatie betreffende de vrijheid van meningsuiting en de persvrijheid in Turkije is uitsluitend behandeld in het op 16 oktober 2013 door de Commissie goedgekeurde voortgangsverslag over Turkije ([4]).

([1]) http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2013/jun/28/turkey-bbc-reporter-recep-tayyip-erdogan-treason.
([2]) http://www.vandale.nl/opzoeken?pattern=dictator & lang=nn.
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/nl/parliamentary-questions.html
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2013/package/tr_rapport_2013.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008227/13
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(9 July 2013)

Subject: BBC reporter in Turkey accused of 'treason' by Erdoğan

Selin Gerrit, who reports from Turkey for the BBC and is herself of Turkish origin, has been accused by Prime Minister Erdoğan of 'treason' for reporting on the anti-government demonstrations. Erdoğan calls her 'part of a conspiracy against her own country'. Turkish journalists regard the accusations against Gerit as a warning to everybody. They feel compelled to practise self-censorship, which is exactly what Erdoğan wants, this being a way of silencing critics.

Is the Commission aware of Erdoğan's accusation of 'treason' against Selin Gerit and his attempts to silence her and other journalists, possibly by means of self-censorship? ([1]) What view does the Commission take of these reprehensible practices in Turkey, a candidate for membership of the EU?

Does the Commission agree that the definition 'domineering person' ([2]) applies to Erdoğan, an authoritarian person who brooks no contradiction and seeks to silence all critics by means of threats or violent police action? If not, how can the Commission refute this?

Does the Commission agree that Turkey has constantly regressed, particularly as regards freedom of expression and the press, and has shown itself to be a very repressive country? Will the Commission accordingly conclude that Turkey should never accede to the EU and that Turkey should forfeit its status as a candidate country with immediate effect, i.e. that the accession negotiations should be permanently terminated? If not, why not?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(20 November 2013)

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its answer to previous Question E-008312/2013 by Mr Provera and Mr Tannock on the same issue and to several other previous questions on the subject, notably E-010384/2012 ([3]).

The situation of the freedom of expression and media in Turkey has been exclusively covered in the progress report on Turkey adopted by the Commission on 16 October 2013 ([4]).

([1]) http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2013/jun/28/turkey-bbc-reporter-recep-tayyip-erdogan-treason
([2]) http://www.vandale.nl/opzoeken?pattern=dictator&lang=nn
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2013/package/tr_rapport_2013.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008312/13
alla Commissione
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(10 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Giornalisti stranieri chiamati «cospiratori» in Turchia

Alla fine di giugno 2013, *Al-Monitor*, un sito di notizie online, e diversi altri siti di informazioni hanno riferito di crescenti minacce ai danni di giornalisti turchi che lavorano per emittenti straniere. Il sindaco di Ankara İbrahim Melih Gökçek, del partito Giustizia e Sviluppo, ha avviato recentemente una campagna su Twitter contro Selin Girit, giornalista della BBC, denominandola «agente straniero» e accusandola di «tradire il suo paese». In una replica la BBC ha dichiarato che una sua giornalista è stata «aggredita sui media sociali dal sindaco di Ankara per un suo servizio sulle proteste in corso».

Secondo *Al-Monitor*, quasi ogni giorno un organo di informazione viene accusato di avere un ruolo nelle proteste in Turchia. Il primo ministro del paese Recep Tayyip Erdoğan avrebbe chiamato «terroristi» i contestatori antigovernativi e «pedine» i mezzi di informazione.

La Turchia occupa attualmente i primi posti tra i paesi che prevedono l'arresto per i giornalisti. Stando all'Organizzazione per la sicurezza e la cooperazione in Europa (OSCE) sono 65 i giornalisti attualmente detenuti nelle prigioni turche. Il comitato per la protezione dei giornalisti ha documentato numerosi casi di brutalità commesse dalla polizia. Il 16 giugno 2013 un operatore di ripresa di un notiziario privato sarebbe stato ripetutamente colpito e trascinato per strada dalla polizia antisommossa come punizione per aver opposto resistenza ai tentativi di cancellare le riprese.

1. Alla luce delle crescenti aggressioni ai danni di giornalisti in Turchia, quali misure è disposto ad adottare la Commissione per intimare alle autorità turche di astenersi dall'approvare gli attacchi contro i media sociali e altre piattaforme e contro i giornalisti che lavorano per emittenti straniere?

2. Quali eventuali misure ha adottato la Commissione negli anni passati per affrontare la situazione dei giornalisti incarcerati, quando il partito Giustizia e Sviluppo teneva le redini del governo? Quali sono i risultati delle eventuali misure adottate?

Risposta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(23 settembre 2013)

La Commissione ha seguito con attenzione le questioni e gli avvenimenti menzionati dall'onorevole deputato. La Commissione tratta sempre della libertà di espressione e dei mezzi di comunicazione nella relazione annuale sui progressi compiuti dalla Turchia. La prossima relazione dovrebbe essere pubblicata nell'ottobre 2013.

L'UE ha condannato a più riprese l'arresto di giornalisti, operatori e distributori dei mezzi di comunicazione, ribadendo in numerose occasioni che i politici dovrebbero evitare di rilasciare dichiarazioni pubbliche o pronunciare minacce a scapito dell'indipendenza dei media. Nel suo discorso del 12 giugno 2013 davanti al Parlamento europeo, l'Alta Rappresentante ha osservato che, in quanto paese candidato, la Turchia deve ambire alle norme e alle pratiche democratiche più elevate, tra cui la libertà dei mass media.

Nel giugno 2013 la Commissione ha ospitato la conferenza Speak up!2 sulla libertà di espressione tra i mezzi di comunicazione dei paesi dell'allargamento, riunendo una piattaforma estremamente visibile di professionisti provenienti dai Balcani occidentali e dalla Turchia, ai quali è stato chiesto di esporre le loro preoccupazioni, tra cui quella relativa all'autocensura.

La Commissione si adopera inoltre per promuovere la libertà d'espressione in Turchia attraverso lo strumento di assistenza preadesione. La Commissione cofinanzierà un progetto volto a garantire il rispetto della libertà di espressione nel settore giudiziario, in linea con la Corte europea dei diritti dell'uomo e della pertinente giurisprudenza.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008312/13
to the Commission
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(10 July 2013)

Subject: Foreign journalists called 'conspirators' in Turkey

In late June 2013, *Al-Monitor*, an online news site, and a number of other news sites have reported on growing threats to Turkish journalists working for foreign broadcasters. Recently, Mayor of Ankara İbrahim Melih Gökçek, from the Justice and Development Party, started a campaign on Twitter against Selin Girit, a BBC journalist, by calling her a 'foreign agent' and accusing her of being a 'traitor to her country'. The BBC responded by saying that one of its reporters had been 'attacked on social media by the Mayor of Ankara for her coverage of the current protests'.

According to *Al-Monitor*, almost every day a different foreign media outlet is accused of playing a role in the protests in Turkey. The country's Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, has reportedly called anti-government protestors 'terrorists' and the media as their 'pawns'.

Turkey currently ranks highly among countries jailing journalists. According to the Organisation of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), 65 journalists are currently being held in Turkish prisons. The Committee to Protect Journalists has documented numerous cases of police brutality. On 16 June 2013 a cameraman for a private news channel was allegedly beaten repeatedly and dragged on the street by riot police as punishment for resisting attempts to delete his footage.

1. In light of growing attacks against journalists in Turkey, what steps is the Commission prepared to take to enjoin the Turkish authorities to desist in condoning attacks on social media and other platforms, and against journalists working for foreign broadcasters?

2. What steps, if any, has the Commission taken in the past years to address the situation of journalists imprisoned while the Justice and Development Party has held the reins of government? If steps have been taken, what have been some of the outcomes?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(23 September 2013)

The Commission has followed the issues and events mentioned by the Honourable Members closely. Freedom of expression and media is also always covered in its annual progress report on Turkey; the next one is foreseen to be adopted in October 2013.

The EU has at many instances condemned the imprisonment of journalists, media workers and distributers and stated on numerous occasions that politicians should refrain from public statements and threats affecting the independence of media. The High Representative, in her speech to Parliament on 12 June 2013, noted that Turkey, as a candidate country, needs to aspire to the highest possible democratic standards and practices, including freedom of the media.

In June 2013, the Commission hosted the Speak up!2 conference on freedom of expression in the media in the enlargement countries, allowing a very visible platform for media professionals from the western Balkans and Turkey to bring forth their concerns, including those related to self-censorship

The Commission also supports strengthening freedom of expression in Turkey through the Instrument for Pre-accession assistance. The Commission will co-finance a project aiming at ensuring respect for freedom of expression in judiciary in line with the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) and relevant case-law.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008339/13
to the Commission
Paul Nuttall (EFD)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Commissioners' declarations of interests

Will the Commission explain why the declarations of interests of Commissioners Reding, Tajani, Barnier, Oettinger and Hahn are not available to view on the Commission website at http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/interests/index_en.htm, and have not been available for at least a week?

Will the Commission undertake to require Commissioners Reding, Tajani, Barnier, Oettinger and Hahn to place their declarations of interests online forthwith?

Does any Commissioner own, control or have authority to use any bank account in any jurisdiction identified as a tax haven by the OECD as such in its report of 2000?

Has any Commissioner, at any time in the past, owned, controlled or had authority to use any bank account in any jurisdiction identified as a tax haven by the OECD as such in its report of 2000?

Is any Commissioner the beneficial owner of or beneficiary of or entitled to receive any benefit from any trust or other financial vehicle or arrangement established in any jurisdiction identified as a tax haven by the OECD as such in its report of 2000?

Has any Commissioner, at any time in the past, been the beneficial owner of or beneficiary of or entitled to receive any benefit from any trust or other financial vehicle or arrangement established in any jurisdiction identified as a tax haven by the OECD as such in its report of 2000?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(8 October 2013)

1 and 2. The Commission is not aware of any problem related to the availability of the declarations of interests of Commissioners Reding, Tajani, Barnier, Oettinger and Hahn, on the Commission website:
http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/interests/index_en.htm

When a declaration of interests is not available in English, it is available in French or German, clicking on the second letter icon found next to name of the Commissioner.

3 to 6. The Commission does not possess this information.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-008340/13
lill-Kummissjoni
Marlene Mizzi (S&D)
(11 ta' Lulju 2013)

Suġġett: Numru komuni tal-benessri tal-annimali

Il-benessri tal-annimali huwa xi ħaġa li ħafna ċittadini Ewropej jgħożżu. L-Istati Membri joffru tipi ta' servizzi differenti sabiex jipprovdu għajnuna u appoġġ adegwat lis-sidien tal-annimali. Madanakollu, l-aċċess għall-biċċa l-kbira ta' dawn is-servizzi huwa diffiċli minħabba diversi raġunijiet, bħan-nuqqas ta' għarfien.

Fid-dawl ta' dan kollu, il-Kummissjoni taqbel mal-idea li jkun hemm numru uniku ta' emerġenza għall-emerġenzi li jinvolvu l-annimali fl-Unjoni Ewropea kollha?

X'tip ta' finanzjament lesta tipprovdi l-Unjoni Ewropea bil-għan li tfassal tali inizjattiva?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Borg f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(29 ta' Awwissu 2013)

Il-Kummissjoni ma kkunsidratx li jkollha numru waħdieni tal-emerġenza għall-emerġenzi tal-annimali għall-Unjoni Ewropea kollha. Madankollu, hemm servizzi differenti li wieħed jista' jikkuntattja fil-każ ta' emerġenza, kif offrut mill-Istati Membri.

Huma l-Istati Membri li huma primarjament responsabbli għall-implimentazzjoni ta' kuljum tal-leġiżlazzjoni. L-Uffiċju Alimentari u Veterinarju tad-Direttorat Ġenerali tal-Kummissjoni għas-Saħħa u l-Konsumatur (FVO) jissorvelja l-ħidma tal-awtoritajiet tal-Istat Membru imma l-Kummissjoni tintervjeni biss fil-każ ta' falliment sistematiku.

Il-Kummissjoni mhix bihsiebha twaqqaf numru għall-emerġenzi tal-annimali għal madwar l-Unjoni Ewropea.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008340/13
to the Commission
Marlene Mizzi (S&D)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Common animal welfare number

The welfare of animals is something which is close to the heart of many European citizens. Member States offer different kinds of services in order to provide adequate help and support to animal owners. However, most of these services are difficult to access for a variety of reasons such as a lack of awareness.

In light of all this, does the Commission agree with the idea of having a single emergency number for animal emergencies throughout the European Union?

What kind of funding would the European Union be willing to provide with a view to the setting-up of such an initiative?

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

The Commission has not considered having a single emergency number for animal emergencies throughout the European Union. However, there are different services to contact in an emergency as offered by the Member States.

It is the Member States that are primarily responsible for the daily implementation of legislation. The Food and Veterinary Office of the Commission's Health and Consumers Directorate General (FVO) supervises the work of the Member State authorities but the Commission would intervene only in the event of systematic failure.

The Commission does not intend to set up a number for animal emergencies throughout the European Union.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-008342/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Krzysztof Lisek (PPE) oraz Paweł Zalewski (PPE)
(11 lipca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Potencjalny kandydat opozycji w zbliżających się wyborach prezydenckich w Gruzji, Iwane Merabiszwili, nie został jeszcze uznany za więźnia politycznego

Należy pochwalić Komisję za szybkie i zdecydowane zajęcie stanowiska wobec aresztowania byłej premier Ukrainy Julii Tymoszenko. Uznano ją za więźnia politycznego, a sprawę jej zatrzymania nazwano po imieniu: umotywowanym politycznie aktem wybiórczej sprawiedliwości. Jej zatrzymanie miało niekorzystny wpływ na stosunki polityczne między Unią Europejską a Ukrainą. Zdecydowane stanowisko UE umożliwia Unii wywarcie znaczącego wpływu na Ukrainę w przededniu szczytu Partnerstwa Wschodniego, który ma się odbyć w listopadzie bieżącego roku w Wilnie i podczas którego ma zostać podpisany układ o stowarzyszeniu z Ukrainą (obejmujący pogłębioną i kompleksową strefę wolnego handlu). Podpisanie układu będzie jednak zależało od odnośnych okoliczności politycznych, wśród których decydujące znaczenie ma zwolnienie z więzienia byłej premier.

Niestety jesteśmy również świadkami podobnych wydarzeń mających miejsce w niedalekiej Gruzji, gdzie rząd koalicji Gruzińskie Marzenie przyjął podobną taktykę zastraszania politycznego, wykorzystując wymiar sprawiedliwości jako narzędzie do walki z opozycją.

Dlaczego były premier Gruzji i potencjalny kandydat opozycji w zbliżających się wyborach prezydenckich, Iwane Merabiszwili, który przetrzymywany jest w areszcie tymczasowym, nie został jeszcze uznany za więźnia politycznego? Dlaczego zatrzymanie jego oraz wielu innych członków Zjednoczonego Ruchu Narodowego nie zostało jeszcze uznane za umotywowaną politycznie wybiórczą sprawiedliwość?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(11 września 2013 r.)

Wydawanie opinii na temat rzetelności zarzutów w postępowaniu sądowym nie jest zadaniem instytucji UE. UE śledzi natomiast uważnie postępowanie karne przeciwko Wano Merabiszwilemu oraz inne procesy sądowe i ocenia, czy należycie przestrzegana jest zasada sprawiedliwego procesu, zgodnie ze wspólnymi wartościami Unii i Gruzji oraz ustalonymi międzynarodowymi standardami. Rząd Gruzji zapewnił, że nie pozwoli na to, aby na toczące się postępowania sądowe wywierano jakikolwiek nacisk polityczny.

Oświadczenie wydane w dniu 22 maja 2013 r. brzmi ([1]):

„Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca Catherine Ashton i komisarz Štefan Füle z uwagą odnotowali sprawę aresztowania i pozbawienia wolności byłego premiera Gruzji, obecnie sekretarza generalnego opozycyjnej partii Zjednoczony Ruch Narodowy, Wano Merabiszwilego, oraz byłego gruzińskiego ministra zdrowia, obecnie gubernatora Kachetii, Zuraba Cziaberaszwilego.

Unia Europejska będzie w dalszym ciągu uważnie śledzić przebieg postępowania sądowego przeciwko nim, oczekując, że będzie ono sprawiedliwe, przejrzyste i niezależne, w pełni zgodne z międzynarodowymi standardami.

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca i komisarz podkreślili, iż mają nadzieję, iż władze Gruzji będą prowadzić wspomniane sprawy, podobnie jak wszystkie inne sprawy sądowe, w sposób sprawiedliwy, bezstronny i z wyłączeniem jakichkolwiek względów politycznych.”

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-13-452_pl.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008342/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Krzysztof Lisek (PPE) and Paweł Zalewski (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Potential opposition candidate in the upcoming Georgian presidential elections Vano Merabishvili not yet considered a political prisoner

The Commission needs to be commended for the swift and strong position it took towards the arrest of former Ukrainian Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko. She was considered a political prisoner and her detention named what it was in reality: a politically motivated manifestation of selective justice. This has had a detrimental influence on political relations between the European Union and Ukraine. The strong EU position gives the EU leverage over Ukraine in the run-up to the Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius in November this year, where the Association Agreement (including the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area) with Ukraine is due to be signed. That is however conditional on the necessary political circumstances pertaining, among which the release from prison of the former Prime Minister is crucial.

Unfortunately we are also witnessing a similar situation unfolding in nearby Georgia, where the government of the Georgian Dream coalition is deploying similar political intimidation tactics, using the justice system as a tool against the opposition.

Why is the former prime minister of Georgia and potential opposition candidate in the upcoming presidential elections, Vano Merabishvili, who is in pre-trail detention, not yet considered a political prisoner? Why is his detention, and that of many other members of the United National Movement, not yet considered to be politically motivated selective justice?

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

It is not for the EU's institutions to form an opinion on the strength of the prosecution's case in any given legal proceeding; rather, the EU will carefully monitor criminal proceedings against Vano Merabishvili, and other trials, and assess whether due process is being applied, in line with the common values shared by the EU and Georgia and to established international standards. The government of Georgia has given assurances that it will not permit any political influence over ongoing judicial processes.

The statement of 22 May 2013 says ([1]):

'High Representative Catherine Ashton and Commissioner Štefan Füle take careful note of the arrests and detention yesterday of the former Prime Minister of Georgia, current Secretary-General of the United National Movement, Vano Merabishvili, and the former Georgian Health Minister, current governor of Kakheti, Zurab Chiaberashvili.

The European Union will closely follow the legal proceedings against them, which it expects to be fair, transparent and independent, in full accordance with international standards.

The High Representative and the Commissioner underline their expectation that the Georgian authorities will pursue justice in these cases, as in all other cases, impartially and free from political motivation.'

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-13-452_en.htm

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-008343/13
adresată Comisiei
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(11 iulie 2013)

Subiect: Temei juridic pentru un Registru de transparență obligatoriu

Din iunie 2011, Registrul de transparență comun a permis cetățenilor să afle informații despre părțile interesate care încearcă să impulsioneze și să influențeze elaborarea politicilor europene. Cu toate că Parlamentul European a cerut în mod repetat înregistrarea obligatorie a părților interesate, Registrul de transparență comun are deocamdată un caracter voluntar.

După doi ani de funcționare Registrul de transparență comun a dat rezultate pozitive, 5 661 de părți interesate fiind deja înregistrate, dar el nu este obligatoriu: cele mai multe cabinete de avocatură, precum și circa 25,8% din companiile și firmele de lobbying nu se regăsesc încă în Registrul de transparență comun (Greenwood și Dreger, aprilie 2013).

Un studiu juridic recent propune înființarea unui Registru de transparență obligatoriu prin intermediul unui regulament în temeiul articolului 298 alineatul (2) din TFUE și/sau al doctrinei competențelor implicite, care ar putea fi adoptat prin procedura legislativă ordinară (Krajewski, iunie 2013).

În prezent are loc o revizuire a Registrului de transparență comun. Caracterul voluntar/obligatoriu al Registrului de transparență comun va fi o chestiune de prim ordin în cadrul procesului de revizuire.

Având în vedere revizuirea Registrului de transparență comun ținut împreună cu Parlamentul European, cum va reacționa Comisia la ideea temeiului juridic propus de studiul juridic Krajewski, și anume articolul 298 alineatul (2) din TFUE și/sau doctrina competențelor implicite, pentru a introduce un Registru de transparență obligatoriu?

Răspuns dat de dl Šefčovič în numele Comisiei
(23 august 2013)

Aspectului menționat de distinsul deputat i se va acorda o atenție deosebită în contextul revizuirii registrului de transparență prevăzute la punctul 30 din Acordul interinstituțional privind un registru de transparență comun (OJ L 191/32 din 22.7.2011). Această revizuire a început de curând, în cadrul unui grup de lucru format din reprezentanți ai Parlamentului European și ai Comisiei Europene, coprezidat de vicepreședintele Wieland și de vicepreședintele Šefčovič.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008343/13
to the Commission
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Legal basis for a mandatory Transparency Register

Since June 2011, the joint Transparency Register has enabled citizens to find information on stakeholders seeking to feed and influence European policy-making. Although the European Parliament has repeatedly called for a mandatory registration of stakeholders, the joint Transparency Register functions at present on a voluntary basis.

After two years of functioning, the joint Transparency Register shows positive results, with 5 661 stakeholders having already registered, but it is not mandatory: most law firms, as well as around 25.8% of companies and lobbying firms, are still absent from the joint Transparency Register (Greenwood and Dreger, April 2013).

A recent legal study proposes the establishment of a mandatory Transparency Register through a regulation based on Article 298(2) TFEU and/or the implied powers doctrine, which could be adopted through the ordinary legislative procedure (Krajewski, June 2013).

A review of the joint Transparency Register is currently under way. The voluntary/mandatory nature of the joint Transparency Register will be a key issue of the review process.

Given the review of the joint Transparency Register held together with the European Parliament, how will the Commission reflect on the legal basis proposed by Krajewski's legal study, i.e. Article 298(2) TFEU and/or the implied powers doctrine, for introducing a mandatory Transparency Register?

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

Due consideration will be given to the issue mentioned by the Honourable Member in the context of the review of the Transparency register scheme foreseen by item 30 of the Interinstitutional agreement on the Transparency Register (JOL191/32 of 22.7.2011). This review has only just started within a working group composed of representatives of the European Parliament and of the European Commission, co-chaired by Vice-President Wieland and Vice-President Šefčovič.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008344/13
to the Commission
Emma McClarkin (ECR)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: European Health Insurance Card

Could the Commission please inform me how it is working on improving the European Health Insurance Card? I have understood, from one of my constituents, that there are public hospitals across Europe not accepting the card and have poor knowledge on how the card works.

Is the Commission considering an information campaign with guidelines on how the card works for both healthcare services and citizens?

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

Raising citizens' awareness of their rights under the European Health Insurance Card is primarily a responsibility of the national institutions. The Commission strongly supports Member States in this duty by various means, such as an extensive information campaign, including e.g. a website dedicated to EHIC, a video clip, promotional materials and a free smartphone application which gives guidance on the use of the card. The application is available in 24 languages and can be downloaded in all EU/EEA countries and Switzerland. The Commission also regularly updates the website and publishes periodical press releases promoting the EHIC. At the same time, the Commission monitors the use of the EHIC in the EU by means of an annual report based on the national reports provided by the Member States.

As regards the acceptance of the Card, the hospitals that provide public health services are obliged to recognise the EHIC. Available facts and figures provide that in the vast majority of cases, patients presenting the EHIC receive the necessary healthcare and are reimbursed without problems. Whenever it is brought to the Commission's attention that the EHIC is not accepted, the Commission investigates the issue with the authorities of the country concerned. Such investigation may lead to an infringement procedure against any Member State not applying or incorrectly applying EC law on the use of the EHIC.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008345/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(11 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Promozione dell'odio antisemita tra i bambini da parte della TV dell'Autorità palestinese

Il 7 luglio 2013, Palestinian Media Watch ha riportato la notizia di un video, trasmesso all'inizio di luglio dalla TV dell'Autorità palestinese, che incitava i bambini all'antisemitismo. Due sorelline recitavano una poesia piena di dichiarazioni radicali e antisemite del tipo: «Oh figli di Sion, le più malvagie tra le creature, oh barbare scimmie, porci spregevoli» e «Gerusalemme vomiti dalle sue viscere la vostra impurità».

1. È a conoscenza il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante del suddetto materiale antisemita recitato da bambini e trasmesso dalla TV dell'Autorità palestinese?

2. Quali misure intende adottare il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante per chiedere all'Autorità palestinese di interrompere la promozione televisiva di contenuti radicali e antisemiti?

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

L'AR/VP condanna tutti i casi di incitamento all'odio ad opera di gruppi radicali di entrambe le parti del conflitto israelo-palestinese. Atti di questo genere vanno contrastati sistematicamente. L'esempio dei bambini che recitano materiale antisemita in televisione è particolarmente preoccupante, visto che l'Autorità palestinese è responsabile dell'educazione della prossima generazione. Conformemente alla roadmap, tutte le parti hanno l'obbligo di porre fine all'incitamento all'odio.

Nell'ambito della sua politica nei confronti del processo di pace in Medio Oriente, l'AR/VP continua a promuovere i principi democratici, lo Stato di diritto e il rispetto dei diritti umani, anche finanziando progetti di organizzazioni non governative (ONG) in linea con gli obiettivi indicati nelle decisioni pertinenti della Commissione. L'AR/VP continuerà a discutere dei casi di incitamento all'odio con l'Autorità palestinese nell'ambito del sottocomitato PEV «Diritti umani, governance e Stato di diritto», la cui prossima riunione è prevista alla fine di ottobre 2013. In consessi specifici ad alto livello, inoltre, l'UE ha condannato le dichiarazioni antisemite rilasciate dai leader palestinesi e quelle trasmesse dalla televisione palestinese.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008345/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Palestinian Authority TV promotes hatred of Jews among children

On 7 July 2013, Palestinian Media Watch reported that a video was broadcast at the beginning of July by Palestinian Authority TV encouraging hatred of Jews among children. Two young sisters recited a poem full of anti-Semitic and radical statements like: 'Oh Sons of Zion, oh most evil among creations, oh barbaric monkeys, wretched pigs' and 'Jerusalem vomits from within it your impurity'.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of this anti-Semitic material recited by children and broadcast on Palestinian Authority TV?

2. What steps will the Vice-President/High Representative take to ask that the PA stops promoting anti-Semitic and radical material on television?

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

The HR/VP condemns all instances of incitement to hatred by radical groups on both sides of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Such acts must be tackled whenever they occur. The example of young children reciting anti-Semitic material on television is particularly disturbing given the responsbility of the Palestinian Authority to educate the next generation. All parties have an obligation under the Roadmap to end incitement.

In the framework of its policy vis-à-vis the Middle East Peace Process, the HR/VP continues to advance democratic principles, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including through funding of non-governmental organisations (NGO) projects in accordance with objectives set out in the relevant decisions of the Commission. The HR/VP will continue to raise instances of incitement in its ENP subcommittee with the Palestinian Authority covering human rights, governance and the rule of law, the next meeting of which should take place by the end of October 2013. In particular high-profile instances, the EU has also made statements condemning anti-Semitic statements made by Palestinian leaders or broadcast on Palestinian television.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008346/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(11 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Il presidente dell'Autorità palestinese rende onore ai terroristi

Il 3 luglio 2013 l'organizzazione *Palestinian Media Watch* ha riportato la notizia secondo cui il presidente dell'Autorità palestinese, Mahmoud Abbas, avrebbe reso onore a terroristi responsabili della morte di centinaia di israeliani.

Il 28 maggio 2013 PA TV ha trasmesso un video in cui Mahmoud Abbas insignisce Nayef Hawatmeh del «più alto ordine della stella d'onore». Hawatmeh ha ricevuto l'onorificenza «come riconoscimento del suo importante ruolo nazionale al servizio della causa palestinese e del popolo palestinese e come riconoscimento del suo impegno a tenere alta la bandiera della Palestina dall'inizio della rivoluzione palestinese, durante tutte le tappe della lotta in corso».

Hawatmeh è il leader del Fronte democratico per la liberazione della Palestina, che è responsabile di numerosi attacchi terroristici mortali.

Da dicembre 2012 Mahmoud Abbas continua a celebrare terroristi responsabili della morte di centinaia di israeliani, tra cui i fondatori di Fatah, che erano a capo dell'organizzazione terroristica Settembre Nero, e i fondatori e i capi di Hamas, Jihad islamica e il Fronte popolare per la liberazione della Palestina.

1. È il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante a conoscenza del fatto che il presidente dell'Autorità palestinese Mahmoud Abbas ha recentemente reso onore ai terroristi?

2. Quali misure ha adottato il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante al fine di impedire l'utilizzo di fondi europei a sostegno di eventi e trasmissioni televisive e radiofoniche che elogiano i terroristi?

3. Quali misure intende adottare il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante per far sì che il presidente Abbas smetta di rendere onore ai terroristi?

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

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente non si pronuncia sull'attribuzione di onorificenze da parte di governi stranieri. Tuttavia, l'Unione europea condanna con la massima fermezza tutti gli atti di terrorismo e anche il presidente Abbas ha condannato esplicitamente il terrorismo in tutte le sue forme. L'UE ha classificato come terroristiche varie organizzazioni menzionate nell'interrogazione: Hamas, Jihad islamica, Fronte popolare per la liberazione della Palestina. In Palestina i fondi dell'UE sono erogati a enti e ONG nel quadro di progetti specifici, i cui obiettivi sono stabiliti dalle pertinenti decisioni della Commissione; nessun fondo dell'UE è erogato a sostegno di eventi che elogiano i terroristi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008346/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Palestinian Authority President honours terrorists

On 3 July 2013, the Palestinian Media Watch organisation reported that Palestinian Authority President, Mahmoud Abbas, has honoured terrorists responsible for the deaths of hundreds of Israelis.

On 28 May 2013, PA TV broadcast a video in which Mahmoud Abbas decorates Nayef Hawatmeh with the 'highest order of the Star of Honour'. Hawatmeh received an honour 'in recognition of his important national role in service of the Palestinian cause and the Palestinian people, and in recognition of his efforts to raise the flag of Palestine since the launch of the Palestinian revolution, through the stages of the ongoing struggle'.

Hawatmeh is the leader of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, which has been responsible for numerous deadly terror attacks.

Since December 2012, Mahmoud Abbas has been glorifying terrorists who have been involved in the murder of hundreds of Israelis. Among them are the founders of Fatah who headed the terrorist organisation Black September, as well as the founders and heads of Hamas, Islamic Jihad and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the fact that Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas recently honoured terrorists?

2. What measures has the Vice-President/High Representative taken in order to prevent European funding being used to support events, as well as TV and radio broadcasts that glorify terrorists?

3. What steps is the Vice-President/High Representative going to take to see that President Abbas ceases honouring terrorists?

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

The HR/VP does not comment on the granting of honours by foreign governments. However, the EU rejects in the strongest terms all acts of terrorism. President Abbas has also clearly rejected terrorism in all its forms. The EU has listed as terrorist organisations a number of organisations referred to in the question: Hamas, Islamic Jihad and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. EU funds are provided to entities and NGOs in Palestine in the framework of specific projects whose objectives are set out in the relevant decisions of the Commission. The EU does not provide funds to support events that glorify terrorists.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008347/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(11 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Monaci tibetani sotto il tiro dei cinesi

In data 8 luglio, Reuters e altre agenzie di stampa riportano la notizia della sparatoria avvenuta il 6 luglio scorso a Ganji, nella Cina sudoccidentale, per mano delle forze di polizia che hanno aperto il fuoco su un gruppo di monaci tibetani e altri presenti, riuniti per celebrare il compleanno del Dalai Lama. I feriti sono almeno due. I monaci e i presenti si erano adunati per portare offerte e bruciare incenso in onore del 78°compleanno del loro leader spirituale.

Secondo la Campagna Internazionale per il Tibet, con sede negli USA, «numerosi soldati e poliziotti armati hanno partecipato all'operazione e una fonte ha riportato la presenza in loco di almeno sette carri armati e veicoli delle forze dell'ordine (…). Le forze di sicurezza hanno tentato di impedire ai tibetani di riunirsi e di procedere al rituale delle offerte. Tuttavia, secondo due fonti tibetane in esilio, alcuni tibetani presenti hanno affermato che bruciare l'incenso non è un reato». La polizia ha iniziato a sparare all'improvviso e almeno due monaci sono stati colpiti alla testa. Reuters ha sottolineato come sia raro il ricorso della polizia alle armi da fuoco e a misure repressive di questa portata.

Yu Zhengsheng, membro del Comitato permanente del Politburo costituito da sette membri del Partito Comunista cinese, ha dichiarato: «È necessario inasprire la lotta contro la cricca del Dalai con una presa di posizione ben definita». Dal 2009, numerosi tibetani si sono dati fuoco in segno di protesta contro il governo di Pechino e la maggior parte di essi ha perso la vita.

1. Qual è la posizione del Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante rispetto al nuovo sforzo del governo cinese per reprimere i sostenitori del Dalai Lama?

2. Quali misure sta attuando il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante al fine di monitorare gli abusi esercitati dai servizi di sicurezza cinesi?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(1º ottobre 2013)

L'Unione europea ha sollevato pubblicamente la questione del Tibet in numerose occasioni. Ad esempio, il 12 giugno 2012 l'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Ashton ha parlato della situazione tibetana di fronte al Parlamento europeo, Il 14 dicembre 2012, l'AR/VP ha rilasciato una dichiarazione a nome dell'UE27 sulle autoimmolazioni verificatesi nel Tibet e il 13 marzo 2013, ha sollevato la questione del Tibet nel corso del dibattito sull'adozione della relazione del Parlamento europeo sui rapporti tra l'Unione europea e la Cina. Il Tibet viene inoltre menzionato sistematicamente nelle dichiarazioni dell'Unione europea presso il Consiglio per i diritti umani delle Nazioni Unite e, più recentemente, durante la sessantesima sessione dell'Assemblea generale delle Nazioni Unite.

Durante il più recente dialogo UE-Cina sui diritti umani, che ha avuto luogo nel Guiyang (provincia di Guizhou) il 25 giugno 2013, la situazione in Tibet costituiva una delle questioni discusse in modo sostanziale. L'UE ha esortato la Cina a rivedere la propria politica e ripristinare il dialogo con i rappresentanti del Dalai Lama. Sono stati inoltre sollevati casi individuali. Il SEAE continuerà a seguire la situazione e a esprimere le proprie preoccupazioni in merito alla situazione in Tibet con il governo cinese.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008347/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Chinese fire on Tibetan monks

On 8 July 2013, Reuters and other news agencies reported that on 6 July police in Ganji in south-west China fired on a group of Tibetan monks and other people who had gathered to celebrate the birthday of the Dalai Lama. At least two were injured. Monks and other people had come to make offerings and burn incense to celebrate the spiritual leader's 78th birthday.

According to the US-based International Campaign for Tibet, 'large numbers of armed police and soldiers were deployed, with one source reporting at least seven army trucks and police vehicles at the scene (…). The security forces attempted to prevent Tibetans from making their offerings and gatherings, but according to two Tibetan sources in exile, some Tibetans present argued that burning incense was not a crime'. The police started shooting without any warning and at least two monks were shot in the head. Reuters noted that it is rare for the police to use guns and adopt such heavy-handed tactics.

A member of the Communist Party's seven-man Politburo Standing Committee, Yu Zhengsheng, said : 'We must deepen the struggle against the Dalai clique with a clear-cut stand'. Since 2009 numerous Tibetans have set themselves alight in protest against Chinese rule and most have died.

1. What is the position of the Vice-President/High Representative regarding the Chinese Government's renewed effort to clamp down on supporters of the Dalai Lama?

2. What steps is the Vice-President/High Representative taking in order to monitor the abuses carried out by the Chinese security services?

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

The EU has publicly raised the situation in Tibet on many occasions. For example, on 12 June 2012, HR/VP Ashton addressed the Tibetan situation before the European Parliament; on 14 December 2012, she made a statement on behalf of the EU-27 on Tibetan self-immolations; and on 13 March 2013 she raised Tibet during the debate on the adoption of the European Parliament's report on EU-China relations. Tibet is also highlighted regularly in EU statements at the UN Human Rights Council, most recently during the 60th session of the UN General Assembly.

During the most recent EU-China Human Rights Dialogue, which took place in Guiyang (Guizhou province) on 25 June 2013, the situation in Tibet was one of the issues substantially discussed. The EU urged China to revise its policy and resume dialogue with the representatives of the Dalai Lama. Individual cases were also raised. The EEAS will continue to monitor the situation and raise its concerns over the situation in Tibet with the Chinese Government.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008348/13
à la Commission
Jean-Luc Bennahmias (ALDE)
(11 juillet 2013)

Objet: Augmentation des frais bancaires

Selon le rapport annuel de l'Observatoire des tarifs bancaires publié le 4 juillet dernier, plusieurs services bancaires voient leurs coûts augmenter: la hausse pour les cartes bancaires (en particulier internationales) va de 0,7 % à 1,7 % et les frais pour les retraits aux distributeurs d'un autre établissement bancaire que celui du client ont, eux, augmenté de 9,3 %. La proportion de banques qui font payer à leurs clients des frais de gestion de compte s'accroît.

Cette situation touche particulièrement les Européens mobiles qui, pour retirer de l'argent dans un État membre, même au sein de la zone euro, doivent payer des frais élevés et récurrents, qui peuvent varier considérablement d'un État membre à l'autre.

Outre les problèmes de transparence posés par l'incertitude existante quant aux frais encourus par les citoyens qui se déplacent au sein de l'Union européenne, cette situation porte préjudice au marché intérieur et à l'exercice effectif des libertés fondamentales.

À l'heure où la Commission incite les citoyens européens à la mobilité et au moment où elle s'engage dans une révision de la directive sur les services de paiement en Europe, il est essentiel d'agir sur la question des frais bancaires et, en particulier, des frais occasionnés par le franchissement d'une frontière à l'intérieur de l'Union. Force est de constater, en effet, qu'en matière de tarifs bancaires, les frontières intérieures subsistent bel et bien.

Ma question sera triple:

— La Commission a-t-elle pris connaissance du rapport annuel de l'Observatoire des tarifs bancaires? Comment entend-elle agir dans ce domaine?

— La réforme de la directive sur les services de paiement en Europe inclut-elle des clauses visant à limiter les hausses des frais bancaires?

— Un encadrement, voire un plafonnement des frais bancaires est-il envisagé par la Commission?

Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission
(4 septembre 2013)

Le règlement (CE) nº 924/2009 ([1]) a déjà supprimé les différences de frais entre les paiements transfrontaliers et les paiements nationaux effectués en euros, bénéficiant ainsi fortement aux échanges transfrontaliers et à la protection des consommateurs. Le règlement s'applique à tous les paiements électroniques effectués en euros, notamment les virements, les prélèvements, les retraits aux distributeurs automatiques et les paiements par cartes de crédit et cartes de débit.

La proposition de directive sur les comptes de paiement, adoptée par la Commission le 8 mai 2013, permettra d'améliorer la transparence et la comparabilité des frais liés aux comptes de paiement et de faciliter le changement de compte pour les consommateurs. Toutes les banques devront informer de façon totalement normalisée les consommateurs des frais les plus courants et mettre ces informations à disposition sur un site internet national, ce qui facilitera la comparaison entre ces différents frais. Les dispositions concernant le changement de compte bancaire permettront de changer rapidement de compte de paiement. Tous les consommateurs auront en outre la possibilité d'ouvrir un compte de paiement de base. Ce compte sera accessible à un coût raisonnable, voire gratuitement, pour le consommateur, et offrira néanmoins les services nécessaires aux paiements, notamment une carte de débit et l'accès en ligne au compte bancaire. Tous ces changements devraient exercer une pression importante sur les banques pour qu'elles limitent les frais de paiement.

([1]) JO L 266 du 9.10.2009, p. 11.

En outre, la proposition de directive sur les services de paiement (PSD 2) et la proposition de règlement relatif aux commissions d'interchange pour les opérations de paiement liées à une carte, adoptées par la Commission le 24 juillet 2013, permettront notamment d'interdire aux commerçants de surfacturer les opérations effectuées par les consommateurs à l'aide d'une carte de débit ou de crédit. Ce type de surfacturation est monnaie courante à l'heure actuelle, notamment dans le cadre des paiements transfrontaliers en ligne. Les «fournisseurs de distributeurs automatiques de billets indépendants» entrent également dans le champ d'application de la proposition de directive PSD 2 et sont de ce fait soumis aux règles générales en matière de commissions et de transparence.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008348/13
to the Commission
Jean-Luc Bennahmias (ALDE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Rise in bank charges

The annual report of the 'Observatoire des tarifs bancaires' (French bank-fee monitoring authority), published on 4 July 2013, reported a rise in the cost of a number of bank services: card charges (particularly international ones) rose from 0.7% to 1.7% and the charges for ATM withdrawals from a bank other than the one at which the customer's account is held increased by 9.3%. The number of banks charging their customers account management fees is also rising.

This is particularly a problem for European frequent travellers, who, in order to withdraw money in other Member States, even within the euro area, must persistently pay high withdrawal fees, which may vary considerably from one Member State to another.

Besides the problems of transparency posed by the uncertainty surrounding the charges incurred by cardholders travelling around the European Union, this situation is damaging to the internal market and the effective enjoyment of fundamental liberties.

At a time when the Commission is promoting European mobility and undertaking a review of the Payment Services Directive, it is essential to address the issue of bank charges and, in particular, the fees incurred in crossing borders within the EU. It is clear that in terms of bank charges, internal borders are as firmly in place as ever.

I therefore have three questions:

— Is the Commission aware of the annual report published by the 'Observatoire des tarifs bancaires'? How does it intend to address these issues?

— Will the revised Payment Services Directive include clauses aiming to limit rises in bank charges?

— Does the Commission plan to introduce controls, or even a ceiling, on bank charges?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(4 September 2013)

Regulation (EC) No 924/2009 ([1]) has already eliminated differences in charges between cross-border and national payments in euro, with a strong, positive impact on cross-border trade and consumer protection. The regulation applies to all electronic payments in euro, including e.g. credit transfers, direct debits, cash withdrawals at ATMs, and payments with debit and credit cards.

The proposal for a directive on Payment Accounts, adopted by the Commission on 8 May 2013, will improve the transparency and comparability of fees for payment accounts and facilitate the account switching for consumers. All banks will have to inform consumers about their most common fees in a fully standardised manner and make this information available on one national website, allowing for easy comparison between them. The account switching provisions will make it possible to quickly change a bank account. Every consumer will be also able to open a basic bank account. Such an account will be provided at a low or even no cost to consumer, but include all necessary payment functionalities, including a debit card or online banking access. All these changes should create a strong pressure on banks in order to limit their payment fees.

In addition, the proposal for a Payment Service Directive (PSD2) and Regulation on interchange fees for card based payments, adopted by the Commission on 24 July 2013, will among other things prohibit merchant surcharging as regards consumer debit and credit cards. Such surcharging is currently common, notably in the context of cross-border online payments. The so-called independent ATM providers are also included in the scope of PSD2, making these providers subject to the general charging and transparency rules.

([1]) OJ L266 of 9.10.2009, p.11.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008349/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego entre casais em Portugal

Considerando que:

— em abril 2013, em Portugal, o número de casais em que ambos os cônjuges estão desempregados aumentou para 13 176, mais 67,3 % do que em 2012;

— esta é uma situação que se vem a agravar.

Pergunta-se:

1. Que tem feito a Comissão para combater esta situação?

2. Existem algumas medidas específicas que possam ser adotadas pelos Estados-Membros no combate a esta situação?

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

1. Os serviços da Comissão estão a acompanhar estreitamente a evolução do emprego, do desemprego e a situação dos agregados familiares sem emprego em Portugal.

A Comissão coopera de perto com as autoridades portuguesas e encoraja-as a utilizarem da melhor forma os recursos disponíveis no âmbito dos programas em curso no combate ao desemprego. O «Pacote do Emprego» ([1]), lançado pela Comissão em abril de 2012, enumera todos os fundos e programas da UE que podem ser mobilizados para apoiar trabalhadores desempregados. Entre estes, os fundos da política de coesão, e o FSE ([2]), em especial, são fontes importantes de investimento, que estimulam o crescimento sustentável e o emprego, e podem ser utilizados para apoiar políticas ativas do mercado de trabalho, a manutenção e criação de emprego, nomeadamente através do financiamento de mecanismos de apoio às PME e aos agregados familiares sem emprego.

2. Se ou quando se verificará uma recuperação geradora de emprego em Portugal dependerá, *inter alia*, da realização de novos progressos na estabilização da crise do euro, do restabelecimento a preços acessíveis dos fluxos de crédito à economia real e da restauração da confiança das famílias e das empresas no futuro. A Comissão remete também o Senhor Deputado para o «Programa de Ajustamento Económico para Portugal — Sétima Revisão», no que se refere aos objetivos em termos de mercado de trabalho (página 84). ([3]) As medidas estruturais, tendo em vista a reforma da legislação laboral, adotadas até à data pelo Governo Português, tiveram e continuam a ter como objetivo principal tornar o mercado de trabalho menos rígido e segmentado e, por conseguinte, mais acessível a um maior grupo de pessoas.

([1]) COM(2012) 173 final de 18 de abril de 2012.
([2]) No que diz respeito espeecificamente ao Fundo Social Europeu, estão disponíveis informações no seguinte endereço Web: http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=394
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/ocp153_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008349/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Unemployment among married couples in Portugal

In April 2013, the number of married couples in Portugal in which both spouses are unemployed rose to 13 176 — 67.3% more than in 2012 — and the situation continues to worsen.

1. What has the Commission done to combat this situation?

2. Are there any specific measures that the Member States can adopt to combat this situation?

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

1. The Commission services are closely monitoring the development of employment, unemployment and the situation of jobless households in Portugal.

The Commission cooperates closely with the Portuguese authorities and encourages them to make the best use of the resources available under the current programmes to fight against unemployment. The Employment Package ([1]) launched by the Commission in April 2012 lists all the EU funds and programmes that can be mobilised to support unemployed workers. Among those, Cohesion Policy funds, and the ESF ([2]) in particular, are important sources of investment stimulating sustainable growth and employment and can be used to support active labour market policy, maintaining and creating jobs, notably by funding SME support mechanisms, as well as to support jobless households.

2. Whether and when a job-rich recovery occurs in Portugal will depend, *inter alia*, on further progress in stabilising the euro crisis, resumption of affordable credit flows to the real economy and restoration of households' and companies confidence in the future. The Commission would also like to refer the Honourable Member to *'The Economic Adjustment Programme for Portugal — Seventh review'* regarding the labour market objectives (page 84) ([3]). The structural measures in view of the reform of employment legislation undertaken so far by the Portuguese Government had and have the main objective to render the labour market less rigid and segmented and thus more accessible for a wider group of people.

([1]) COM(2012) 173 final of 18 April 2012.
([2]) Regarding specifically the European Social Fund, detailed information is available online.: http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=394
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/ocp153_en.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008350/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego entre casais na Estónia

Considerando que:

— tem crescido o número de casos em que ambos os membros de um casal se encontram na situação de desemprego;

— em abril de 2013, em Portugal, este número aumentou para 13 176, mais 67,3 % do que em 2012;

— o desemprego entre os casais é um problema que afeta e preocupa toda a União Europeia.

Pergunta-se:

Como tem evoluído o desemprego entre casais, no primeiro trimestre de 2013, em comparação com o período homólogo de 2012, na Estónia?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008351/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego entre casais na Finlândia

Considerando que:

— tem crescido o número de casos em que ambos os membros de um casal se encontram na situação de desemprego;

— em abril de 2013, em Portugal, este número aumentou para 13 176, mais 67,3 % do que em 2012;

— o desemprego entre os casais é um problema que afeta e preocupa toda a União Europeia.

Pergunta-se:

Como tem evoluído o desemprego entre casais, no primeiro trimestre de 2013, em comparação com o período homólogo de 2012, na Finlândia?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008352/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego entre casais em França

Considerando que:

— tem crescido o número de casos em que ambos os membros de um casal se encontram na situação de desemprego;

— em abril de 2013, em Portugal, este número aumentou para 13 176, mais 67,3 % do que em 2012;

— o desemprego entre os casais é um problema que afeta e preocupa toda a União Europeia.

Pergunta-se:

Como tem evoluído o desemprego entre casais, no primeiro trimestre de 2013, em comparação com o período homólogo de 2012, em França?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008353/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego entre casais na Alemanha

Considerando que:

— tem crescido o número de casos em que ambos os membros de um casal se encontram na situação de desemprego;

— em abril de 2013, em Portugal, este número aumentou para 13 176, mais 67,3 % do que em 2012;

— o desemprego entre os casais é um problema que afeta e preocupa toda a União Europeia.

Pergunta-se:

Como tem evoluído o desemprego entre casais, no primeiro trimestre de 2013, em comparação com o período homólogo de 2012, na Alemanha?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008354/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego entre casais na Grécia

Considerando que:

— tem crescido o número de casos em que ambos os membros de um casal se encontram na situação de desemprego;

— em abril de 2013, em Portugal, este número aumentou para 13 176, mais 67,3 % do que em 2012;

— o desemprego entre os casais é um problema que afeta e preocupa toda a União Europeia.

Pergunta-se:

Como tem evoluído o desemprego entre casais, no primeiro trimestre de 2013, em comparação com o período homólogo de 2012, na Grécia?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008355/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego entre casais na Bulgária

Considerando que:

— tem crescido o número de casos em que ambos os membros de um casal se encontram na situação de desemprego;

— em abril de 2013, em Portugal, este número aumentou para 13 176, mais 67,3 % do que em 2012;

— o desemprego entre os casais é um problema que afeta e preocupa toda a União Europeia.

Pergunta-se:

Como tem evoluído o desemprego entre casais, no primeiro trimestre de 2013, em comparação com o período homólogo de 2012, na Bulgária?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008356/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego entre casais na Hungria

Considerando que:

— tem crescido o número de casos em que ambos os membros de um casal se encontram na situação de desemprego;

— em abril de 2013, em Portugal, este número aumentou para 13 176, mais 67,3 % do que em 2012;

— o desemprego entre os casais é um problema que afeta e preocupa toda a União Europeia.

Pergunta-se:

Como tem evoluído o desemprego entre casais, no primeiro trimestre de 2013, em comparação com o período homólogo de 2012, na Hungria?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008357/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego entre casais na Bélgica

Considerando que:

— tem crescido o número de casos em que ambos os membros de um casal se encontram na situação de desemprego;

— em abril de 2013, em Portugal, este número aumentou para 13 176, mais 67,3 % do que em 2012;

— o desemprego entre os casais é um problema que afeta e preocupa toda a União Europeia.

Pergunta-se:

Como tem evoluído o desemprego entre casais, no primeiro trimestre de 2013, em comparação com o período homólogo de 2012, na Bélgica?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008358/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego entre casais na Dinamarca

Considerando que:

— tem crescido o número de casos em que ambos os membros de um casal se encontram na situação de desemprego;

— em abril de 2013, em Portugal, este número aumentou para 13 176, mais 67,3 % do que em 2012;

— o desemprego entre os casais é um problema que afeta e preocupa toda a União Europeia.

Pergunta-se:

Como tem evoluído o desemprego entre casais, no primeiro trimestre de 2013, em comparação com o período homólogo de 2012, na Dinamarca?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008359/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego entre casais na República Checa

Considerando que:

— tem crescido o número de casos em que ambos os membros de um casal se encontram na situação de desemprego;

— em abril de 2013, em Portugal, este número aumentou para 13 176, mais 67,3 % do que em 2012;

— o desemprego entre os casais é um problema que afeta e preocupa toda a União Europeia.

Pergunta-se:

Como tem evoluído o desemprego entre casais, no primeiro trimestre de 2013, em comparação com o período homólogo de 2012, na República Checa?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008360/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego entre casais em Chipre

Considerando que:

— tem crescido o número de casos em que ambos os membros de um casal se encontram na situação de desemprego;

— em abril de 2013, em Portugal, este número aumentou para 13 176, mais 67,3 % do que em 2012;

— o desemprego entre os casais é um problema que afeta e preocupa toda a União Europeia.

Pergunta-se:

Como tem evoluído o desemprego entre casais, no primeiro trimestre de 2013, em comparação com o período homólogo de 2012, em Chipre?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008361/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego entre casais na Áustria

Considerando que:

— tem crescido o número de casos em que ambos os membros de um casal se encontram na situação de desemprego;

— em abril de 2013, em Portugal, este número aumentou para 13 176, mais 67,3 % do que em 2012;

— o desemprego entre os casais é um problema que afeta e preocupa toda a União Europeia.

Pergunta-se:

Como tem evoluído o desemprego entre casais, no primeiro trimestre de 2013, em comparação com o período homólogo de 2012, na Áustria?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008362/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego entre casais em Espanha

Considerando que:

— tem crescido o número de casos em que ambos os membros de um casal se encontram na situação de desemprego;

— em abril de 2013, em Portugal, este número aumentou para 13 176, mais 67,3 % do que em 2012;

— o desemprego entre os casais é um problema que afeta e preocupa toda a União Europeia.

Pergunta-se:

Como tem evoluído o desemprego entre casais, no primeiro trimestre de 2013, em comparação com o período homólogo de 2012, em Espanha?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008363/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego entre casais na Suécia

Considerando que:

— tem crescido o número de casos em que ambos os membros de um casal se encontram na situação de desemprego;

— em abril de 2013, em Portugal, este número aumentou para 13 176, mais 67,3 % do que em 2012;

— o desemprego entre os casais é um problema que afeta e preocupa toda a União Europeia.

Pergunta-se:

Como tem evoluído o desemprego entre casais, no primeiro trimestre de 2013, em comparação com o período homólogo de 2012, na Suécia?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008364/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego entre casais no Reino Unido

Considerando que:

— tem crescido o número de casos em que ambos os membros de um casal se encontram na situação de desemprego;

— em abril de 2013, em Portugal, este número aumentou para 13 176, mais 67,3 % do que em 2012;

— o desemprego entre os casais é um problema que afeta e preocupa toda a União Europeia.

Pergunta-se:

Como tem evoluído o desemprego entre casais, no primeiro trimestre de 2013, em comparação com o período homólogo de 2012, no Reino Unido?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008365/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego entre casais nos Países Baixos

Considerando que:

— tem crescido o número de casos em que ambos os membros de um casal se encontram na situação de desemprego;

— em abril de 2013, em Portugal, este número aumentou para 13 176, mais 67,3 % do que em 2012;

— o desemprego entre os casais é um problema que afeta e preocupa toda a União Europeia.

Pergunta-se:

Como tem evoluído o desemprego entre casais, no primeiro trimestre de 2013, em comparação com o período homólogo de 2012, nos Países Baixos?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008366/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego entre casais na Roménia

Considerando que:

— tem crescido o número de casos em que ambos os membros de um casal se encontram na situação de desemprego;

— em abril de 2013, em Portugal, este número aumentou para 13 176, mais 67,3 % do que em 2012;

— o desemprego entre os casais é um problema que afeta e preocupa toda a União Europeia.

Pergunta-se:

Como tem evoluído o desemprego entre casais, no primeiro trimestre de 2013, em comparação com o período homólogo de 2012, na Roménia?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008367/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego entre casais Irlanda

Considerando que:

— tem crescido o número de casos em que ambos os membros de um casal se encontram na situação de desemprego;

— em abril de 2013, em Portugal, este número aumentou para 13 176, mais 67,3 % do que em 2012;

— o desemprego entre os casais é um problema que afeta e preocupa toda a União Europeia.

Pergunta-se:

Como tem evoluído o desemprego entre casais, no primeiro trimestre de 2013, em comparação com o período homólogo de 2012, na Irlanda?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008368/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego entre casais na Itália

Considerando que:

— tem crescido o número de casos em que ambos os membros de um casal se encontram na situação de desemprego;

— em abril de 2013, em Portugal, este número aumentou para 13 176, mais 67,3 % do que em 2012;

— o desemprego entre os casais é um problema que afeta e preocupa toda a União Europeia.

Pergunta-se:

Como tem evoluído o desemprego entre casais, no primeiro trimestre de 2013, em comparação com o período homólogo de 2012, na Itália?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008369/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego entre casais na Polónia

Considerando que:

— tem crescido o número de casos em que ambos os membros de um casal se encontram na situação de desemprego;

— em abril de 2013, em Portugal, este número aumentou para 13 176, mais 67,3 % do que em 2012;

— o desemprego entre os casais é um problema que afeta e preocupa toda a União Europeia.

Pergunta-se:

Como tem evoluído o desemprego entre casais, no primeiro trimestre de 2013, em comparação com o período homólogo de 2012, na Polónia?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008370/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego entre casais na Eslováquia

Considerando que:

— tem crescido o número de casos em que ambos os membros de um casal se encontram na situação de desemprego;

— em abril de 2013, em Portugal, este número aumentou para 13 176, mais 67,3 % do que em 2012;

— o desemprego entre os casais é um problema que afeta e preocupa toda a União Europeia.

Pergunta-se:

Como tem evoluído o desemprego entre casais, no primeiro trimestre de 2013, em comparação com o período homólogo de 2012, na Eslováquia?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008371/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego entre casais na Eslovénia

Considerando que:

— tem crescido o número de casos em que ambos os membros de um casal se encontram na situação de desemprego;

— em abril de 2013, em Portugal, este número aumentou para 13 176, mais 67,3% do que em 2012;

— o desemprego entre os casais é um problema que afeta e preocupa toda a União Europeia.

Pergunta-se:

Como tem evoluído o desemprego entre casais, no primeiro trimestre de 2013, em comparação com o período homólogo de 2012, na Eslovénia?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008372/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego entre casais na Letónia

Considerando que:

— tem crescido o número de casos em que ambos os membros de um casal se encontram na situação de desemprego;

— em abril de 2013, em Portugal, este número aumentou para 13 176, mais 67,3 % do que em 2012;

— o desemprego entre os casais é um problema que afeta e preocupa toda a União Europeia.

Pergunta-se:

Como tem evoluído o desemprego entre casais, no primeiro trimestre de 2013, em comparação com o período homólogo de 2012, na Letónia?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008373/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego entre casais na Lituânia

Considerando que:

— tem crescido o número de casos em que ambos os membros de um casal se encontram na situação de desemprego;

— em abril de 2013, em Portugal, este número aumentou para 13 176, mais 67,3% do que em 2012;

— desemprego entre os casais é um problema que afeta e preocupa toda a União Europeia.

Pergunta-se:

Como tem evoluído o desemprego entre casais, no primeiro trimestre de 2013, em comparação com o período homólogo de 2012, na Lituânia?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008374/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego entre casais no Luxemburgo

Considerando que:

— tem crescido o número de casos em que ambos os membros de um casal se encontram na situação de desemprego;

— em abril de 2013, em Portugal, este número aumentou para 13 176, mais 67,3% do que em 2012;

— o desemprego entre os casais é um problema que afeta e preocupa toda a União Europeia.

Pergunta-se:

Como tem evoluído o desemprego entre casais, no primeiro trimestre de 2013, em comparação com o período homólogo de 2012, no Luxemburgo?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008375/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego entre casais em Malta

Considerando que:

— tem crescido o número de casos em que ambos os membros de um casal se encontram na situação de desemprego;

— em abril de 2013, em Portugal, este número aumentou para 13 176, mais 67,3 % do que em 2012;

— o desemprego entre os casais é um problema que afeta e preocupa toda a União Europeia.

Pergunta-se:

Como tem evoluído o desemprego entre casais, no primeiro trimestre de 2013, em comparação com o período homólogo de 2012, em Malta?

Resposta conjunta dada por Algirdas Šemeta em nome da Comissão
(27 de agosto de 2013)

O Eurostat pode produzir estimativas do número e da proporção de casais em que os dois membros estão desempregados, com base no Inquérito às Forças de Trabalho da UE (ver quadro anexo). Devido às características do inquérito, esses números incluem todos os casais cujos membros vivem juntos, independentemente de serem ou não legalmente casados. Note-se que a percentagem de casais casados entre todos os casais pode variar de forma significativa consoante os países da UE. Para o cálculo dessas estimativas não é tido em consideração o estatuto de desempregado dos outros eventuais membros do agregado familiar.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008350/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Unemployment among married couples in Estonia

There has been a rise in the number of married couples in which both spouses are unemployed.

In April 2013 in Portugal, this figure rose to 13 176, 67.3% higher than in 2012.

Unemployment among married couples is a problem and a cause for concern throughout the European Union.

What has been the trend in unemployment among married couples in Estonia in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008351/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Unemployment among married couples in Finland

There has been a rise in the number of married couples in which both spouses are unemployed.

In April 2013 in Portugal, this figure rose to 13 176, 67.3% higher than in 2012.

Unemployment among married couples is a problem and a cause for concern throughout the European Union.

What has been the trend in unemployment among married couples in Finland in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008352/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Unemployment among married couples in France

There has been a rise in the number of married couples in which both spouses are unemployed.

In April 2013 in Portugal, this figure rose to 13 176, 67.3% higher than in 2012.

Unemployment among married couples is a problem and a cause for concern throughout the European Union.

What has been the trend in unemployment among married couples in France in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008353/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Unemployment among married couples in Germany

There has been a rise in the number of married couples in which both spouses are unemployed.

In April 2013 in Portugal, this figure rose to 13 176, 67.3% higher than in 2012.

Unemployment among married couples is a problem and a cause for concern throughout the European Union.

What has been the trend in unemployment among married couples in Germany in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008354/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Unemployment among married couples in Greece

There has been a rise in the number of married couples in which both spouses are unemployed.

In April 2013 in Portugal, this figure rose to 13 176, 67.3% higher than in 2012.

Unemployment among married couples is a problem and a cause for concern throughout the European Union.

What has been the trend in unemployment among married couples in Greece in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008355/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Unemployment among married couples in Bulgaria

There has been a rise in the number of married couples in which both spouses are unemployed.

In April 2013 in Portugal, this figure rose to 13 176, 67.3% higher than in 2012.

Unemployment among married couples is a problem and a cause for concern throughout the European Union.

What has been the trend in unemployment among married couples in Bulgaria in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008356/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Unemployment among married couples in Hungary

There has been a rise in the number of married couples in which both spouses are unemployed.

In April 2013 in Portugal, this figure rose to 13 176, 67.3% higher than in 2012.

Unemployment among married couples is a problem and a cause for concern throughout the European Union.

What has been the trend in unemployment among married couples in Hungary in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008357/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Unemployment among married couples in Belgium

There has been a rise in the number of married couples in which both spouses are unemployed.

In April 2013 in Portugal, this figure rose to 13 176, 67.3% higher than in 2012.

Unemployment among married couples is a problem and a cause for concern throughout the European Union.

What has been the trend in unemployment among married couples in Belgium in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008358/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Unemployment among married couples in Denmark

There has been a rise in the number of married couples in which both spouses are unemployed.

In April 2013 in Portugal, this figure rose to 13 176, 67.3% higher than in 2012.

Unemployment among married couples is a problem and a cause for concern throughout the European Union.

What has been the trend in unemployment among married couples in Denmark in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008359/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Unemployment among married couples in the Czech Republic

There has been a rise in the number of married couples in which both spouses are unemployed.

In April 2013 in Portugal, this figure rose to 13 176, 67.3% higher than in 2012.

Unemployment among married couples is a problem and a cause for concern throughout the European Union.

What has been the trend in unemployment among married couples in the Czech Republic in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008360/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Unemployment among married couples in Cyprus

There has been a rise in the number of married couples in which both spouses are unemployed.

In April 2013 in Portugal, this figure rose to 13 176, 67.3% higher than in 2012.

Unemployment among married couples is a problem and a cause for concern throughout the European Union.

What has been the trend in unemployment among married couples in Cyprus in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008361/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Unemployment among married couples in Austria

There has been a rise in the number of married couples in which both spouses are unemployed.

In April 2013 in Portugal, this figure rose to 13 176, 67.3% higher than in 2012.

Unemployment among married couples is a problem and a cause for concern throughout the European Union.

What has been the trend in unemployment among married couples in Austria in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008362/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Unemployment among married couples in Spain

There has been a rise in the number of married couples in which both spouses are unemployed.

In April 2013 in Portugal, this figure rose to 13 176, 67.3% higher than in 2012.

Unemployment among married couples is a problem and a cause for concern throughout the European Union.

What has been the trend in unemployment among married couples in Spain in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008363/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Unemployment among married couples in Sweden

There has been a rise in the number of married couples in which both spouses are unemployed.

In April 2013 in Portugal, this figure rose to 13 176, 67.3% higher than in 2012.

Unemployment among married couples is a problem and a cause for concern throughout the European Union.

What has been the trend in unemployment among married couples in Sweden in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008364/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Unemployment among married couples in the United Kingdom

There has been a rise in the number of married couples in which both spouses are unemployed.

In April 2013 in Portugal, this figure rose to 13 176, 67.3% higher than in 2012.

Unemployment among married couples is a problem and a cause for concern throughout the European Union.

What has been the trend in unemployment among married couples in the United Kingdom in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008365/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Unemployment among married couples in the Netherlands

There has been a rise in the number of married couples in which both spouses are unemployed.

In April 2013 in Portugal, this figure rose to 13 176, 67.3% higher than in 2012.

Unemployment among married couples is a problem and a cause for concern throughout the European Union.

What has been the trend in unemployment among married couples in the Netherlands in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008366/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Unemployment among married couples in Romania

There has been a rise in the number of married couples in which both spouses are unemployed.

In April 2013 in Portugal, this figure rose to 13 176, 67.3% higher than in 2012.

Unemployment among married couples is a problem and a cause for concern throughout the European Union.

What has been the trend in unemployment among married couples in Romania in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008367/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Unemployment among married couples in Ireland

There has been a rise in the number of married couples in which both spouses are unemployed.

In April 2013 in Portugal, this figure rose to 13 176, 67.3% higher than in 2012.

Unemployment among married couples is a problem and a cause for concern throughout the European Union.

What has been the trend in unemployment among married couples in Ireland in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008368/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Unemployment among married couples in Italy

There has been a rise in the number of married couples in which both spouses are unemployed.

In April 2013 in Portugal, this figure rose to 13 176, 67.3% higher than in 2012.

Unemployment among married couples is a problem and a cause for concern throughout the European Union.

What has been the trend in unemployment among married couples in Italy in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008369/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Unemployment among married couples in Poland

There has been a rise in the number of married couples in which both spouses are unemployed.

In April 2013 in Portugal, this figure rose to 13 176, 67.3% higher than in 2012.

Unemployment among married couples is a problem and a cause for concern throughout the European Union.

What has been the trend in unemployment among married couples in Poland in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008370/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Unemployment among married couples in Slovakia

There has been a rise in the number of married couples in which both spouses are unemployed.

In April 2013 in Portugal, this figure rose to 13 176, 67.3% higher than in 2012.

Unemployment among married couples is a problem and a cause for concern throughout the European Union.

What has been the trend in unemployment among married couples in Slovakia in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008371/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Unemployment among married couples in Slovenia

There has been a rise in the number of married couples in which both spouses are unemployed.

In April 2013 in Portugal, this figure rose to 13 176, 67.3 % higher than in 2012.

Unemployment among married couples is a problem and a cause for concern throughout the European Union.

What has been the trend in unemployment among married couples in Slovenia in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008372/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Unemployment among married couples in Latvia

There has been a rise in the number of married couples in which both spouses are unemployed.

In April 2013 in Portugal, this figure rose to 13 176, 67.3% higher than in 2012.

Unemployment among married couples is a problem and a cause for concern throughout the European Union.

What has been the trend in unemployment among married couples in Latvia in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008373/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Unemployment among married couples in Lithuania

There has been a rise in the number of married couples in which both spouses are unemployed.

In April 2013 in Portugal, this figure rose to 13 176, 67.3% higher than in 2012.

Unemployment among married couples is a problem and a cause for concern throughout the European Union.

What has been the trend in unemployment among married couples in Lithuania in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008374/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Unemployment among married couples in Luxembourg

There has been a rise in the number of married couples in which both spouses are unemployed.

In April 2013 in Portugal, this figure rose to 13 176, 67.3% higher than in 2012.

Unemployment among married couples is a problem and a cause for concern throughout the European Union.

What has been the trend in unemployment among married couples in Luxembourg in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008375/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Unemployment among married couples in Malta

There has been a rise in the number of married couples in which both spouses are unemployed.

In April 2013 in Portugal, this figure rose to 13 176, 67.3 % higher than in 2012.

Unemployment among married couples is a problem and a cause for concern throughout the European Union.

What has been the trend in unemployment among married couples in Malta in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Joint answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(27 August 2013)

Eurostat can produce estimates of the number and proportion of couples in which both members are unemployed based on the EU Labour Force Survey (see table annexed). Due to the features of the EU LFS, these figures include all couples where both members live together and irrespective of being legally married or not. Please note that the proportion of married couples among all couples may fluctuate to a significant extent across EU countries. For the calculation of those estimates the unemployment status of other possible members of the household is not considered.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008376/13
a la Comisión
Santiago Fisas Ayxela (PPE)
(11 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: Cupos de jugadores formados localmente

La Comisión Europea ha abierto en los últimos años «un procedimiento de infracción» contra España, Italia y Francia, ya que considera que el sistema de cupos de jugadores formados localmente, que rige en el baloncesto, supone una traba para la libre circulación de trabajadores nacidos en la Unión Europea.

¿En qué otros países de la Unión Europea existen cuotas de jugadores formados localmente o cuotas basadas en la nacionalidad que limiten la libre circulación de jugadores de baloncesto?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(4 de septiembre de 2013)

Los procedimientos contra España, Italia y Francia se basaban en denuncias individuales, que facilitaban información sobre las respectivas normas nacionales. También están en curso por la misma cuestión procedimientos de infracción contra Luxemburgo, por lo que se refiere a las competiciones de aficionados.

Las normas nacionales con cupos de jugadores del país en el baloncesto son todas relativamente nuevas y están evolucionando todavía. Aunque la Comisión responde a las denuncias recibidas, no lleva a cabo un seguimiento sistemático en este ámbito, ya que el artículo 45 del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea es directamente aplicable y no hay normas de ejecución nacionales para controlarlo, como sucedería con una directiva. La propuesta de Directiva sobre medidas para facilitar el ejercicio de los derechos concedidos a los trabajadores en el marco de la libre circulación de los trabajadores, presentada por la Comisión, contiene medidas específicas para reforzar la aplicación, a nivel nacional, de los derechos conferidos por el artículo 45 del TFUE ([1]).

([1]) COM(2013) 236 de 26.4.13.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008376/13
to the Commission
Santiago Fisas Ayxela (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Quotas for home-grown players

Within the last few years the Commission has instituted infringement proceedings against Spain, Italy, and France, as it considers that quotas for home-grown players, a system used in basketball, impede the free movement of workers born in the EU.

Which other Member States have home-grown player or nationality quotas that restrict the free movement of basketball players?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(4 September 2013)

The proceedings against Spain, Italy and France were based on individual complaints, which provided information about the respective national rules. Infringement proceedings on the same issue are also ongoing against Luxembourg, as concerns amateur competitions.

National rules with quotas for home-grown players in basketball are all relatively new and are still evolving. While the Commission responds to complaints received, it does not operate a systematic monitoring process in this area as Article 45 TFEU is directly applicable and there are no national implementation rules to monitor (as would exist in the case of a directive). The Commission's proposal for a directive on measures facilitating the exercise of rights conferred on workers in the context of freedom of movement contains specific measures to strengthen the national enforcement of rights given by Article 45 TFEU. ([1])

([1]) COM(2013) 236 of 26.4.13.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008377/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(11 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Nuevas ejecuciones en Japón

La ejecución de dos condenados a muerte en Japón pone de manifiesto que con el nuevo gobierno del Partido Liberal Democrático continúa el espeluznante aumento del uso de la pena de muerte, como denuncia Amnistía Internacional. El pasado abril fueron ahorcados en Tokio dos hombres: Yoshihide Miyagi, de 56 años, y Katsuji Hamasaki, de 64. Ambos habían sido declarados culpables de asesinato por matar a tiros a miembros de una banda rival en un restaurante de la ciudad de Ichihara en 2005. Son las ejecuciones cuarta y quinta llevadas a cabo en Japón desde diciembre de 2012, cuando el Primer Ministro Shinzo Abe tomó posesión de su cargo. Las tres anteriores tuvieron lugar en febrero de 2013. En total, Japón ha ejecutado a doce personas desde marzo de 2012, cuando se reanudaron las ejecuciones tras veinte meses sin ninguna ejecución.

Diez personas fueron ahorcadas durante el mandato anterior de Shinzo Abe como Primer Ministro, de septiembre de 2006 a septiembre de 2007. Se teme que la cifra se sobrepase con el actual Ministro de Justicia, Sadakazu Tanigaki, que se ha mostrado públicamente partidario de la pena de muerte.

De la misma forma Japón goza de la fama de tener en su corredor de la muerte al condenado que más tiempo lleva esperando su ejecución. Se trata de Iwao Hakamada, que lleva 45 años esperando su ejecución sin que, a día de hoy, se haya llevado a cabo.

¿Qué opina la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante de que países con estrechas relaciones con la UE mantengan la pena de muerte como un castigo usual?

¿Cree que el hecho de no respetar derechos ni mecanismos respetados en la EU debería condicionar las negociaciones con terceros países?

¿Piensa aprovechar el Tratado de Libre Comercio con Japón para sacar a colación el tema de la pena de muerte?

Teniendo en cuenta los derechos humanos ¿cree que el caso de Iwao Hakamada es admisible?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(3 de septiembre de 2013)

La UE insta constantemente a Japón a abolir la pena de muerte, teniendo no menos en cuenta la evolución internacional hacia su abolición. La Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta realizó declaraciones públicas lamentando cada una de las cinco ejecuciones llevadas a cabo en Japón este año y solicitando una moratoria como un primer paso hacia la abolición. La delegación de la UE en Japón transmite periódicamente este mensaje al Gobierno japonés. La UE también plantea este asunto en sus consultas periódicas con Japón sobre derechos humanos. Además, la Unión ha subvencionado varios actos públicos, tales como seminarios, sobre la pena de muerte en Japón y lo seguirá haciendo.

A la Unión también le inquietan las condiciones de detención de los reclusos condenados a muerte y la calidad de la protección jurídica de los presos en detención preventiva. Puesto que la Comisión de Derechos Humanos de las Naciones Unidas ha observado que la detención prolongada en el corredor de la muerte puede equivaler a un trato cruel, inhumano y degradante, a la UE le preocupa lógicamente cualquier preso sentenciado a muerte que pase un período prolongado en espera de su ejecución, incluido Iwao Hakamada.

La Unión aplica coherentemente desde 1995 la política de introducir en los acuerdos marco políticos una cláusula que dispone que el respeto de los principios democráticos y de los derechos humanos, inspira las políticas nacionales e internacionales de ambas Partes y constituye un elemento esencial del acuerdo. En consonancia con esta política, la UE propone una cláusula similar en el acuerdo que se está negociando con Japón.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008377/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Fresh executions in Japan

The latest execution of two death row prisoners in Japan is part of a chilling escalation of use of the death penalty under the new Liberal Democrat government, as Amnesty International said at the time. In April 2013, two men were hanged: Yoshihide Miyagi, 56, and Katsuji Hamasaki, 64. Both had been convicted of murder for shooting dead rival gang members in a restaurant in the city of Ichihara in 2005. The executions are the fourth and fifth to take place in Japan since Prime Minister Shinzo Abe took office in December 2012, with three other men hanged in February 2013. In total, Japan has executed 12 people since March 2012; before then no executions had taken place for 20 months in that country.

Ten people were hanged during Shinzo Abe's previous term as Prime Minister from September 2006 to September 2007, and the fact that the current Justice Minister, Sadakazu Tanigaki, has publicly expressed his support for the death has fuelled fears that the number of executions might even be surpassed this time.

In the same vein, Japan is known for having the world's longest-serving prisoner on death row, Iwao Hakamada, who has been awaiting execution for 45 years.

What does the Vice-President/High Representative think of the fact that countries with close ties with the EU continue to apply the death penalty as a common means of punishment?

Does she believe that failure to respect the rights and systems in place in the EU should condition the outcome of negotiations with non-EU countries?

Does she intend to use the EU-Japan Free Trade Agreement to address the issue of the death penalty?

Does she consider what is happening to Iwao Hakamada to be acceptable from a human rights perspective?

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

The EU consistently urges Japan to abolish the death penalty not least in light of the international trend towards abolition. The HR/VP has made public statements deploring each of the five executions in Japan this year, and calling for a moratorium as a first step towards abolition. The EU Delegation in Japan regularly conveys this message to the Japanese government. The EU also raises this issue in its regular human rights consultations with Japan. The EU has moreover supported a number of public events, such as seminars, on the death penalty in Japan, and will continue to do so.

The EU is also concerned about the conditions of detention of death row prisoners, and the quality of legal protections for those held in pre-trial custody. Given that the UN Human Rights Committee has noted that prolonged detention on death row can amount to cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, the EU is naturally concerned about any prisoner who has spent a prolonged period under sentence of death awaiting execution, including Iwao Hakamada.

Since 1995, the EU has pursued a consistent policy of inserting in political framework agreements a clause which provides that respect for democratic principles and human rights underpins the internal and international policies of both Parties and constitutes an essential element of the agreement. In line with this policy, the EU is proposing a similar clause for the agreement under negotiation with Japan.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008378/13
an die Kommission
Heinz K. Becker (PPE) und Othmar Karas (PPE)
(11. Juli 2013)

Betrifft: Benachteiligung von Grenzgängern durch die Abschaffung der Ehepaarrente in der Schweiz seit der 10. Revision der AHV (Alters- und Hinterlassenenversicherung)

Mit der 10. AHV-Revision schaffte die Schweiz am 1.1. 1997 die Ehepaarrente ab, und die Renten werden seither separat an jeden Ehepartner ausbezahlt. Zuvor konnten die Einkommen der Eheleute während der Ehe aus einer Tätigkeit in der Schweiz für die Rentenberechnung gutgeschrieben werden, indem die Summe der Gesamtrentenbezüge jedem Ehepartner je zur Hälfte angerechnet wurde. Durch die AHV-Revision ist ein solches Renten-Splitting nunmehr an einen Schweizer Wohnort gebunden. Auch für die Anrechnung des Erziehungsgeldes gelten diese Bestimmungen, was vor allem Grenzgänger benachteiligt. Bereits 1997 haben mehrere Mitglieder des Europäischen Parlamentes der Europäischen Kommission ihre Bedenken bezüglich der AHV-Revision und deren Auswirkung auf Grenzgänger mitgeteilt (Parlamentarische Anfrage E-3400/1996). Zum damaligen Zeitpunkt verwies die Kommission jedoch darauf, dass die AHV-Revision vor dem Inkrafttreten des Personenfreizügigkeitsabkommens mit der Schweiz in Kraft getreten sei und daher die Union darauf keinen Einfluss habe. Gleichzeitig muss aber darauf hingewiesen werden, dass sich die Kommission dafür ausgesprochen hat, künftig Anliegen von Grenzgängern mehr Gehör zu schenken. Die Mitglieder des Europäischen Parlaments werden durch Bürgerfragen immer wieder auf die Problematik der finanziellen Benachteiligung von Grenzgängern verwiesen, die bei der Pensionsanrechnung durch das Schweizer System bis zu einem Drittel Verlust erfahren.

Dies widerspricht jedoch der Idee des Personenfreizügigkeitsabkommens Schweiz-EU das Arbeitnehmern eine barrierefreie Ausübung der Erwerbstätigkeit gewährleisten soll. Darüber hinaus ist eine Benachteiligung von Grenzgängern durch die AHV-Revision nicht im Sinne multilateraler Menschenrechtsverträge, welche die Schweiz unterzeichnet hat, darunter der UN-Pakt über wirtschaftliche, soziale und kulturelle Rechte, dessen Diskriminierungsverbote u. a. die Materie der Sozialversicherung beinhaltet;

— Wie bewertet die Kommission aus heutiger Sicht die aus der 10. AHV-Richtlinie resultierenden Benachteiligungen von Grenzgängern?

— Was gedenkt die Kommission zu unternehmen, um Diskriminierung aufgrund von Personenfreizügigkeit entgegenzuwirken?

Antwort von László Andor im Namen der Kommission
(4. September 2013)

Durch die 10. Revision der Alters- und Hinterbliebenenversorgung (AHV) in der Schweiz hat sich die Formel für die Berechnung der Altersrente für verheiratete Paare grundlegend geändert. Mit Blick auf die Gleichbehandlung von Frauen und Männern wurde die „Ehepaarrente“ des Ehemannes ersetzt durch ein Splitting der von beiden Ehepartnern erworbenen Rentenansprüche. Da hierfür lediglich nach Schweizer Recht erworbene Rentenansprüche berücksichtigt werden, kann die neue Art der Rentenberechnung die Rentenansprüche von Grenzgängern negativ beeinflussen, wenn die Ehepartner den Rechtsvorschriften verschiedener Mitgliedstaaten unterliegen. Dies bedeutet jedoch nicht zwangsläufig, dass eine indirekte Diskriminierung von Grenzgängern vorliegt, die aus sachlichen Gründen nicht gerechtfertigt werden kann und nicht im Verhältnis zu anderen rechtmäßigen Zielen steht.

Die 10. AHV-Revision trat am 1. Januar 1997 in Kraft, d. h. vor dem Inkrafttreten des bilateralen Personenfreizügigkeitsabkommens zwischen der Schweiz und der Europäischen Gemeinschaft und ihren Mitgliedstaaten vom 1. Juni 2002. Dieses bilaterale Abkommen berechtigt EU-Bürgerinnen und -Bürger, unter bestimmten Bedingungen in der Schweiz zu arbeiten und zu wohnen und umgekehrt; die Schweiz wird dadurch jedoch nicht zu einem Mitgliedstaat der Europäischen Union und kann folglich auch nicht vor den Gerichtshof der Europäischen Union gebracht werden.

Daher ist die Kommission der Auffassung, dass es der Schweiz grundsätzlich freisteht, ihr eigenes Rentensystem festzulegen. Die Kommission bedauert, dass es im Rahmen des bilateralen Abkommens nicht möglich war, einen besseren Schutz der Rechte von Grenzgängern zu verwirklichen, sieht jedoch keine Möglichkeit, dieses Ziel durch andere Maßnahmen zu erreichen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008378/13
to the Commission
Heinz K. Becker (PPE) and Othmar Karas (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Penalising of cross-border workers through abolition of the 'married couple's joint pension' (Ehepaarrente) in Switzerland under the 10th revision of the AHV (old-age and survivors' insurance)

Under the 10th revision of the AHV, Switzerland abolished the 'married couple's joint pension' on 1 January 1997, with the result that pensions would henceforth be paid to each partner separately. Previously, a married couple's incomes for the duration of their marriage from employment in Switzerland could be credited for the purpose of pension calculation by assigning half of the total pension benefits to each partner. Under the revision of the AHV, splitting pensions in this way is now only possible if the partners live in Switzerland. This also applies to the child allowance, which penalises cross-border workers in particular. As early as 1997, a number of MEPs expressed their concerns to the Commission about the AHV revision and its repercussions for cross-border workers (question No E-3400/1996). At the time, the Commission pointed out that, since the AHV revision had entered into force before the agreement on the free movement of persons between the EU and Switzerland came into operation, the EU had no influence over the former. It should, however, be pointed out that the Commission expressed its intention to pay greater attention in future to the concerns of cross-border workers. MEPs are constantly being contacted by citizens regarding the financial disadvantage experienced by cross-border workers who suffer losses of up to a third as a result of the Swiss pension accounting system.

This runs counter to the basic idea of the agreement on the free movement of persons between the EU and Switzerland, which should guarantee employees the opportunity to work without barriers. In addition, discrimination against cross-border workers as a result of the AHV revision is not in the spirit of multilateral human rights treaties signed by Switzerland, including the UN Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which includes social insurance in its provisions on anti-discrimination.

— Seen from the current perspective, what is the Commission's view of the discrimination against cross-border workers resulting from the 10th revision of the AHV?

— What action does the Commission intend to take in order to combat discrimination on the basis of the free movement of persons?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(4 September 2013)

The 10th revision of the old-age and survivors' pension insurance (AHV) in Switzerland has fundamentally changed the formula for calculating the old-age pension for a married couple. In order to treat men and women equally in this respect, the 'married couple's joint pension' for the husband was replaced by a splitting of pension rights acquired by both spouses. As only pension rights acquired under Swiss law are taken into account for this purpose, the new pension formula can adversely affect the pension rights of cross-border workers when both spouses have been subject to the legislation of different Member States. This, however, does not necessarily mean that it constitutes an indirect discrimination of migrant workers which cannot be justified on objective considerations and which are not proportionate to other legitimate aims pursued.

The 10th revision of the AHV entered into force as of 1 January 1997, i.e. before the entry into force of the bilateral Agreement on the Free Movement of Persons between the European Community and the Member States on 1 June 2002. This bilateral Agreement entitles Union citizens to work and reside in Switzerland and vice versa subject to certain conditions, but it does not have the effect that Switzerland became a member of the European Union and that it can be referred to the Court of Justice of the European Union.

The Commission therefore considers that Switzerland is basically free to establish its own pension scheme. It regrets that it was not possible to achieve a better protection of cross-border workers' rights under the bilateral Agreement, but it sees no possibility to achieve that goal through other means.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008379/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(11 Ιουλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Νόμος Ανδαλουσίας υπέρ της προστασίας ενοικιαστών και δανειοληπτών

Η τοπική κυβέρνηση της Ανδαλουσίας θέσπισε πρόσφατα έναν νόμο σύμφωνα με τον οποίο εμποδίζει τις τράπεζες να προχωρήσουν σε εξώσεις όσων αδυνατούν να αποπληρώσουν τα δάνεια και των οποίων το οικογενειακό μηνιαίο εισόδημα είναι κάτω των 1 600 ευρώ.

Κατά τον εκπρόσωπο του Επιτρόπου Όλι Ρεν, η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή έχει ζητήσει εξηγήσεις από την Ισπανική Κυβέρνηση θεωρώντας ότι ο νόμος αποτελεί αντικίνητρο για επενδύσεις και ότι θα δημιουργήσει προβλήματα στις τράπεζες.

Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη ότι το ΕΚ ενέκρινε πρόσφατα (Ιούνιος 2013) την έκθεση της Karima Delli σχετικά με την κοινωνική στέγαση στην ΕΕ, η οποία «σημειώνει την σε πλείονα κράτη μέλη παρατηρούμενη αύξηση του αριθμού των εξώσεων και των κατασχέσεων ιδιοκτησιών από τις τράπεζες και παροτρύνει την ανάληψη μέτρων προς αντιμετώπιση αυτών των προκλήσεων» και τονίζει ότι «οι εθνικές, περιφερειακές και τοπικές αρχές των κρατών μελών έχουν δικαίωμα και παράλληλα καθήκον να ορίζουν τη δική τους πολιτική στέγασης και να προβαίνουν στις ενέργειες που απαιτούνται για να εξασφαλίζουν υλοποίηση αυτού του θεμελιώδους δικαιώματος εκάστη εντός της αντίστοιχα δικής της αγοράς κατοικίας σύμφωνα με τις ανάγκες των κατοίκων της με σκοπό την παροχή καθολικής πρόσβασης σε αξιοπρεπή και σε προσιτή τιμή κατοικία», ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Ποιο ήταν το ακριβές αντικείμενο της παρέμβασής της στην Ισπανική Κυβέρνηση;

— Θεωρεί η Επιτροπή ότι η προστασία των τραπεζών προέχει της προστασίας των πιο κοινωνικά ευάλωτων στρωμάτων του πληθυσμού, που πλήττονται και από μια πρωτοφανή ανεργία;

— Η θέση αυτή της Επιτροπής έναντι της τοπικής κυβέρνησης της Ανδαλουσίας αποτελεί προηγούμενο και κριτήριο για όλες τις άλλες υπό κρίση και με τεράστια ανεργία χώρες της ΕΕ, οι οποίες και ενδέχεται να λάβουν παρόμοια μέτρα;

— Προτίθεται η Επιτροπή να λάβει υπόψη της τις συστάσεις του ΕΚ και η σχετική πολιτική της να κινηθεί προς την κατεύθυνση της έκθεσης του ΕΚ;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(12 Αυγούστου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή εκφράζει ανησυχία για την επισφαλή κατάσταση των πλέον ευάλωτων νοικοκυριών στην Ισπανία, που αντιμετωπίζουν προβλήματα έξωσης ή κατάσχεσης ή που απειλούνται από αυτά. Η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει ότι η ισπανική κυβέρνηση καθώς και η κυβέρνηση της Ανδαλουσίας έχουν πρόσφατα θεσπίσει νομοθεσία με σκοπό τη προστασία αυτών των πλέον ευάλωτων νοικοκυριών από τις άμεσες και υπέρογκες δυσκολίες. Χαιρετίζει τις πρωτοβουλίες αυτές, εφόσον είναι αποτελεσματικές και επιτυγχάνουν μια ρεαλιστική ισορροπία μεταξύ των επιτακτικών αναγκών προστασίας των πλέον ευάλωτων νοικοκυριών και των απαραίτητων απαιτήσεων σταθεροποίησης του χρηματοπιστωτικού τομέα στην Ισπανία.

Κατά την άποψη της Επιτροπής, αυτές οι δύο απαιτήσεις είναι εγγενώς συνδεδεμένες, επειδή η αποκατάσταση της χρηματοπιστωτικής σταθερότητας στην Ισπανία αποτελεί απαραίτητη προϋπόθεση για την επαναφορά της χώρας σε πορεία βιώσιμης ανάπτυξης και την επίτευξη βιώσιμου θετικού αντίκτυπου στις συνθήκες διαβίωσης για όλους τους ισπανούς πολίτες.

Στο πλαίσιο αυτό και με βάση τους ειδικούς στόχους και τις απαιτήσεις του εν εξελίξει προγράμματος υπέρ του χρηματοπιστωτικού τομέα της Ισπανίας, η έρευνα της Επιτροπής σχετικά με την πρόσφατη νομοθεσία της Ανδαλουσίας επεδίωξε να συγκεντρώσει πληροφορίες σχετικά με το κατά πόσον συγκεκριμένα τμήματα της νομοθεσίας της Ανδαλουσίας ενδέχεται να έχουν ακούσιες, περιττές και σημαντικές επιπτώσεις στη χρηματοπιστωτική σταθερότητα και στην ευρύτερη αγορά στέγασης στην Ισπανία.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008379/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Andalusian law to protect tenants and borrowers

The local government of Andalusia recently adopted a law under which banks cannot evict people who are unable to pay their loans, provided that their monthly income is less than EUR 1 600.

According to the spokesperson for Commissioner Olli Rehn, the European Commission has demanded an explanation from the Spanish government, because it considers that this law will act as a disincentive to investment and will cause problems for the banks.

In view of the fact that, in June 2013, the European Parliament approved the report by Karima Delli on social housing in the EU which 'notes the increase in several Member States in the number of evictions and properties seized by banks' and 'urges that measures be taken in response to these challenges' and considers that 'national, regional and local authorities in the Member States have a right, as well as a duty, to define their own housing policy and to take the steps required to ensure that this fundamental right is upheld on their respective housing markets, in accordance with the needs of their inhabitants, with the aim of providing universal access to decent, affordable housing', will the Commission say:

— What was the precise subject matter of its intervention vis-à-vis the Spanish government?

— Does it consider that protection for the banks takes precedence over protection for the socially most vulnerable groups of the population which have been hit by unprecedented levels of unemployment?

— Does this stand by the Commission towards the local government of Andalusia constitute a precedent and criterion for all other EU Member States which are in crisis and have massive unemployment to take similar measures?

— Does the Commission intend to take account of the European Parliament's recommendations and policy and act along the lines proposed in the European Parliament report?

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

The Commission is concerned by the precarious situation of some most vulnerable households in Spain, subject to or threatened by evictions or foreclosures. The Commission is aware that both the Spanish Government and the government of Andalusia have recently introduced legislation in order to shelter these most vulnerable households from some of their immediate and massive hardship. It welcomes such initiatives as far as these are effective and strike a workable balance between the imperative needs of protecting these most vulnerable households and the necessary requirements of stabilising the financial sector in Spain.

These two requirements are, in the view of the Commission, intrinsically linked, as restoring financial stability in Spain constitutes a necessary requirement for Spain to move back to a sustainable growth path and to deliver lasting positive effects on the living conditions on all Spanish citizens.

Against this background and that of the specific objectives and requirements of the ongoing financial-sector programme in favour of Spain, the inquiry of the Commission about the recent legislation of Andalucia sought information on whether some specific parts of the legislation of Andalusia would not have unintended, unnecessary and significant effects on financial stability and the wider housing market in Spain.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008380/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(11 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Dazi norvegesi a danno delle esportazioni di Asiago e Montasio

Il settore agroalimentare norvegese riceve una robusta tutela da parte dello Stato che non solo si preoccupa di sostenerlo con trasferimenti e sussidi pubblici di vario tipo, ma periodicamente introduce nuove barriere tariffarie per limitare l'ingresso di quelle merci in diretta concorrenza con la produzione agroalimentare nazionale: carne bovina e porcina, pollame e uova, salumi ma soprattutto formaggi.

Il 4 luglio 2012, con la risoluzione P7_TA(2013)0326 presentata a seguito dell'interrogazione con richiesta di risposta orale B7-0210/2013 ([1]) sull'aumento dei dazi norvegesi sui prodotti agricoli, il Parlamento europeo si è espresso duramente contro la politica commerciale della Norvegia. Negli ultimi tredici anni infatti l'esportazione di prodotti agricoli europei verso la Norvegia è aumentata del 150%: oggi ben il 70% delle importazioni agricole norvegesi proviene dall'UE.

L'aumento dei dazi sui formaggi deciso dalle autorità norvegesi nell'ottobre 2012 ed entrato in vigore il 1° gennaio 2013 ha influito sulle produzioni tipiche del Nord Est italiano, quali i formaggi Asiago e Montasio che hanno subito un aumento di 27 corone norvegesi al kg pari al 277% del prezzo di importazione. Queste misure potrebbero avere effetti di riduzione degli scambi, danneggiando i consumatori norvegesi e i produttori italiani, stante che il settore delle produzioni agroalimentari tipiche è uno dei pilastri dell'occupazione in Italia e nelle sue regioni.

Può la Commissione far sapere, per proteggere posti di lavoro e produzione del settore agroalimentare europeo:

— se ha intenzione di verificare se ai sensi dell'accordo SEE (Spazio economico europeo) i dazi sui prodotti tipici locali possono essere considerati equi e giustificati;

— se ha in animo di valutare i potenziali effetti negativi dell'aumento delle tariffe per gli esportatori e i produttori di formaggi tipici, prodotti a livello locale in Veneto e in Friuli;

— se e quali ulteriori azioni intende proporre in caso di mancanza di cooperazione con l'obiettivo del ritiro di dette misure e se può specificare per quali altri prodotti agroalimentari provenienti dall'UE la Norvegia applica dazi?

Risposta di Dacian Cioloş a nome della Commissione
(12 agosto 2013)

La Commissione ha valutato gli aumenti tariffari norvegesi in rapporto all'accordo SEE. A parere della Commissione, tali misure sono in contrasto con gli obiettivi dell'articolo 19 dell'accordo SEE e con l'ultimo accordo bilaterale contemplato dal medesimo articolo, che prevedono una progressiva liberalizzazione del mercato; le misure rientrano, tuttavia, negli impegni OMC della Norvegia.

La Commissione ha anche valutato l'effetto dell'aumento dei dazi sulle esportazioni totali di formaggio dell'UE verso la Norvegia. Si stima che l'impatto economico a breve e medio termine sarà limitato, dato che le importazioni si collocano nei contingenti storicamente esenti da dazi assegnati all'UE. Questo avviene per i principali formaggi a pasta dura interessati dall'aumento dei dazi (di tipo gouda o emmental), così come per tutti i formaggi non esenti dall'aumento dei dazi, inclusi i tipi menzionati dall'onorevole parlamentare (Asiago e Montasio). Secondo i dati dei primi cinque mesi del 2013 le esportazioni di formaggio dall'Unione europea verso la Norvegia sono aumentate del 1,5 %.

Tuttavia, si prevede che nel lungo periodo le tariffe doganali limiteranno le esportazioni dall'UE verso la Norvegia dei prodotti in questione.

La Commissione sta valutando cosa può essere fatto a livello bilaterale per contrastare questo cambiamento e ne terrà inoltre conto in altre aree delle relazioni dell'Unione con la Norvegia.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=OQ&reference=O-2013-000048&language=IT

In termini di valore commerciale, il 60 % circa dei prodotti agricoli comunitari esportati entrano in Norvegia in franchigia doganale. Informazioni dettagliate sulle concessioni applicate agli scambi di prodotti agricoli tra l'UE e la Norvegia sono reperibili negli accordi bilaterali ([2]) conclusi sulla base dell'articolo 19 dell'accordo SEE. Tutti gli altri prodotti agricoli dell'UE, che non beneficiano di completa liberalizzazione, sono soggetti a dazi al momento dell'introduzione in Norvegia.

([2]) Accordo più recente: «Accordo in forma di scambio di lettere tra l'Unione europea e il Regno di Norvegia relativo alla concessione di preferenze commerciali supplementari per i prodotti agricoli sulla base dell'articolo 19 dell'accordo sullo Spazio economico europeo», GU L 327 del 9.12.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008380/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Norwegian duties damaging exports of Asiago and Montasio cheese

The Norwegian agri-food sector receives robust protection from the State, which not only supports the sector by means of public transfers and subsidies of various kinds, but periodically introduces new trade barriers to restrict the entry of goods in direct competition with national agri-food production: beef, pork, poultry, eggs and cured meats, but above all, cheese.

On 4 July 2012, Parliament strongly criticised Norway's trade policy in resolution P7_TA(2013)0326, tabled following the question for oral answer B7-0210/2013 ([1]) on the increase in Norwegian duties on agricultural products. Over the last 13 years, the export of European agricultural products to Norway has increased by 150%: today, as much as 70% of Norwegian agricultural imports come from the EU.

The increase in duties on cheese decided by the Norwegian authorities in October 2012, which entered into force on 1 January 2013, has had an impact on the typical produce of north-east Italy, such as Asiago and Montasio cheese, the price for which has increased by NOK 27 per kilo, equal to 277% of the import price. These measures could result in less trade, to the detriment of Norwegian consumers and Italian producers, given that the typical agri-food production sector is one of the pillars of employment in Italy and its regions.

Can the Commission state, in order to safeguard jobs and production in the European agri-food sector:

— if it intends to check whether duties on typical local products may be considered fair and justified, pursuant to the European Economic Area (EEA) Agreement;

— whether it intends to evaluate the potential negative effects of the increase in tariffs on exporters and producers of typical cheeses, produced locally in the Veneto and Friuli regions;

— whether it plans to propose any further action, and what this may be, in the event of a lack of cooperation, with the aim of having these measures withdrawn, and whether it can specify which other agri-food products originating in the EU are subject to Norwegian duties?

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

The Commission has evaluated the Norvegian tariff increases in the context of the EEA Agreement. In the Commission's view the measures are contrary to the objectives of Article. 19 of the EEA Agreeement and the latest bilateral Agreement under Article 19 of the EEA Agreement, which both foresee progressive trade liberalisation; however, they are within Norway's WTO commitments.

The Commission has also assessed the effect of the duty increases on overall EU cheese exports to Norway. The estimate is that in the short to medium term the economic impact will be limited, as imports can be accomodated under historical duty free quotas attributed to the EU. This is the case for the main hard cheeses affected by the duty increase (gouda or emmethal type) as well as all cheeses which are not exempted from the duty increases, incl. the types mentioned by the Honourable MEP (Asiago and Montasio). According to figures for the first 5 months of 2013 exports of cheese from EU to Norway have increased by 1.5%.

However, in the longer term the tariffs are expected to put a limit to the growth of EU exports to Norway for the products concerned.

The Commisison is considering what can be done bilaterally to counter this policy change and will also take it into account in other areas of our relations with Norway.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=OQ&reference=O-2013-000048&language=EN

In terms of trade value, around 60% of exported EU agricultural products enter Norway duty free. Details on the concessions applying for trade in agricultural products between EU and Norway can be found from the bilateral agreements ([2]) reached on the basis of Article 19 of the EEA Agreement. All other EU agricultural products, for which full liberalisation is not granted, are subject to duties upon entry to Norway.

([2]) Most recent agreement: 'Agreement in the form of an Exchange of Letters between the European Union and the Kingdom of Norway concerning additional trade preferences in agricultural products reached on the basis of Article 19 of the Agreement on the European Economic Area', OJ L 327, 9.12.2011.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008382/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(11 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Sicurezza alimentare in Cina — Nuovi casi di latte in polvere alterato

Oltre la metà delle industrie produttrici di latte in polvere, in Cina, è stata chiusa o sottoposta a sequestro perché non osservava gli standard minimi di sicurezza alimentare.

Considerando che il primo caso segnalato si è registrato nella provincia orientale di Anhui, dove un'industria produttrice di latte in polvere immetteva sul mercato latte contenente solo lo 0,16 % delle proteine necessarie allo sviluppo del bambino, contro il 18 % generalmente presente in analoghe quantità;

osservando poi come nel 2008 si sia avuta anche la vicenda del latte alla melanina, che ha provocato il decesso di sei bambini e la malattia di altri 300 000, mentre nel 2012 si è scoperto che un'azienda casearia dell'Hunan produceva latte con additivi cancerogeni;

sottolineando che, data la situazione, in Cina si diffonde sempre più il contrabbando del latte proveniente dall'estero e che questo alimenta un mercato internazionale illegale che frutta almeno 100 milioni di yuan ogni anno;

considerando infine l'articolo 24 della Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'Unione, soprattutto la prima parte del primo comma per il quale «I bambini hanno diritto alla protezione e alle cure necessarie per il loro benessere» e l'articolo 35 in tema di protezione della salute, in particolare laddove si specifica che «Ogni individuo ha il diritto di accedere alla prevenzione sanitaria e di ottenere cure mediche alle condizioni stabilite dalle legislazioni e prassi nazionali»,

si chiede alla Commissione:

— È in possesso di dati recenti relativi alle caratteristiche del latte in polvere in Cina?

— Come intende agire al fine di aumentare il livello di sicurezza del latte in polvere prodotto e commercializzato all'interno dell'Unione europea?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(2 settembre 2013)

— Le importazioni di latte e di prodotti lattiero-caseari dalla Cina nell'UE non sono autorizzate, pertanto la Commissione non dispone di informazioni aggiornate sulla natura del latte in polvere in Cina.

— Il latte in polvere prodotto e venduto nell'UE deve rispettare regole e controlli unionali di sicurezza alimentare collaudati, rigorosi ed esaustivi. Non si registrano problematiche in tema di sicurezza alimentare per quanto concerne il latte in polvere prodotto e venduto nell'UE e pertanto un ulteriore miglioramento della sua sicurezza non figura sull'agenda della Commissione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008382/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Food safety in China: new cases of contaminated milk powder

Over half the companies producing milk powder in China have been closed down or seized because they did not observe minimum food safety standards.

The first case to come to light was recorded in the eastern province of Anhui, where a milk-powder producer was selling milk containing just 0.16% of the protein needed for infant development, compared with 18% generally present in similar quantities.

Then in 2008, there was the case of melamine-contaminated milk, which killed six children and made another 300 000 ill, while in 2012 it was revealed that a dairy company in Hunan was producing milk containing carcinogenic additives.

Given the situation in China, milk smuggled from abroad is becoming more widespread and this is feeding an illegal international market that is worth at least CNY 100 million every year.

Finally, Article 24 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, in particular the first part of the first paragraph, states 'Children shall have the right to such protection and care as is necessary for their well-being' and Article 35 relating to healthcare, in particular, specifies 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'.

— Does the Commission have up-to-date information about the nature of milk powder in China?

— What will it do to improve the safety of milk powder produced and sold in the EU?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(2 September 2013)

— Imports of milk and dairy products from China into the EU are not authorised, therefore the Commission has no up-to-date information about the nature of milk powder in China.

— Milk powder produced and sold in the EU must respect well established, strict and comprehensive EU rules and controls as regards food safety. There are no food safety issues regarding milk powder produced and sold in the EU and therefore the additional improvement of its safety is not in the agenda of the Commission.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008383/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(11 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Miglioramento del livello di istruzione scolastica — Il caso indiano

Da molti anni l'istruzione dei nuovi tecnici informatici a Mumbai è resa possibile dalla «S. Angelo's Professional Education», una società informatica attiva nell'offrire corsi e borse di studio agli allievi che vogliano intraprendere una carriera professionale in questo settore. L'istituto ha finora aiutato circa 300 000 studenti a diplomarsi e a entrare nel mondo del lavoro.

Considerando che, quando l'imprenditore ha dato avvio al progetto, gli studi nel settore dell'informatica rappresentavano un lusso cui pochi giovani potevano accedere;

osservando altresì l'articolo 13 del Patto internazionale sui diritti economici, sociali e culturali, in particolare il primo comma nella parte in cui sottolinea che «l'istruzione deve mirare al pieno sviluppo della personalità umana e del senso della sua dignità e rafforzare il rispetto per i diritti dell'uomo e le libertà fondamentali» e il secondo comma alle lettere c) ed e) che recitano rispettivamente «l'istruzione superiore deve essere resa accessibile a tutti su un piano d'uguaglianza, in base alle attitudini di ciascuno, con ogni mezzo a ciò idoneo, ed in particolare mediante l'instaurazione progressiva dell'istruzione gratuita» e ancora «(...) deve perseguirsi attivamente lo sviluppo di un sistema di scuole di ogni grado, stabilirsi un adeguato sistema di borse di studio (...)»;

evidenziando infine la portata dell'articolo 26 della Dichiarazione universale dei diritti dell'uomo, soprattutto nella parte in cui afferma che «L'istruzione tecnica e professionale deve essere messa alla portata di tutti e l'istruzione superiore deve essere egualmente accessibile a tutti sulla base del merito»,

può dire la Commissione se e come intende sostenere i progetti di miglioramento e diffusione dell'istruzione a livello di Stati membri e di cooperazione con i Paesi emergenti?

Risposta di Androulla Vassiliou a nome della Commissione
(28 agosto 2013)

La Commissione sostiene da lungo tempo progetti per migliorare l'istruzione nell'UE, più di recente attraverso il programma di apprendimento permanente. Dal 2014 il sostegno sarà erogato per il tramite di *Erasmus+* (http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus-for-all). La Commissione e gli Stati membri cooperano anche sulla base del quadro strategico «ET 2020». ([1])

L'attuale programma Erasmus Mundus interessa i paesi terzi, con capitoli specifici per i paesi emergenti. Sono in corso programmi di *capacity building* come il programma ALFA (America latina), Tempus (paesi in via di adesione e paesi oggetto della politica di vicinato) o Edulink (paesi ACP). Altri strumenti vengono usati per condurre il dialogo politico con i paesi emergenti. Ad esempio, in India, una riunione di alti funzionari ha esaminato gli aspetti dell'assicurazione qualità e degli strumenti di trasparenza prendendo le mosse dal sostegno fornito per l'attuazione dei programmi nazionali finalizzati all'istruzione elementare universale e all'accesso a un'istruzione secondaria di qualità. Con la Cina la cooperazione si sta espandendo grazie alla costituzione di una piattaforma multidimensionale nell'ambito dell'istruzione superiore. Uno studio congiunto è stato condotto con il Brasile mentre si è potenziata la cooperazione con il Sudafrica.

Erasmus+ integrerà e rafforzerà i programmi internazionali in tema di mobilità e cooperazione a livello dell'UE. Esso sosterrà la mobilità bidirezionale del personale delle istituzioni d'istruzione e degli studenti attraverso la mobilità dei crediti e le lauree congiunte. Esso ammodernerà i curricoli, la governance e il funzionamento dell'istruzione superiore oltre a rafforzare i legami con il contesto societale ed economico grazie a partenariati di *capacity building*. Il dialogo politico contribuirà alla modernizzazione e all'internazionalizzazione dell'istruzione superiore.

([1]) GU C 119 del 28.5.2009, pag. 2.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008383/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Improving the level of school education — the case of India

For many years, new IT engineers in Mumbai have been trained thanks to St Angelo's Professional Education, an IT company that offers courses and scholarships to pupils who wish to pursue a career in that sector. To date the institute has helped some 300 000 students become qualified and enter the world of work.

When the company started the project, studying IT was a luxury that few young people had access to.

Article 13(1) of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights lays down that 'education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity, and shall strengthen the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms' and subparagraphs c) and e) of Article 13(2) lay down, respectively, that 'higher education shall be made equally accessible to all, on the basis of capacity, by every appropriate means, and in particular by the progressive introduction of free education' and '[...] the development of a system of schools at all levels shall be actively pursued, an adequate fellowship system shall be established […]'.

Lastly, Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights lays down that 'Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.'

Does the Commission plan to support projects to improve and promote education in the Member States and cooperation projects with emerging countries, and if so, how?

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

The European Commission has long been supporting projects to improve education in the EU, most recently through the Lifelong Learning Programme. From 2014, support will be provided through *Erasmus+* (http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus-for-all). The Commission and the Member States also cooperate on the basis of the 'ET 2020' strategic framework. ([1])

The current Erasmus Mundus programme focuses on third countries, with specific 'windows' for emerging countries. Capacity building programmes are in place, such as ALFA (Latin America), Tempus (acceding and neighbouring countries), or Edulink (ACP). Other tools are used for policy dialogue with emerging countries. For instance, in India, a senior officials meeting looked into aspects of quality assurance and transparency tools building on the support provided for the implementation of national programmes for universal elementary education and access to quality secondary education. With China, cooperation is expanding via the establishment of a multi-dimensional platform in higher education. A joint study was undertaken with Brazil and cooperation has been enhanced with South Africa.

Erasmus+ will integrate and reinforce international mobility and cooperation programmes at EU level. It will support two-way mobility for staff and students through credit mobility and joint degrees. It will modernise curriculum, governance and functioning of higher education as well as strengthen links with the societal and economic environment through capacity building partnerships. Policy dialogue will contribute to the modernisation and the internationalisation of higher education.

([1]) OJ C 119, 28.5.2009, p. 2.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008384/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(11 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Pressioni sulla comunità cattolica indonesiana da parte della maggioranza musulmana

È notizia di inizio luglio che centinaia di manifestanti islamici sono scesi in piazza a Jakarta contro la costruzione di una chiesa cattolica nella provincia indonesiana di Giava Occidentale.

L'iter burocratico per ottenere i permessi di costruzione ha avuto inizio nel 2003 e tutti gli obblighi stabiliti dalla legge indonesiana risultano essere stati adempiuti alla data del 17 dicembre 2012, compreso l'obbligo di ottenere il nulla osta all'edificazione da parte di un certo numero di residenti locali e del gruppo interreligioso di riferimento.

Negli ultimi trent'anni, diversi gruppi estremistici hanno spesso accusato la minoranza cristiana di compiere opera di proselitismo e di conversione e tali proteste, organizzate nei pressi del sito di edificazione delle chiese da islamici spesso non residenti, sono volte a ottenere la revoca dei permessi di costruzione.

Occorre inoltre sottolineare che il premio per la libertà religiosa è stato recentemente assegnato al presidente Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono e che la risoluzione P7_TA(2011)0021 del 20 gennaio 2011 sulla situazione dei cristiani nel contesto della libertà religiosa «sollecita le autorità degli Stati che registrano un numero allarmante di attacchi contro comunità religiose ad assumersi le loro responsabilità garantendo a tutte le confessioni religiose lo svolgimento normale e pubblico delle loro pratiche».

Alla luce di quanto sopra può la Commissione far sapere:

— se sia a conoscenza della situazione della comunità cattolica in Indonesia e

— come intenda agire al fine di promuovere la libertà confessionale nel paese?

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

La delegazione dell'UE a Giacarta sta seguendo da vicino la situazione delle minoranze religiose, inclusa quella cristiana, in Indonesia.

Il Consiglio ha recentemente adottato gli orientamenti dell'UE sulla promozione e la tutela della libertà di religione e di credo, compresi i principi di azione fondamentali a cui l'UE potrebbe fare riferimento o che potrebbe impiegare nei contatti con i paesi terzi. Il tema della libertà di espressione e di credo sarà trattato anche in occasione dell'imminente dialogo sui diritti umani con l'Indonesia.

Lo strumento europeo per la democrazia e i diritti umani (EIDHR) contribuisce alla promozione di tale libertà in Indonesia. Le iniziative attualmente in corso mirano, tra l'altro, a promuovere la tolleranza e il dialogo interreligioso, oltre che a rafforzare la capacità delle minoranze religiose e dei difensori dei diritti umani di tutelare i propri diritti e di monitorare e documentare le violazioni, al fine di migliorare l'assunzione di responsabilità. Altre attività condotte nel quadro dell'EIDHR intendono migliorare la comprensione dei diritti dell'uomo da parte dei giudici, al fine di incentivare l'applicazione delle norme in materia di diritti umani nell'emanazione delle sentenze per le cause che riguardano la libertà religiosa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008384/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Pressure on the Indonesian Catholic community by the Muslim majority

At the beginning of July it was reported that hundreds of Muslim demonstrators had taken to the streets in Jakarta to protest against the construction of a Catholic church in the Indonesian province of West Java.

The bureaucratic process to obtain building permits began in 2003, and all the requirements laid down by Indonesian law were met by 17 December 2012, including the obligation to obtain construction approval from a certain number of local residents and the interreligious reference group.

Over the last 30 years, various extremist groups have often accused the Christian minority of proselytising and converting individuals, and these protests, organised close to church building sites by Muslims who are often not local residents, seek to have the building permits revoked.

Moreover, it should be stressed that an award for religious freedom was recently bestowed on President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, and that resolution P7_TA(2011)0021 of 20 January 2011 on the situation of Christians in the context of freedom of religion 'urges the authorities of states with alarmingly high levels of attacks against religious denominations to take responsibility in ensuring normal and public religious practices for all religious denominations'.

In view of the above, can the Commission state:

— whether it is aware of the situation of the Catholic community in Indonesia, and

— what it plans to do to promote religious freedom in the country?

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

The EU Delegation in Jakarta is following closely the situation of religious minorities, including Christains, in Indonesia.

The Council has recently adopted EU Guidelines on the promotion and protection of freedom of religion or belief including basic principles of action the EU may invoke or use in contacts with third countries. Freedom of expression or belief will also be a topic at the forthcoming EU-Indonesia Human Rights Dialogue.

In addition, the promotion of freedom of expression or belief in Indonesia is also being supported through the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR). Initiatives currently ongoing aim, among others, at promoting tolerance and interfaith dialogue as well as at strenghtening the capacity of religious minorities and human rights defenders to protect their rights and to monitor and document human rights violations, to improve accountabilty. Other activities under EIDHR also aim at enhancing human rights understanding of judges to encourage application of human rights standards in the adjudications of cases related to religious freedom.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008385/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(11 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Modifiche legislative ispirate alla sharia: il caso degli alcolici a Jakarta

La Corte suprema di Jakarta ha recentemente annullato il decreto presidenziale 3/1997 che autorizzava la distribuzione di bevande alcoliche sul territorio nazionale.

I membri del Fronte di difesa islamico (Fpi) stabiliscono da tempo regole ispirate alla legge musulmana sul territorio di propria competenza e queste regole non hanno nulla a che fare con la normativa ufficiale.

Gli appartenenti a questo stesso gruppo inoltre hanno più volte attuato, anche in passato, assalti contro negozi e chioschi che vendono alcolici.

Si sottolinea infine come il governo di Jakarta, pur riconoscendo formalmente le libertà fondamentali, stia diventando sempre più spesso autore di repressioni contro le minoranze, arrivando talvolta anche a proibire alle donne di indossare jeans e minigonne e istituendo una polizia morale attiva nel pattugliamento dei vari quartieri.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione riferire:

— se è a conoscenza delle ultime pronunce giudiziali e delle recenti modifiche legislative avutesi nel paese;

— se intende dare avvio a un tavolo di lavoro con Jakarta per tutelare i turisti dell'UE in viaggio ogni anno nella nazione indonesiana?

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

Il Fronte di difesa islamico (FPI) non controlla il territorio in Indonesia. La delegazione dell'UE a Giacarta è a conoscenza dell'applicazione della sharia ad Aceh e di regole ispirate alla legge islamica in taluni distretti, ma non da parte del governo di Giacarta.

La tutela dei turisti dell'UE è essenzialmente una questione consolare e compete ai singoli Stati membri interessati.

In linea generale, la tutela della libertà di espressione e di credo è un tema ricorrente nel dialogo sui diritti umani tra UE e Indonesia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008385/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Changes to the law based on Sharia: alcohol in Jakarta

The Supreme Court of Jakarta recently annulled Presidential Decree No 3/1997 which authorised the distribution of alcoholic drinks in the country.

For some time, members of the Islamic Defenders' Front (FPI) have been establishing rules based on Islamic law in their territory, and these rules have nothing to do with official regulations.

Furthermore, members of this group have carried out several attacks, including in the past, against shops and kiosks that sell alcohol.

Lastly, I would stress that the Jakarta Government, while officially recognising fundamental freedoms, is increasingly responsible for acts of repression against minorities, sometimes going so far as to ban women from wearing jeans and miniskirts, and to establish a 'morality police' which patrols the various districts.

In view of the above, can the Commission state:

— whether it is aware of the latest court rulings and the recent changes to the law that have occurred in the country;

— whether it intends to set up a working table with Jakarta to protect EU tourists who travel to Indonesia each year?

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

The Islamic Defenders' Front (FPI) does not control territory in Indonesia. The EU Delegation in Jakarta is aware of issues over the implementation of Sharia law in Aceh as well as Sharia inspired regulations in certain districts but not by the Government of Jakarta.

The protection of EU tourists is primarily a consular issue and the responsibility of the individual Member States concerned.

In general terms, protection of freedom of expression or belief is a regular topic at the EU-Indonesia Human Rights Dialogue.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008386/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(11 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Problema della fame e della malnutrizione in India

Secondo alcune stime del governo indiano, nonostante la legge che promette di eliminare il problema della fame nel paese — il cosiddetto *Food Security Bill* — circa il 43 % dei bambini nati sul territorio nazionale soffre di malnutrizione cronica. Il decreto appena citato mira a riconoscere il diritto a nutrirsi quale diritto legale di ogni individuo, e comporterebbe la distribuzione obbligatoria a ciascun indigente di 5 kg. di cereali al mese. La maggior parte dei cittadini indiani li otterrebbe a prezzo calmierato, mentre i senzatetto, i malati gravi, le donne incinte e i bambini di età compresa tra i 6 mesi e i 14 anni potrebbero accedervi gratuitamente.

Si sottolinea come il progetto di legge rischi di sfumare a causa dei suoi costi, giudicati troppo alti — 22 miliardi di euro nel bilancio di un Paese che mira a ridurre il proprio deficit.

Si evidenzia inoltre che il principale ostacolo alla realizzazione del *Food Security Bill* è rappresentato, prima ancora che dai costi, dalla corruzione di una parte rilevante dei pubblici funzionari i quali, durante la fase preparatoria all'attuazione della legge, hanno ceduto ai negozianti circa il 35-55 % delle derrate alimentari affinché le rivendessero.

Si rileva infine che il *Global Hunger Index* (indice globale della fame) dell'International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI, Istituto internazionale di ricerca sulle politiche alimentari) conferma l'India al 15° posto nella classifica delle nazioni in cui la malnutrizione ha raggiunto i livelli più allarmanti;

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione riferire:

— quali azioni sta attualmente svolgendo per aiutare l'innalzamento degli standard di vita nei paesi colpiti dalla fame e dalla malnutrizione;

— se ha provveduto a stabilire contatti significativi con l'India per discutere del tema relativo al diritto legale all'alimentazione e del miglioramento dei livelli di benessere della popolazione?

Risposta di Andris Piebalgs a nome della Commissione
(21 agosto 2013)

La Commissione ha adottato una serie di provvedimenti per essere in primo piano nella lotta alla malnutrizione a livello mondiale. L'anno scorso si è impegnata a sostenere i paesi interessati dal problema per contribuire a ridurre entro il 2025 di almeno 7 milioni il numero di bambini rachitici al di sotto dei 5 anni. A questo impegno ha fatto seguito l'annuncio, durante l'evento del G8 «Nutrition for Growth», di uno stanziamento di 3,5 miliardi di euro nell'ambito del quadro finanziario pluriennale 2014-2020. Nel maggio 2013 la Commissione ha adottato una comunicazione sulla nutrizione ([1]).

Per quanto riguarda l'India, l'UE non ha avviato alcuna cooperazione in materia di sicurezza alimentare, in quanto la Commissione ha concordato con il governo indiano altre priorità per la cooperazione tra UE e India. Tuttavia, le questioni alimentari e nutrizionali sono spesso affrontate nel contesto dei programmi su linee di bilancio tematiche.

Nel periodo 2007-2013 la Commissione ha erogato un considerevole aiuto finanziario a favore del governo indiano nei settori dell'istruzione e della sanità. Il tema dell'alimentazione è stato oggetto costante di dibattito nell'ambito delle missioni di controllo congiunte, dal momento che un'alimentazione adeguata ha una forte incidenza sia sull'istruzione che sulla salute.

La Commissione attualmente sostiene 10 progetti della società civile rivolti al problema della sicurezza alimentare a livello di famiglie e di comunità, progetti incentrati soprattutto sui sistemi di produzione agricola e volti a sostenere gli agricoltori indigenti ed emarginati delle terre aride. Ulteriori progetti incentrati sulla sicurezza alimentare sono stati finanziati nell'ambito del programma EIDHR. Combattere o prevenire la malnutrizione rientra tra le priorità della Commissione nell'assistenza umanitaria a seguito di disastri in India.

([1]) COM(2013)141.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008386/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Problem of hunger and malnutrition in India

According to Indian Government estimates, despite the law that promises to make India's starvation problem history, the Food Security Bill, around 43% of children born in the country are chronically malnourished. The aforementioned law aims to recognise the right to food as a legal right of every individual, and would make it compulsory for every citizen to be given 5 kg of grain every month. Most Indians would be given the grain at a subsidised price, while the homeless, the seriously sick, pregnant women and children between the ages of 6 months and 14 years would be given it free of charge.

The draft law is at risk of coming to nothing because of the cost — EUR 22 billion out of the budget of a country that is aiming to reduce its deficit — which is considered too high.

Even more important than the cost issue, the main obstacle to the Food Security Bill going ahead is the corruption of a significant number of public officials who, during the preliminary phase of implementing the law, sold shopkeepers around 35-55% of the foodstuffs so they could sell them on.

Lastly, according to the International Food Policy Research Institute's Global Hunger Index, India is ranked 15th among nations in which malnutrition has reached the most alarming levels.

— What action is the Commission currently taking to help raise living standards in countries affected by hunger and malnutrition?

— Has it had meaningful exchanges with India to discuss the issue of the legal right to food and improvement of public welfare levels?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(21 August 2013)

The Commission has taken a number of steps to place itself at the forefront of global efforts to reduce undernutrition. The Commission pledged last year to contribute to support countries to reduce by at least 7 million, the number of stunted children under the age of 5 by 2025. This pledge has been coupled with the announcement, during the 'Nutrition for Growth' G8 event, to allocate EUR 3.5 billion, under the 2014-2020 MFF. In May 2013, the Commission adopted a communication on Nutrition ([1]).

As regards India, the EU does not have any cooperation based on food security, since the Commission has agreed with the Government of India other priorities for the EU-India cooperation. However, in the context of the thematic budget line programmes, food and nutrition issues are often addressed.

It may be recalled that, over the 2007-2013 period, the Commission has provided substantial financial support to the Government of India in the education and health sectors. As part of the Joint Review Missions, the issue of nutrition has been regularly discussed because appropriate nutrition critically impacts both education and health.

The Commission currently supports 10 civil society projects which directly address household and community level food security, primarily focusing on agriculture production systems supporting marginalized, poor farmers in dry land areas. Other projects funded under the EIDHR programme have been focusing on food security. The Commission also includes measures to address or prevent malnutrition among its priorities when providing humanitarian assistance after disasters in India.

([1]) COM(2013) 141.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008388/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(11 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Impiego di condannati ai lavori forzati in distretti industriali nord-coreani. Il caso di Kaesong

All'inizio del mese di luglio è stata diffusa la notizia che il governo nord-coreano permetterà agli industriali della Corea del Sud di visitare il complesso produttivo comune di Kaesong.

Considerando che Kaesong, pur trovandosi nel territorio della Corea del Nord, in origine doveva offrire lavoro agli operai provenienti dalla Corea del Sud — in ragione degli accordi bilaterali firmati con questo Paese — ma che la struttura, dopo varie tensioni politiche, è stata chiusa lo scorso 3 aprile per volontà di Pyongyang;

evidenziando inoltre come l'economia nord-coreana, dedita in gran parte al programma nucleare messo al bando dalla comunità internazionale, stia attraversando difficoltà anche a causa dell'embargo stabilito dalle Nazioni Unite e per via della politica monetaria del defunto leader Kim Jong-Li;

sottolineando infine come numerose fonti evidenzino la presenza di prigionieri di coscienza nei campi di lavoro nord-coreani, anche nel complesso industriale di Kaesong, e che, secondo il vicedirettore dell'Alleanza per i diritti umani dei nord-coreani Johanna Hosaniak, questi ultimi sarebbero costretti ai lavori forzati al fine di produrre merci per il mercato cinese — soprattutto cosmetici;

Si chiede alla Commissione:

— se sia a conoscenza della situazione a Kaesong e in altri distretti simili;

— quali misure intenda intraprendere al fine di evitare l'entrata nel mercato europeo di merci prodotte in condizioni di schiavitù dai condannati dell'Estremo Oriente.

Risposta di Karel De Gucht a nome della Commissione
(18 settembre 2013)

1. La Commissione è a conoscenza della situazione attuale nel complesso Kaesong. Tale parco industriale aveva svolto in precedenza un ruolo importante a promozione della cooperazione pacifica tra la Corea del Nord e la Corea del Sud e pertanto la Commissione è dispiaciuta che, a partire da aprile, sia stata sospesa la produzione sul sito. La Commissione plaude al fatto che i due paesi abbiano recentemente concordato le condizioni per far ripartire il lavoro nel suddetto complesso e l'UE intrattiene regolarmente consultazioni con la Corea del Sud sugli ultimi aggiornamenti della situazione.

2. La Commissione è estremamente preoccupata per l'esistenza dei campi di lavoro e in particolare per le gravi violazioni dei diritti civili, politici, economici, sociali e culturali che si verificano nella Corea del Nord. La Commissione condanna a chiare lettere la situazione attuale ed reagisce di conseguenza. Essa ha espresso le proprie profonde preoccupazioni ai rappresentanti della Corea del Nord ogni volta che se ne è presentata l'occasione. Inoltre, l'UE ha recentemente co-patrocinato la costituzione di una commissione di indagine dell'ONU sulla Corea del Nord. La Commissione ha anche costituito un proprio gruppo inter-servizi sul lavoro forzato dei detenuti, con il compito di identificare e analizzare l'entità del problema e di modulare di conseguenza la risposta unionale. Per ulteriori informazioni nel merito la Commissione rinvia alla propria risposta all'interrogazione scritta E0002019/2013 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008388/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Use of hard-labour convicts in North Korean industrial regions: the case of Kaesong

At the start of July, the North Korean Government announced that it would allow companies from South Korea to visit the Kaesong Industrial Park.

Even though Kaesong is in North Korea, it was originally intended to provide jobs for workers from South Korea, based on bilateral agreements between the two countries. However, after increasing political tension, the facility was closed on 3 April this year by Pyongyang.

The North Korean economy, which is largely based on a nuclear programme shunned by the international community, is experiencing difficulties due in part to the embargo imposed by the United Nations and the monetary policy of its late leader Kim Jong-il.

Finally, several sources reveal the presence of prisoners of conscience in North Korean labour camps, including within the Kaesong Industrial Park, and according to Joanna Hosaniak, Deputy Director General of the Citizens' Alliance for North Korean Human Rights, these prisoners are being forced to produce goods for the Chinese market, especially cosmetics.

— Is the Commission aware of the situation in Kaesong and in other industrial regions?

— What measures will it take to prevent goods produced by convicts under slave-labour conditions in the Far East from entering the EU?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(18 September 2013)

1. The Commission is well aware of the present situation in the Kaesong complex. The industrial park has previously played an important role in promoting peaceful cooperation between North and South Korea, and therefore the Commission regrets that operations on the site have been suspended since April. .The Commission welcomes that the two countries have recently agreed on conditions for re-starting operations at the complex and the EU regularly holds consultations with South Korea on the latest situation.

2. The Commission is very concerned by the issue of labour camps, and indeed by the severe violations of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights in North Korea. The Commission unequivocally condemns the present situation and has responded accordingly. It expresses its deep concerns to North Korean representatives at every possible opportunity. In addition, the EU recently co-sponsored the establishing of a UN Commission of Inquiry on North Korea. The Commission has also established its own Inter Service Group on forced prison labour, tasked with identifying and analysing the scope of the issue and reviewing the EU response accordingly. For more information on this the Commission refers to its answer to Written Question E0002019/2013 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008390/13
alla Commissione
Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(11 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Attività di spionaggio dei servizi di sicurezza degli Stati Uniti d'America e ripercussioni sulla politica commerciale dell'Unione europea

Come messo in luce recentemente dalle rivelazioni apparse sulla stampa internazionale, l'attività di raccolta dati effettuata dai servizi di sicurezza americani, nota come PRISM, implica l'esistenza di un sistema di spionaggio in grado di mettere a repentaglio la sovranità dell'Unione europea e la salvaguardia degli interessi dei suoi cittadini. In particolare vi sono serie perplessità in merito all'utilizzo, da parte del governo statunitense, di una notevole mole di informazioni riservate e indebitamente sottratte. Queste ultime potrebbero essere utilizzate anche a fini diversi da quello di garantire la sicurezza nazionale degli Stati Uniti d'America previsto dal «Protect America Act», ossia la base giuridica del programma PRISM. L'utilizzo improprio di tali dati potrebbe quindi comportare pratiche di spionaggio industriale, con gravi ripercussioni per il corretto funzionamento dei rapporti commerciali transatlantici e la competitività delle imprese europee.

Ciò premesso, si interroga la Commissione per sapere se:

— è in grado di fornire informazioni dettagliate in merito all'utilizzo dei dati raccolti dal governo americano attraverso il programma PRISM;

— quali provvedimenti intende attuare qualora vi siano prove dell'utilizzo delle suddette informazioni per finalità diverse da quelle sancite dal «Protect America Act»;

— intende, durante la fase di negoziazione dell'accordo di libero scambio UE-USA, porre sul tavolo delle trattative la questione dell'attività di spionaggio delle comunicazioni al fine di garantire il corretto funzionamento dello stesso e di evitare pratiche di spionaggio industriale;

— quali azioni intende proporre al fine di proteggere adeguatamente le comunicazioni telefoniche e informatiche dei cittadini europei.

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(5 settembre 2013)

La Commissione rinvia l'onorevole deputato alla propria risposta all'interrogazione scritta E-007934/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008390/13
to the Commission
Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: US security agency spying and its impact on EU trade policy

As highlighted in recent revelations in the international press, data collection activities operated by the US security agency and known as the PRISM programme imply the existence of a spying network capable of threatening EU sovereignty and the protection of its citizens' interests. In particular, there are serious concerns about the US Government using a huge amount of confidential information that has been misappropriated. Such information could be used for purposes other than ensuring US national security provided for in the 'Protect America Act', which is the legal basis for the PRISM programme. Improper use of such data could therefore result in industrial espionage with serious repercussions on the smooth operation of transatlantic trade relations and the competitiveness of European companies.

— Can the Commission provide detailed information about the use of data collected by the US Government through its PRISM programme?

— What measures will it implement if evidence emerges that such information is being used for purposes other than those laid down in the 'Protect America Act'?

— During talks on the EU-US free trade agreement, will the Commission raise the question of spying on communications at the negotiating table to ensure the proper functioning of the agreement and to avoid industrial espionage?

— What measures will it take to adequately protect EU citizens' telephone calls and e-mails?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(5 September 2013)

The Commision would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-007934/2013.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008391/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(11 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Compro oro: cittadini a rischio truffa

Il 13 maggio scorso Altroconsumo, l'associazione italiana per la tutela e difesa dei consumatori, ha lanciato un allarme: è aumentato il numero dei cittadini che, in seguito alla riduzione del potere d'acquisto e al conseguente bisogno di liquidità, si sono rivolti a operatori di acquisto di oro e ne sono stati truffati. Secondo l'indagine, la maggior parte degli operatori viene meno agli obblighi verso i clienti: non sono esposti cartelli con il prezzo di acquisto, sono utilizzate bilance sfalsate, non viene rilasciata un'adeguata ricevuta e sono fatte stime che non tengono conto delle quotazioni dell'oro in borsa. Il medesimo oggetto viene stimato diversamente non solo a seconda delle varie zone d'Italia, ma anche tra esercizi di una stessa città, con variazioni che possono raggiungere i 100 euro. La legge n. 7 del 17 gennaio 2000, che mette in atto la direttiva 98/80/CE del Consiglio, del 12 ottobre 1998, riserva l'esercizio in via professionale del commercio di oro, industriale o da investimento, alle banche e agli operatori professionali in oro e stabilisce che lo svolgimento di tale attività, per conto proprio o di terzi, deve essere preventivamente comunicato alla Banca d'Italia per ottenerne l'autorizzazione secondo le modalità previste dall'articolo 5 del provvedimento UIC del 14 luglio 2000. Ciò nonostante, su oltre 28.000 attività presenti in Italia, solo 450 sono registrate all'Albo degli operatori professionali in oro. Pur non attendendo ai requisiti imposti dalla legge e operando quindi in modo abusivo, moltissimi gestori assumono le funzioni e le competenze commerciali proprie di un operatore professionale.

Tali operatori in oro usano acquistare oggetti preziosi usati dai privati cittadini e rivenderli come rottame, anziché come oreficeria usata, direttamente a fonderie o aziende specializzate nel recupero di metalli preziosi, in modo da eludere l'imposta sul valore aggiunto prevista dal decreto legge n. 633/77, articolo 17, comma 5.

La Commissione:

— è a conoscenza di tali pratiche da parte degli esercizi di acquisto di oro?

— Ritiene utile un intervento normativo a livello dell'Unione che specifichi altri requisiti, ad esempio il divieto di pagamento in contanti o il superamento di un esame di abilitazione, al fine di regolamentare ulteriormente tali esercizi?

— Quali altre misure considera atte a tutelare i cittadini europei che individuano negli esercizi di acquisto di oro uno strumento per accedere alla liquidità di cui necessitano per far fronte alla difficile situazione economica attuale?

Risposta di Neven Mimica a nome della Commissione
(10 settembre 2013)

La Commissione non è a conoscenza delle pratiche degli operatori commerciali dediti all'acquisto d'oro in Italia.

Non è previsto alcun intervento legislativo al riguardo.

La direttiva 2005/29/CE sulle pratiche commerciali sleali ([1]) si applica unicamente alle pratiche commerciali tra imprese e consumatori, vale a dire alle pratiche «direttamente connesse alla promozione, vendita o fornitura di un prodotto ai consumatori». Ad ogni modo, la direttiva si applica ai casi in cui è possibile stabilire un collegamento tra l'acquisto del prodotto dal commerciante al consumatore e la promozione, la vendita o la fornitura di un prodotto al consumatore. È ciò che avviene, ad esempio, nel settore automobilistico, in cui è normale che gli operatori commerciali acquistino un veicolo usato dal consumatore in cambio dell'acquisto, da parte di quest'ultimo, di un veicolo nuovo. Nei casi in cui tale collegamento non possa essere stabilito, gli Stati membri sono liberi di estendere il campo di applicazione della direttiva attraverso il diritto o la giurisprudenza nazionale includendovi le transazioni tra consumatori e imprese, purché ciò sia conforme alla legislazione dell'UE ([2]).

([1]) GU L 149 dell'11.6.2005, pag. 22.
([2]) Orientamenti per l'attuazione/applicazione della direttiva 2005/29/CE relativa alle pratiche commerciali sleali, SEC(2009) 1666, cfr. sezione 1.3, pag. 9.

In particolare, in risposta a quanto suggerito dall'onorevole parlamentare, è improbabile che il problema possa essere risolto da una legislazione dell'Unione europea che vieti il pagamento in contanti da parte dei consumatori, poiché il denaro contante può essere facilmente versato su un conto ed è possibile ricorrere ad altri metodi di pagamento. La soluzione consisterebbe piuttosto in un inasprimento da parte dello Stato membro dei controlli alle imprese che si dedicano all'acquisto d'oro, in particolare laddove già esiste una normativa in materia, come sembra avvenire in Italia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008391/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Cash-for-gold shops: citizens risk being defrauded

On 13 May 2013, Altroconsumo, the Italian association for the protection and defence of consumers, sounded an alarm: there has been an increase in the number of people who, following a reduction in purchasing power and the consequent need for cash, have turned to cash-for-gold traders and have been defrauded by them. According to the investigation, most of these traders do not meet their obligations towards customers: they do not display notices of the purchase price, they use rigged scales, they do not issue adequate receipts and the valuations they provide do not take account of the price of gold on the stock market. The same item is valued differently, not only from one area of Italy to the next, but also in shops in the same city, with a price difference that may be as high as EUR 100. Law No 7 of 17 January 2000 implementing Council Directive 98/80/EC of 12 October 1998 limits professional trade in gold, for industrial or investment purposes, to banks and professional gold traders, and lays down that those exercising this activity, on their own account or for others, must notify the Bank of Italy in advance in order to obtain authorisation in accordance with the methods laid down by Article 5 of the Decision of the Italian Foreign Exchange Office (UIC) of 14 July 2000. Nevertheless, of more than 28 000 gold businesses in Italy, only 450 are registered in the register of professional gold traders. Although they do not comply with the legal requirements and therefore operate illegally, a high number of cash-for-gold traders assume the functions and business skills of a professional trader.

These gold traders purchase second-hand precious items from individuals and sell them as scrap, instead of as used articles of gold, directly to foundries or companies specialising in recovering precious metals, to avoid paying the value added tax required under Article 17(5) of Decree Law No 633/77.

— Is the Commission aware of these practices by shops that buy gold?

— Does it believe that legislative intervention at EU level — laying down other requirements such as a ban on cash payments or the obligation to pass a professional exam — would be helpful to further regulate these shops?

— What other measures does it consider appropriate to protect EU citizens who view shops that buy gold as a means to obtain the cash that they need to face the current difficult economic situation?

Answer given by Mr Mimica on behalf of the Commission
(10 September 2013)

The Commission is not aware of the practices of cash-for-gold traders in Italy.

There is no legislative intervention planned in this respect.

Directive 2005/29/EC on Unfair Commercial Practices ([1]) applies solely to business-to-consumer commercial practices, i.e. practices 'directly connected with the promotion, sale or supply of a product to consumers'. The directive would, however, apply to cases where a link can be established between the purchase of the product by the trader from a consumer and the promotion, sale or supply of a product to a consumer, such as in the car sector where it is common for traders to purchase a used vehicle in return for the consumer buying a vehicle from the trader. In relation to cases where such a link cannot be established, Member States remain free to extend the scope of the directive through national law or jurisprudence to cover consumer-to-business transactions, as long as this complies with EC law ([2]).

In particular, in response to the suggestion by the Honourable Member, it is unlikely that European Union legislation banning cash payment by consumers would solve the problem, because cash can be easily put on one's account and other means of payment may be used. The solution would be rather for the Member State to introduce stricter controls over the gold purchase business, especially where the relevant legislation exists, as seems to be the case in Italy.

([1]) OJ L 149, 11.06.2005, p. 22.
([2]) Guidance on the implementation/application of Directive 2005/29/EC on Unfair Commercial Practices, SEC(2009) 1666, see Section 1.3. p. 9.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008392/13
aan de Commissie (Vicevoorzitter / Hoge Vertegenwoordiger)
Johannes Cornelis van Baalen (ALDE)
(11 juli 2013)

Betreft: VP/HR — Deelname van Sam Rainsy aan verkiezingen in Cambodja

Op 28 juli vinden er verkiezingen plaats in Cambodja. De Verenigde Naties, de Europese Unie en de Verenigde Staten hebben meerdere malen aangedrongen op eerlijke en vrije verkiezingen in Cambodja. Een van de voorwaarden is dat oppositieleider Sam Rainsy als kandidaat kan deelnemen aan de verkiezingen. Dit is echter niet het geval: Rainsy is beroofd van zijn politieke en burgerlijke rechten, hij verblijft momenteel in ballingschap en hij riskeert een gevangenisstraf indien hij terugkeert naar Cambodja. Ondanks de tegenwerking van de Cambodjaanse autoriteiten, is Rainsy van plan om terug te keren naar Cambodja en zich verkiesbaar te stellen.

1. Wat vindt de hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter van het besluit van Sam Rainsy om terug te keren naar Cambodja en deel te nemen aan de verkiezingen, ondanks de mogelijke persoonlijke consequenties?

2. Vindt de hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter dat de Europese Unie, de Verenigde Naties en de Verenigde Staten zich krachtig moeten inzetten om vrije en eerlijke verkiezingen af te dwingen, inclusief de deelname van Sam Rainsy?

3. Wat gaat de hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter doen om de veiligheid van Sam Rainsy te garanderen indien hij terugkeert naar Cambodja?

4. Welke acties gaat de hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter ondernemen om te zorgen dat Sam Rainsy kan deelnemen aan de verkiezingen?

5. Welke sancties stelt de hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter in het vooruitzicht indien de Cambodjaanse autoriteiten Sam Rainsy niet onbelemmerd laten deelnemen aan de verkiezingen op 28 juli?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(2 september 2013)

Op het moment dat dit antwoord wordt opgesteld, is Sam Rainsy na een koninklijk pardon veilig teruggekeerd naar Cambodja. Hij heeft campagne kunnen voeren voor de algemene verkiezingen van 28 juli, hoewel hij niet op de kieslijst was geregistreerd. Zijn partij heeft de uitslag van de verkiezingen verworpen en heeft opgeroepen tot een onderzoek naar vermeende fraude.

De woordvoerder van de hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter heeft een verklaring afgegeven waarin ertoe wordt opgeroepen alle bij de nationale kiescommissie en de gevestigde justitiële organen ingediende betwistingen snel en eerlijk te behandelen.

De EU volgt de situatie in het land nauwlettend. De EU-delegatie in Phnom Penh heeft regelmatig contact met zowel oppositieleiders als met vertegenwoordigers van de regering om ervoor te zorgen dat geschillen op democratische en vreedzame wijze worden opgelost.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008392/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Johannes Cornelis van Baalen (ALDE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Candidature of Sam Rainsy in elections in Cambodia

On 28 July, elections are to be held in Cambodia. The United Nations, the European Union and the United States have several times urged that free and fair elections be held there. One of the conditions is that opposition leader Sam Rainsy should be allowed to stand as a candidate in the elections. However, he will be unable to do so. He has been deprived of his political and civil rights, is currently in exile and runs the risk of imprisonment if he returns to Cambodia. Despite the obstructionism of the Cambodian authorities, Rainsy intends to return to Cambodia and stand for election.

1. What view does the Vice-President/High Representative take of the decision by Sam Rainsy to return to Cambodia and stand for election despite the possible personal consequences?

2. Does the Vice-President/High Representative consider that the European Union, the United Nations and the United States should make vigorous efforts to bring about free and fair elections, with the participation of Sam Rainsy?

3. What will the Vice-President/High Representative do to guarantee the safety of Sam Rainsy if he returns to Cambodia?

4. What action will the Vice-President/High Representative take to ensure that Sam Rainsy can stand for election?

5. What sanctions does the Vice-President/High Representative anticipate imposing if the Cambodian authorities do not permit Sam Rainsy to stand for election unhindered on 28 July?

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

At the time of writing, Sam Rainsy has safely returned to Cambodia following a royal pardon and was able to campaign for the general elections of 28 July, although not registered on the voters' list. His party has refused the results of the elections and has called for an investigation on fraud allegations.

The Spokesperson of the HR/VP issued a statement calling for all disputes addressed to the National Election Committee and the established judicial mechanisms to be dealt with fairly and swiftly.

The EU is closely following the situation in the country. The EU Delegation in Phnom Penh has been in regular contacts with the opposition leaders, as well as with representatives from the government to ensure disputes are settled in a democratic and peaceful spirit.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008393/13
aan de Commissie
Daniël van der Stoep (NI)
(11 juli 2013)

Betreft: Herinvoeren visumplicht westelijke Balkan

1. Bent u bekend met het bericht: „EU moves closer to reimposing visas on Western Balkans" ([1])? Zo neen, waarom niet?

2. Deelt u de breedgedragen mening dat de noodzaak tot herinvoering van de visumplicht duidelijk aangeeft dat er met betrekking tot het afschaffen ervan destijds overhaast gehandeld is? Zo neen, waarom niet?

3. Deelt u de mening dat verschillende lidstaten op verschillende wijzen last hebben van een overvloed aan asielaanvragen uit de westelijke Balkan en dat daarom in het kader van subsidiariteit de bevoegdheid om tot herinvoering van de visumplicht over te gaan — voor bepaalde dan wel onbepaalde termijn — bij de lidstaten zou moeten liggen en niet bij de Europese Commissie? Zo neen, waarom niet?

4. Deelt u de mening dat onmiddellijk moet worden overgegaan tot herinvoering van de visumplicht voor westelijke Balkanlanden en dat deze een permanente status dient te krijgen? Zo neen, waarom niet?

Antwoord van mevrouw Malmström namens de Commissie
(29 augustus 2013)

1. De Europese Commissie levert geen commentaar op artikelen in de pers.

2. De visumplicht voor burgers van Servië, Montenegro, de voormalige Joegoslavische Republiek Macedonië, Albanië en Bosnië en Herzegovina werd opgeheven aan het eind van landenspecifieke dialogen over visumversoepeling. Bij deze dialogen werden hervormingen geëist op een breed aantal terreinen, zoals overname, herintegratie, documentbeveiliging, grensbeheer, migratie en asiel, de bestrijding van georganiseerde misdaad en corruptie, en grondrechten inzake vrij verkeer. Deze hervormingen hebben geleid tot een veilige omgeving voor visumvrij reizen.

3. In reactie op een grote toename van het aantal asielverzoeken in 2010 heeft de Commissie een mechanisme voor monitoring na visumliberalisering opgezet, dat de van visumplicht vrijgestelde staten onmiddellijke maatregelen heeft aanbevolen om het misbruik van de asielprocedures aan te pakken. De betrokken landen hebben het merendeel van de aanbevelingen van de Commissie uitgevoerd.

4. In 2011 heeft de Commissie voorgesteld in Verordening 539/2001 een opschortingsmechanisme op te nemen. Deze wijziging zal naar verwachting in het najaar van 2013 door de medewetgevers worden aangenomen. Overeenkomstig de aan te nemen tekst zouden de lidstaten het opschortingsmechanisme in werking kunnen stellen wanneer aan bepaalde door de medewetgevers gestelde voorwaarden is voldaan. Het zal echter aan de Commissie zijn om, in het kader van haar uitvoeringsbevoegdheden en bijgevolg met de medewerking van een comité van deskundigen van de lidstaten, een maatregel aan te nemen waarmee de visumvrijstelling voor een derde land tijdelijk wordt opgeschort, zulks na onderzoek van alle relevante elementen, zoals de gevolgen van een dergelijke opschorting voor de externe betrekkingen van de EU en haar lidstaten met het betrokken land.

([1]) http://euobserver.com/justice/120799.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008393/13
to the Commission
Daniël van der Stoep (NI)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Reintroduction of visa requirement for the western Balkans

1. Is the Commission aware of the report 'EU moves closer to reimposing visas on Western Balkans' ([1])? If not, why not?

2. Does the Commission agree with the widely held view that the need to reimpose the visa requirement clearly indicates that the requirement was abolished too hastily? If not, why not?

3. Does the Commission agree that various Member States are being inconvenienced in various ways by the flood of asylum applications from the western Balkans and that therefore, in accordance with subsidiarity, the power to reintroduce the visa requirement — whether for a limited period or indefinitely — should lie with the Member States and not with the Commission? If not, why not?

4. Does the Commission agree that the visa requirement should immediately be reimposed for the Western Balkan countries and that it should be assigned permanent status? If not, why not?

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

1. The Commission does not comment on press articles.

2. The visa obligation was lifted for the citizens of Serbia, Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina at the end of country-specific visa liberalisation dialogues that required reforms in areas as wide-ranging as readmission, reintegration, document security, border management, migration and asylum, the fight against organised crime and corruption and fundamental rights related to the freedom of movement. These reforms have created a secure environment for visa-free travel.

3. In response to a surge in asylum applications in 2010, the Commission set up a post-visa liberalisation monitoring mechanism that recommended immediate measures for the visa-free states to address abuses of asylum procedures. The countries concerned have implemented most of the Commission's recommendations.

4. In 2011, the Commission proposed integrating a suspension mechanism into Regulation 539/2001. This amendment is expected to be adopted by the co-legislators in the autumn of 2013. According to the text to be adopted, the suspension mechanism may be triggered by the Member States if certain conditions set by the co-legislators are met. However, it will be for the Commission, under implementing powers and thus assisted by a committee composed of Member States' experts, to adopt a measure temporarily suspending the visa waiver for a third country after an examination of all relevant elements including, *inter alia*, the consequences of such a suspension for the external relations of the EU and its Member States with the country concerned.

([1]) http://euobserver.com/justice/120799.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008394/13
aan de Commissie
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(11 juli 2013)

Betreft: Informatie conflictmineralen

In augustus 2012 werden door de Amerikaanse *Securities and Exchange Commission* de laatste bepalingen uitgevaardigd voor de implementatie van de artikelen 1502 en 1504 van de zogenaamde „Dodd-Frank Act" (*Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act*).

In artikel 1502 is opgenomen dat alle bedrijven informatie moeten vrijgeven over het gebruik van „conflictmineralen" afkomstig van de Democratische Republiek Congo of een van zijn buurlanden.

Artikel 1504 vereist dat olie- en mijnbouwbedrijven de opbrengsten bekendmaken die ze wereldwijd aan overheden betalen.

In maart 2013 lanceerde de Europese Commissie een openbare raadpleging die hiermee verband houdt: *Public Consultation on a possible EU initiative on responsible sourcing of minerals originating from conflict-affected and high-risk areas*.

In haar antwoord op vraag P-004340/2011 gaf de Commissie al aan dat de omschrijving van de leveringsketen van mineralen een zeer complex proces is. Zo is er de moeilijke positie van kmo's in de mijnbouwsector in het hele proces.

— Kan de Commissie een overzicht geven van de voorlopige resultaten van de openbare raadpleging?

— Hoe kijkt de Commissie aan tegen de problematiek van kmo's in de mijnbouwsector en hoe zal dit in het (mogelijk) nieuwe wetgevend initiatief worden geïncorporeerd?

— Hoe zal de Commissie verzekeren dat dit wetgevend initiatief er niet voor zorgt dat kleinschalige mijnwerkers het legale handelscircuit uit worden gedwongen?

Antwoord van de heer De Gucht namens de Commissie
(21 augustus 2013)

De openbare raadpleging waarnaar het geachte Parlementslid verwijst, is op 26 juni 2013 gesloten en de Commissie bestudeert momenteel de resultaten. De Commissie heeft een relatief groot aantal antwoorden ontvangen — bijna 300 — van een grote verscheidenheid aan belanghebbenden, onder andere het bedrijfsleven, ngo's en burgers. Uit de eerste resultaten blijkt dat een groot percentage van de respondenten interesse toont in de verantwoorde winning uit conflictgebieden en het vraagstuk belangrijk vindt. Uit de algemene boodschap blijkt bovendien dat de Commissie voor een samenhangende benadering zou kunnen kiezen die het wereldwijde karakter van complexe toeleveringsketens erkent en steunt op een internationaal kader zoals uiteengezet in de zorgvuldigheidsrichtsnoeren van de OESO voor verantwoorde toeleveringsketens van mineralen uit risicovolle en conflictgebieden.

Wat de vraag over kmo's in de mijnbouwsector en kleinschalige mijnwerkers betreft, is de Commissie op de hoogte van de netelige positie waarin zij verkeren en zij hecht belang aan het voorkomen van eventuele nadelige gevolgen voor deze exploitanten. Daarom zal de analyse van antwoorden op vragen over deze aspecten die in de openbare raadpleging waren opgenomen een bepalende rol spelen bij het verder uitwerken van het standpunt dat de Commissie in haar aanstaande initiatief zal innemen. De volledige analyse van deze resultaten is momenteel gaande en wordt in principe in de herfst beschikbaar gesteld.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008394/13
to the Commission
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Information on conflict minerals

In August 2012, the final provisions for the implementation of Articles 1502 and 1504 of the so-called Dodd Frank Act (in full, Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act) were promulgated by the US Securities and Exchange Commission.

Article 1502 stipulates that all companies are required to disclose information about the use of conflict minerals originating from the Democratic Republic of Congo or an adjoining country.

Article 1504 requires oil and mining companies to disclose revenues that they pay to governments worldwide.

In March 2013, the European Commission launched a public consultation in connection with this: Public Consultation on a possible EU initiative on responsible sourcing of minerals originating from conflict-affected and high-risk areas.

In its answer to Question P-004340/2011, the Commission has already indicated that describing the mineral supply chain is a very complex process. For example, the position of SMEs operating in the mining sector at whatever stage of the process is a difficult one.

— Can the Commission provide an overview of the preliminary results of the public consultation?

— How does the Commission view the issue of SMEs in the mining sector and how will it incorporate this position into a (possible) new legislative initiative?

— How will the Commission ensure that this legislative initiative does not result in small-scale miners being forced out of the legal trade channels?

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

The public consultation referred to by the Honourable Member closed on 26 June 2013 and the Commission is currently analysing the results. The Commission received a relatively high number of responses — close to 300 — from a wide range of stakeholders including business, NGOs and citizens. Preliminary results indicate that a high percentage of respondents are interested in responsible sourcing from conflict-areas and believe the issue is important. Moreover, the overall message indicates that the Commission could take a consistent approach recognising the global nature of complex supply chains and relying on an international framework as set out in the OECD Due Diligence Guidance for responsible supply chains of minerals from conflict-affected and high-risk areas.

As regards the question on SMEs in the mining sector and small scale miners on the ground, the Commission is aware of the sensitivity of their positions and is keen on avoiding any undue negative consequence on those operators. To this end, the analysis of replies to questions on these aspects that were included in the public consultation will be instrumental in further shaping the Commission's position in its upcoming initiative. The full analysis of these results is currently underway and should be made available in the autumn.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008395/13
aan de Commissie
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE)
(11 juli 2013)

Betreft: Invoertarieven duurzaam geproduceerde palmolie en grondstoffen

Voor de invoer van palmolie worden door de EU verschillende tarieven gehanteerd.

Palmolie voor industrieel gebruik heeft een 0 %-tarief. Palmolie voor voedselbereidingen kent een tarief van 3,8 %. Voor duurzaam geproduceerde palmolie, zoals gecertificeerd door de Roundtable for Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO), wordt geen uitzondering gemaakt.

1. Kan de Commissie aangeven wat de reden voor de huidige tariefdifferentiatie is?

2. Is het mogelijk om voor duurzaam geproduceerde palmolie een 0 %-tarief toe te passen in de toekomst, ongeacht de uiteindelijke bestemming?

3. Acht de Commissie het gewenst om de productie en het gebruik van duurzaam geproduceerde grondstoffen te bevorderen middels een preferentieel invoertarief?

Antwoord van de heer De Gucht namens de Commissie
(4 september 2013)

De invoerrechten van de EU zijn het resultaat van een decennialang streven naar liberalisering en zij worden vastgesteld in een proces waarbij tal van elementen in aanmerking worden genomen. Bij de vaststelling van de tarieven voor palmolie is overeenkomstig de behandeling van goederen in het EU-douanewetboek rekening gehouden met verschillende aspecten van menselijke consumptie of industrieel gebruik.

De Commissie is van mening dat de verschuiving op de markt naar duurzame producten een bijdrage kan leveren aan het beperken van de impact van consumptie op het milieu en de samenleving. Daarom neemt zij verschillende initiatieven om duurzame productie en consumptie van goederen aan te moedigen. Voorbeelden hiervan zijn de bevordering van maatschappelijk verantwoord ondernemen ([1]) en de regelingen om in het kader van de handel duurzaamheid te bevorderen ([2]).

De door de Roundtable for Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) ontwikkelde certificeringsregeling is een van de regelingen van de privésector die de Commissie heeft erkend voor het aantonen van de naleving van de EU-criteria voor biobrandstoffen ([3]), maar dit heeft alleen betrekking op het in aanmerking komen voor subsidies in de EU en de berekening van het halen van de streefcijfers voor hernieuwbare energie. De Commissie acht tariefdifferentiatie op basis van de certificering door particuliere regelingen, met name uit het oogpunt van doeltreffendheid, juridische haalbaarheid en praktische handhaving, hiervoor geen geschikt middel. Daarom heeft de Commissie momenteel geen plannen om beleid te ontwikkelen waarbij de particuliere duurzaamheidsregelingen worden gekoppeld aan handelspreferenties voor palmolie of grondstoffen.

([1]) Mededeling over „Een vernieuwde EU-strategie 2011-2014 ter bevordering van maatschappelijk verantwoord ondernemen", COM(2011) 681 definitief.
([2]) Mededeling over „Handel, groei en ontwikkeling", COM(2012) 22 definitief.
([3]) Zie punt 13 van deze link: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/renewables/biofuels/sustainability_schemes_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008395/13
to the Commission
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Import tariffs for sustainably produced palm oil and raw materials

The EU applies various tariffs for imports of palm oil.

For palm oil for industrial use, the tariff is 0%. The tariff for palm oil intended for preparing food is 3,8%. However, no exception is made for sustainably produced palm oil, such as the oil certified by the Roundtable for Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO).

1. Can the Commission state what the reason behind the current tariff differentiation is?

2. Is it possible to apply a 0% tariff to sustainably produced palm oil in the future, regardless of its end use?

3. Does the Commission consider it desirable to promote the production and use of sustainably produced raw materials through a preferential import tariff?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(4 September 2013)

EU import duties are the result of a decades-long ongoing liberalisation effort, and are determined through a process taking into account a comprehensive set of elements. In the case of palm oil, the tariff duties take account of the different aspects of human consumption or industrial use, according to the provisions of the EU customs code treatment of goods.

The Commission considers that the shift in the market place towards sustainable products has a role to play in contributing to reducing the environmental and social impact of consumption. In this framework, it undertakes different initiatives to encourage the production and consumption of goods responding to sustainability concerns. These include the promotion of Corporate Social Responsibility practices ([1]) and of trade-related sustainability assurance schemes ([2]).

The Roundtable for Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) has developed one of the private certification schemes recognised by the Commission to demonstrate compliance with the EU biofuels criteria ([3]) but it only relates to eligibility for subsidies in the EU and for counting towards renewable energy targets. The Commission does not consider tariff differentiation on the basis of certification by private schemes to be an appropriate tool to this end, in particular with a view to efficiency, legal feasibility, and practical enforceability. Therefore, the Commission currently has no plans to develop a policy linking private sustainability schemes to trade preferences for palm oil or raw materials.

([1]) Communication on 'A renewed EU strategy 2011-14 for Corporate Social Responsibility', COM(2011)681 final.
([2]) Communication on 'Trade, growth and development', COM(2012)22 final.
([3]) See point 13 under this link: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/renewables/biofuels/sustainability_schemes_en.htm

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008396/13
aan de Commissie
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE)
(11 juli 2013)

Betreft: Tijdelijk EU-verbod op neonicotoïden

Bent u op de hoogte van het onderzoek van het Centrum voor Landbouw en Milieu (CLM) ([1]) naar het (tijdelijk) verbod dat de Europese Commissie heeft ingesteld op een aantal toepassingen van clothianidine, thiamethoxam en imidacloprid, in verband met mogelijke effecten van deze middelen op bijen? Het CLM heeft geanalyseerd in welke gewassen, in welk type toepassingen en in welke hoeveelheden deze drie neonicotinoïden in Nederland worden gebruikt en welk deel hiervan valt onder het moratorium. Volgens het CLM valt slechts 15 % van de drie bestrijdingsmiddelen onder het verbod.

1. Weet u wat het percentage is van de bestrijdingsmiddelen die tijdelijk verboden zijn dat daadwerkelijk onder het moratorium valt in de gehele EU? Zo ja, wat is dat percentage en is dat ook beschikbaar per lidstaat? Zo ja, kunt u mij dan van een overzicht voorzien?

2. Kan er met een dergelijk laag percentage (15 %) een gedegen wetenschappelijke conclusie worden getrokken over het effect van het verbod in de komende twee jaar? Zo ja, kunt u mij dan uitleggen hoe?

3. Is de Commissie op de hoogte van het risico dat telers overstappen op andere neonicotenoïden zoals thiacloprid en acetamiprid of andere stoffen met mogelijke giftigheid voor waterleven of bijen zoals deltamethrin en zo ja hoe schat de Commissie dat risico op het effect van het verbod in?

4. Kan de Commissie haar standpunt toelichten wat betreft het advies van het CLM om de verbruiksgegevens van de bestrijdingsmiddelen openbaar te maken?

Antwoord van de heer Borg namens de Commissie
(3 september 2013)

1. De eerste gegevens over het agrarisch gebruik van pesticiden die vallen onder Verordening (EG) nr. 1107/2009 zullen naar verwachting vóór eind 2015 beschikbaar zijn in het kader van Verordening (EG) nr. 1185/2009 betreffende statistieken over pesticiden ([2]). Daarom is het in dit stadium niet mogelijk cijfers te verstrekken over het percentage van de jaarlijks gebruikte hoeveelheden van de neonicotinoïden in kwestie dat onder het EU-moratorium valt.

2. Zoals vermeld in punt 1 zijn in dit stadium nog geen gegevens over het agrarisch gebruik van pesticiden beschikbaar. Derhalve kan nog geen conclusie met betrekking tot deze gegevens worden getrokken. De Commissie zal de maatregelen in kwestie evenwel evalueren op basis van door de lidstaten, het bedrijfsleven en andere belanghebbenden verstrekte nieuwe gegevens die specifiek betrekking hebben op de drie neonicotinoïden in kwestie.

De uitkomst van die evaluatie kan erin bestaan dat de maatregelen worden versoepeld, maar ook dat verdere beperkingen worden opgelegd. In dit stadium valt niet te zeggen wat de uitkomst zal zijn.

3. De Commissie verwijst het geachte Parlementslid naar haar antwoord op schriftelijke vraag E-002012/2013 ([3]).

4. Overeenkomstig Verordening (EG) nr. 1185/2009 aggregeert Eurostat de gegevens vóór publicatie volgens de chemische klassen of de categorieën van producten vermeld in bijlage III bij die verordening. De lidstaten zijn evenwel verplicht niet-vertrouwelijke gegevens over pesticiden te publiceren.

([1]) http://www.clm.nl/uploads/pdf/825-Gebruik_toepassing_verbod_neonicotinoiden.pdf (geraadpleegd op 10.6.2013).
([2]) PB L 134 van 10.12.2009, blz. 1.
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/nl/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008396/13
to the Commission
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Temporary EU ban on neonicotinoids

Are you aware of the research by the Dutch Centre for Agriculture and the Environment (CLM) ([1]) into the (temporary) ban that the European Commission has imposed on a number of applications of clothianidin, thiamethoxam and imidacloprid, in connection with the possible effects of these agents on bees? The CLM has analysed in what crops, applications and amounts these three neonicotinoids are being used in the Netherlands and which part of this falls under the moratorium. According to the CLM, as little as 15% of the three pesticides is covered by the ban.

1. Do you know what percentage of the pesticides that are temporarily banned actually falls under the moratorium across the EU? If so, what is that percentage and is it also available broken down by Member State? If so, could you provide me with an overview?

2. With such a low percentage (15%), can a sound scientific conclusion be drawn about the effect of the ban over the next two years? If so, could you explain to me how?

3. Is the Commission aware of the risk of growers switching to other neonicotinoids, such as thiacloprid and acetamiprid, or other agents that are potentially toxic to aquatic life or the bees, such as deltamethrin, and, if so, how does the Commission estimate that risk to the ban's impact?

4. Can the Commission explain its position as regards the CLM's advice that data on pesticide consumption should be made public?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(3 September 2013)

1. The first data on agricultural use of pesticides subject to Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 are expected to be available before the end of 2015 in the framework of Regulation (EC) No 1185/2009 ([2]) concerning statistics on pesticides. Therefore, at this stage, it is not possible to provide figures on what percentage of the yearly used quantities of the neonicotinoids at issue falls under the EU moratorium.

2. At this stage, as mentioned in point 1, the data on agricultural use of pesticides is not yet available. Hence no conclusion on this data can yet be drawn. However, as far as the measures at issue are concerned, the Commission is committed to review those measures based on new data specific to the three neonicotinoids at issue submitted by Member States, industry and other relevant stakeholders.

The review might lead to a relaxation of the measures, or to further restrictions. At this stage it is not possible to envisage the final outcome of the process.

3. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-002012/2013 ([3]).

4. According to Regulation (EC) No 1185/2009, Eurostat shall aggregate the data before publication in accordance with the chemical classes or categories of products indicated in Annex III of this regulation. However, Member States are required to publish pesticide data that are not confidential.

([1]) http://www.clm.nl/uploads/pdf/825-Gebruik_toepassing_verbod_neonicotinoiden.pdf (geraadpleegd op 10.6.2013).
([2]) OJ L 324, 10.12.2009, p. 1.
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-008397/13
do Komisji
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(11 lipca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Plany uruchomienia unijnego portalu prasowego

Pojawiające się informacje dotyczące planów Komisji Europejskiej związanych z uruchomieniem, finansowanego z unijnego budżetu, portalu prasowego wywołały niepokój środowiska dziennikarskiego. Protest wyraziła między innymi afiliowana w Brukseli organizacja API. Kontrowersje wzbudza zarówno sam pomysł, określany jako ingerencja w niezależność mediów, jak też wysoki koszt projektu. W obecnej sytuacji finansowej Wspólnoty oraz wielu krajów członkowskich finansowanie podobnych przedsięwzięć nie wydaje się bowiem uzasadnione.

W związku z powyższym zwracam się z prośbą o odpowiedź:

1. Czy Komisja potwierdza zamiar utworzenia własnego portalu dziennikarskiego i w jakim stopniu zaawansowania znajduje się projekt?

2. Jaki jest przewidywany faktyczny koszt utworzenia portalu oraz roczne koszty jego obsługi?

3. Jaki jest cel tworzenia nowego portalu w sytuacji, w której już obecnie funkcjonuje europejski portal presseurop.eu? Czy nie nosi to znamion zbędnego i kosztownego duplikowania przedsięwzięć?

4. Jakie jest stanowisko Komisji wobec krytyki projektu ze strony szeregu przedstawicieli krajów członkowskich oraz organizacji i środowisk dziennikarskich?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Viviane Reding w imieniu Komisji
(20 sierpnia 2013 r.)

W kontekście ogłoszonych ograniczeń budżetowych w okresie objętym kolejnymi wieloletnimi ramami finansowymi Komisja postanowiła anulować zaproszenie do składania ofert dotyczących uruchomienia unijnego portalu prasowego. Ogłoszenie w tej sprawie zostało opublikowane w TED (Tenders Electronic Daily ([1])), internetowej wersji Suplementu do Dziennika Urzędowego Unii Europejskiej poświęconego zamówieniom publicznym w Europie.

([1]) http://ted.europa.eu/udl?uri=TED:NOTICE:235140-2013:TEXT:EN:HTML&ticket=ST-391351-jpvUQf1nQSqzy37dn5Pn7u5AP0w6YUsKtUR7jE1CWSvGIXr1oo5oyCVAVOQmp1LNK3fxrmE2vXkFIauLscYIOC-9fKQG0rMBdO1q1c8opLEU0-u2Ni3uUwhi4FFeIUOzUkFSDdN8vFxQ5br06A3yqRNh7

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008397/13
to the Commission
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Plans to launch an EU news website

Information which has emerged concerning plans being made by the Commission to launch an EU-funded news website has caused concern among journalists. Protests have been registered, amongst others, by the International Press Association, which is based in Brussels. Controversy is being caused by the idea itself, which has been described as interference in the independence of the media, and also by the high cost of the project. This is because, in the current financial situation facing the EU and many of the Member States, funding measures of this kind is not considered justified.

In connection with the above, I should like to ask the following questions:

1. Is the Commission able to confirm its intention to launch its own news website, and what stage has this project reached?

2. What is expected to be the real cost of launching the website and what will be the annual costs of its operation?

3. What is the aim of creating a new website in a situation in which the European website presseurop.eu is already in operation? Does this not bear the hallmarks of an unnecessary and expensive duplication of effort?

4. What is the Commission's position regarding the criticism of the project being expressed by a number of representatives of Member States and organisations and groups of journalists?

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

In the context of the announced budgetary restrictions for the next Multiannual Financial Framework period, the Commission has decided to cancel the call for tender for an Online Media on EU Affairs. A notice to this project has been published in TED (Tenders Electronic Daily ([1])), the online version of the 'Supplement to the Official Journal of the European Union' dedicated to European public procurement.

([1]) http://ted.europa.eu/udl?uri=TED:NOTICE:235140-2013:TEXT:EN:HTML&ticket=ST-391351-jpvUQf1nQSqzy37dn5Pn7u5AP0w6YUsKtUR7jE1CWSvGIXr1oo5oyCVAVOQmp1LNK3fxrmE2vXkFIauLscYIOC-9fKQG0rMBdO1q1c8opLEU0-u2Ni3uUwhi4FFeIUOzUkFSDdN8vFxQ5br06A3yqRNh7

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-008398/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(11 lipca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Koniec projektu Nabucco

Decyzją azerskiego konsorcjum gazowego Shah Deniz, planowane dostawy do Europy w ramach Południowego Korytarza Gazowego realizowane będą za pośrednictwem Gazociągu Transadriatyckiego (TAP). Oznacza to koniec Nabucco, rurociągu od lat postrzeganego jako flagowy projekt Unii Europejskiej w zakresie dywersyfikacji dostaw gazu ziemnego.

Nabucco (ostatnio Nabucco West) miało być realną alternatywą dla rosyjskich dostaw do krajów Europy Środkowowschodniej, uniezależniając od nich m.in. Bułgarię, Rumunię, czy Węgry. Poprzez połączenia międzysystemowe dostawy miały być realizowane również do Polski. Projekt legitymował się więc olbrzymimi korzyściami strategicznymi. Odejście od jego realizacji oznacza natomiast wzmocnienie rosyjskiego potencjału energetycznego. Fiasko Nabucco uwidoczniło tym samym słabość i brak skuteczności działań Wspólnoty w obszarze polityki zagranicznej.

W oparciu o powyższe zwracam się z prośbą o odpowiedź:

1. Czy Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel wykorzystała wszystkie dostępne środki negocjacyjne w celu utrzymania realizacji projektu Nabucco?

2. Czy Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel rozważy wystosowanie protestu oraz podjęcie działań dyplomatycznych, ukierunkowanych na zmianę decyzji azerskiego operatora?

3. Utrata tej sztandarowej inwestycji postrzegana jest w charakterze braku kompetencji unijnej dyplomacji w obszarze polityki energetycznej i zagranicznej. Czy i jakie działania zostaną podjęte celem osiągnięcia znaczącej poprawy w tej materii?

4. Czy i w jaki sposób unijna dyplomacja zamierza w obecnej sytuacji zagwarantować dywersyfikację dostaw gazu do wspomnianych krajów środkowoeuropejskich, w celu zachowania strategii uniezależniania ich polityki energetycznej od Rosji?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Günthera Oettingera w imieniu Komisji
(1 października 2013 r.)

Decyzja podjęta przez Shah Deniz Consortium dotycząca wyboru gazociągu transadriatyckiego ma charakter komercyjny i ustanawia pierwszą trasę gazociągu przez terytorium UE w ramach południowego korytarza gazowego. Po zakończeniu realizacji gazociągu transanatolijskiego w Turcji, nowa infrastruktura gazowa będzie stanowić bezpośrednie połączenie Morza Kaspijskiego z Europą.

Komisja nie widzi powodu, aby wyrażać sprzeciw wobec decyzji podjętej przez dwa podmioty gospodarcze. W rzeczywistości potrzebne będą ostatecznie obie trasy, niezależnie od tego, która z nich zostanie zrealizowana jako pierwsza. Otwarcie trasy europejskiej powinno również przynieść bezpośrednią korzyść państwom członkowskim w Europie Środkowej i Wschodniej, dla których wybrany gazociąg nie stanowi przedmiotu bezpośredniego zainteresowania. Od dłuższego czasu Komisja prowadzi działania w celu zagwarantowania, że żadne państwo członkowskie nie pozostanie zależne od jednego źródła dostaw gazu, bez względu na początkowy wybór trasy. Można to osiągnąć w szczególności poprzez zakończenie procesu tworzenia wewnętrznego rynku energii, zapewnienie dwukierunkowego przepływu gazu oraz budowę niezbędnych połączeń międzysystemowych.

W tym kontekście Komisja zaproponowała podpisanie protokołów ustaleń dotyczących korytarzy z możliwością odwróconego przepływu w Europie Południowo-Wschodniej (z Grecji na Ukrainę, z Turcji na Węgry oraz z Chorwacji na Ukrainę).

Ta ściślejsza współpraca, w połączeniu z opracowywaniem projektów będących przedmiotem wspólnego zainteresowania zgodnie z niedawno przyjętym rozporządzeniem w sprawie wytycznych dotyczących transeuropejskiej infrastruktury energetycznej (rozporządzenie (UE) nr 347/2013), będzie służyć wsparciu dywersyfikacji dostaw gazu w Europie Środkowej i Europie Południowo-Wschodniej.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008398/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — End of the Nabucco project

A decision made by the Azerbaijani gas concern *Shah Deniz* means that the plan to supply gas to Europe via the Southern Gas Corridor has been abandoned in favour of using the Trans-Adriatic Pipeline (TAP). This signals the end of Nabucco, a pipeline which has, for years, been seen as a flagship European Union project for diversifying supplies of natural gas.

Nabucco (recently Nabucco West) was to have been a realistic alternative for the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, releasing countries such as Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary from dependence on supplies from Russia. Connections between supply systems were also to have allowed delivery to Poland. The project therefore had huge strategic advantages. However, departure from this plan is equivalent to strengthening the hand of energy supplies from Russia. The Nabucco fiasco has therefore exposed the weakness and ineffectiveness of EU foreign policy.

In connection with the above, I should like to ask the Commission:

1. Has the Vice-President/High Representative used all available channels of negotiation to ensure continuation of the Nabucco project?

2. Will the Vice-President/High Representative consider making a protest and taking diplomatic action to reverse the decision of the Azerbaijani operator?

3. The loss of this very important investment is being seen as a sign of incompetence in the EU diplomatic service in the area of energy and foreign policy. Will any efforts be made to achieve a significant improvement in this area and, if so, what action will be taken?

4. Does the EU's diplomatic service intend to ensure that the Central and Eastern European countries in question enjoy a diversity of gas supply in this situation in order to preserve the strategy of keeping their energy policy independent of Russia, and how will this be achieved?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(1 October 2013)

The decision made by the Shah Deniz Consortium to select the Trans-Adriatic Pipeline was a commercial decision and constitutes the first intra-EU route for the Southern Gas Corridor. Once the Trans-Anatolian Pipeline is built in Turkey, a new gas infrastructure will directly link the Caspian Sea to Europe.

The Commission has no reason to protest this decision made between two commercial entities. Indeed, eventually both routes will be needed, independently of which one comes first. The opening of the European route should also directly benefit Member States in central and eastern Europe that are not directly concerned by the selected pipeline. The Commission has been working for a long time on making sure that, independently of the initially chosen route, eventually no Member State remains dependent on a single supplier of gas. This can be achieved notably through the completion of the energy internal market, through ensuring bi-directional gas flows and the construction of the necessary interconnectors.

In this sense, the Commission proposed the signature of Memoranda of Understanding related to reverse flow corridors in South East Europe, from Greece to Ukraine, from Turkey to Hungary, and from Croatia to Ukraine.

This enhanced cooperation, combined with the development of Projects of Common Interest under the recently adopted Regulation on guidelines for trans-European energy infrastructure (Regulation (EU) No 347/2013), will support gas supply diversification in Central and South Eastern Europe.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-008399/13
do Komisji
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(11 lipca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Bułgarski odcinek gazociągu South Stream

Podczas niedawnej wizyty w Sofii, szef rosyjskiego Gazpromu – Aleksiej Miller, zadeklarował gotowość sfinansowania budowy bułgarskiego odcinka (540 km) gazociągu South Stream w całości przez stronę rosyjską. Szacowana na ponad trzy miliardy euro inwestycja miałaby jednak oznaczać zadłużenie Bułgarii, która zostałaby zobowiązania do jego spłaty kosztem opłat tranzytowych w ciągu piętnastu lat. Tymczasem, całościowa regulacja projektu podlegać będzie negocjacjom pomiędzy Moskwą i Brukselą, które – w obliczu niedawnego zaniechania projektu Nabucco – stawiają Kreml w uprzywilejowanej pozycji.

W oparciu o powyższe, proszę o wyjaśnienie:

1. Czy bułgarski fragment inwestycji South Stream jest realizowany w zgodzie ze strategią Komisji w zakresie tego projektu?

2. Czy proponowane docelowe obciążenie Bułgarii kosztami inwestycji nie spotęguje uzależnienia gospodarczego tego kraju od Rosji?

3. Kiedy planowane jest rozpoczęcie oraz zakończenie prac związanych z budową bułgarskiego odcinka gazociągu i czy odbywać się będą pod nadzorem Komisji?

4. Jakie działania ze strony instytucji europejskich zostaną podjęte, celem wzmocnienia (osłabionego upadkiem projektu Nabucco West) stanowiska negocjacyjnego Wspólnoty względem Rosji, dotyczącego inwestycji South Stream?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Güntera Oettingera w imieniu Komisji
(2 września 2013 r.)

Gazociąg South Stream jest promowany przez Gazprom i jego współinwestorów. Komisja nie ma żadnej strategii dotyczącej tego projektu. Jak w przypadku każdego innego projektu przesyłowego, Komisja zapewni zgodność budowy i eksploatacji gazociągu South Stream z przepisami UE. Chodzi tu przede wszystkim o ustawodawstwo dotyczące wewnętrznego rynku energii, zwłaszcza przepisy dotyczące niedyskryminującego dostępu do mocy przesyłowych dla konkurujących dostawców. Komisja z zadowoleniem przyjęłaby włączenie innych potencjalnych eksporterów gazu z Rosji w charakterze dostawców hurtowych lub deweloperów projektu.

Komisja przypomniała unijnym przedsiębiorstwom biorącym udział w projekcie w charakterze jego promotorów, że jakiekolwiek wiążące zobowiązanie dotyczące budowy gazociągu można podjąć tylko pod warunkiem ukończenia oceny wszelkich parametrów, od źródła do odbiorcy końcowego, w tym wpływu na środowisko.

Wpływu gazociągu South Stream na gospodarkę Bułgarii nie można ocenić ze względu na brak jakichkolwiek informacji o finansowaniu projektu. Jednak wszelkie wsparcie rządowe – jeżeli rzeczywiście jest udzielane – musi być zgodne z zasadami pomocy państwa. Tego rodzaju projekty powinny otrzymywać środki publiczne tylko wówczas, gdy przynoszą społeczeństwu nadrzędne korzyści. Komisja nie została poinformowana o żadnych istotnych korzyściach wspomnianego projektu dla społeczeństwa.

Ważnym krokiem w kierunku zagwarantowania dywersyfikacji dostaw gazu do UE jest decyzja podjęta niedawno przez konsorcjum Shah Deniz, aby wprowadzać na rynek UE gaz z Azerbejdżanu (gazociągiem TAP). Wewnętrzny rynek gazu ciekłego z możliwością przepływu wstecznego na granicach może zwiększyć korzystny wpływ gazu kaspijskiego na bezpieczeństwo dostaw i hurtowe ceny gazu w UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008399/13
to the Commission
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Bulgarian section of the South Stream gas pipeline

Alexey Miller, Chairman of the Management Committee of the Russian company Gazprom, declared during a recent visit to Sofia that the Russian side is ready to extend all the finance needed for construction of the Bulgarian section (540 km) of the South Stream gas pipeline. This investment, estimated at in excess of EUR 3 billion, would, however, leave Bulgaria with a debt which it would have to repay over 15 years from money collected in transit fees. Meanwhile, overall control of the project is going to be subject to negotiations between Moscow and Brussels which — in view of the recent termination of the Nabucco project — find the Kremlin in a privileged position.

I should therefore like to ask the following questions:

1. Is the Bulgarian section of the South Stream development being carried out in accordance with the Commission's strategy for this project?

2. Is it not the case that the proposal to charge Bulgaria with the costs of the investment will greatly increase the country's economic dependence on Russia?

3. What is the time frame planned for commencement and completion of work related to construction of the Bulgarian section of the pipeline, and will this work be done under the supervision of the Commission?

4. The EU's negotiating position with Russia on the South Stream investment has been weakened by the collapse of the Nabucco West project. What action will be taken by the European institutions to strengthen it?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(2 September 2013)

South Stream is promoted by Gazprom and its co-investors. The Commission does not have any strategy for this project. As for any transmission project, the Commission will ensure that South Stream is developed and operated in line with EU legislation. This is in particular the internal energy market legislation, including provisions on non-discriminatory access to capacity for competing suppliers. The Commission would welcome the inclusion of other potential exporters of gas from Russia as shippers or developers of the project.

The Commission has reminded the EU companies associated as project promoters that any binding commitment to build the pipeline may only be made once an assessment of all parameters, from source to consumption, including the impact on the environment, has been accomplished.

In the absence of any information on South Stream financing it is not possible to assess its effects on the Bulgarian economy. However, any government support — if given — should comply with the state aid rules. Projects of this nature should only attract public funding if there are overriding public benefits. The Commission has not been informed of any significant public benefit arising from this project.

The recent decision of the Shah Deniz Consortium to market Azerbaijani gas in the EU (through the TAP pipeline) is a major step towards realising the diversification of gas supply to the EU. A liquid internal gas market with reverse flows at borders can maximise the positive impact of Caspian gas on security of supply and wholesale gas prices in the EU.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-008400/13
do Komisji
Janusz Wojciechowski (ECR)
(11 lipca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Możliwość wykorzystania technologii mikoryzacji do ograniczania strat spowodowanych przez susze

Poważne straty w rolnictwie europejskim powodują kolejne susze nawiedzające zwłaszcza południową część Europy. Według uzyskanych przeze mnie informacji znaczne zmniejszenie tych strat można osiągnąć poprzez zastosowanie technologii specyficznych szczepionek mikoryzowych z żywej grzybni. Technologia ta stosowana jest z powodzeniem w Polsce, a w ostatnim czasie są również pozytywne doświadczenia z zastosowaniem tych szczepionek na doświadczalnych plantacjach w Hiszpanii i w Chorwacji. Można mieć nadzieję, że zastosowanie na szerszą skalę technologii mikoryzacji może znacząco ograniczyć straty powodowane przez susze, a także spowodować zwiększenie ilości i jakości plonów.

Proszę o informacje, czy Komisja Europejska dysponuje wiedzą na temat pozytywnych efektów technologii mikoryzacji w Polsce oraz czy przewiduje jakieś działania zmierzające do wsparcia tej technologii i upowszechnienia jej w Europie lub przynajmniej wsparcia badań nad rozwojem tej technologii.

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Máire Geoghegan-Quinn w imieniu Komisji
(9 października 2013 r.)

Komisja zdaje sobie sprawę z przeprowadzanych w Polsce doświadczeń dotyczących wykorzystania grzybów mikoryzowych do celów pozyskiwania składników odżywczych i wody. Korzystne działanie grzybów mikoryzowych odnotowano również kilkakrotnie w literaturze naukowej. Komisja finansuje w ramach 7PR ([1])szereg projektów, których celem jest zbadanie wpływu suszy na rośliny i znalezienie rozwiązań za pośrednictwem hodowli roślin. W szczególności projekty ROOTOPOWER (wzmacnianie skierowanych na korzenie strategii zmierzających do minimalizacji wpływu stresu abiotycznego na uprawy ogrodnicze) ([2]) i EURoot (zwiększenie efektywności pobierania substancji odżywczych przez korzenie roślin zbożowych w warunkach stresu) ([3]) koncentrują się na badaniach systemów korzeniowych odpowiednio pomidorów i zbóż, a także podejmują kwestię różnych rodzajów stresu abiotycznego, w tym suszy. Nacisk kładzie się również na określenie wkładu grzybów mikoryzowych w wydajność roślin w warunkach stresu oraz na wykorzystanie potencjalnej skuteczności mikoryzacyjnej jako narzędzia w hodowli.

Dalsze badania tego interesującego podejścia będą prawdopodobnie finansowane w ramach „Horyzontu 2020" ([4]). Jest to kolejny unijny program finansowania badań naukowych i innowacji, w którym położono większy nacisk na innowacje i rozwiązywanie problemów w ramach społecznych i globalnych wyzwań stojących dziś przed nami. Będzie to dotyczyło w szczególności badań naukowych i innowacji ukierunkowanych na walkę z suszami i innymi zdarzeniami ekstremalnymi. Przyczynić się do tego może europejskie partnerstwo innowacyjne na rzecz wydajnego i zrównoważonego rolnictwa ([5]), które będzie dalej wdrażane w ramach „Horyzontu 2020" i nowej wspólnej polityki rolnej (WPR).

([1]) Siódmy program ramowy w zakresie badań, rozwoju technologicznego i demonstracji (PR7, 2007-2013).
([2]) www.rootopower.eu
([3]) www.euroot.eu
([4]) Wyzwanie społeczne nr 2, badania nad produkcją roślinną.
([5]) COM(2012)79 z 29.2.2012 r.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008400/13
to the Commission
Janusz Wojciechowski (ECR)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Potential for the use of mycorrhizal technology to reduce losses caused by drought

The series of droughts which have affected the southern part of Europe in particular have caused serious losses in European agriculture. I have recently learned that such losses can be significantly reduced by using technology based on specific mycorrhizal vaccines consisting of live mycelium. This technology is being used successfully in Poland, and successful experiments using these vaccines have also been carried out recently at experimental plantations in Spain and Croatia. It is to be hoped that the use of mycorrhizal technology on a wider scale can result in significant reductions in the losses caused by droughts and that it can also lead to an increase in the quantity and quality of crops.

Does the Commission have any knowledge of the beneficial effects of mycorrhizal technology in Poland? Is it planning any action to support this technology and make it more widely available in Europe, or at least to support research into the development of this technology?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(9 October 2013)

The Commission is aware of the experiments in Poland concerning the use of mycorrhizal fungi in nutrient and water acquisition. The beneficial effect of mycorrhizal fungi has also been reported several times in the scientific literature. The Commission is funding under FP7 ([1])a number of projects that aim at studying the effect of drought on plants and finding solutions via selective breeding. In particular, the projects ROOTOPOWER (Empowering root-targeted strategies to minimise abiotic stress impacts on horticultural crops) ([2]) and EURoot (Enhancing resource Uptake from Roots under stress in cereal crops) ([3]) focus on studies of the root systems of tomatoes and cereals respectively, and tackle a number of abiotic stresses, including drought. Emphasis is also put on unravelling the contribution of mycorrhizal fungi to plant performance under stress conditions, and the use of the potential mycorrhizal effectiveness as a tool for breeding.

Further research into this interesting approach will probably be supported under Horizon 2020 ([4]), the next EU funding Programme for Research and Innovation, where key elements will be a greater emphasis on innovation and addressing problems within the societal and global challenges facing us today. This will concern in particular research and innovation geared towards coping with droughts and other extreme events. The European Innovation Partnership 'Agricultural productivity and sustainability' ([5]), which will be implemented further under Horizon 2020 and the new Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), can contribute to this.

([1]) The Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7, 2007-2013).
([2]) www.rootopower.eu
([3]) www.euroot.eu
([4]) Societal Challenge 2, Crop Production Research.
([5]) COM(2012)79, 29/02/2012.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-008401/13
do Komisji
Bogdan Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz (PPE), Andrzej Grzyb (PPE), Jolanta Emilia Hibner (PPE), Bogusław Sonik (PPE), Wojciech Michał Olejniczak (S&D) oraz Jan Kozłowski (PPE)
(11 lipca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wstępne wyniki konsultacji społecznych dot. gazu łupkowego

W grudniu 2012 r. Komisja Europejska rozpoczęła konsultacje społeczne dotyczące rozwoju gazu łupkowego w Europie. Wstępne dane z przeprowadzonych konsultacji społecznych pokazują, że oceny były różne.

Nadesłano 23 631 odpowiedzi na ankiety – w tym 96, 5 % od podmiotów indywidualnych, 707 odpowiedzi od organizacji, 115 odpowiedzi o instytucji publicznych. 53 % ankiet przesłano z Polski, 15 % z Francji, 14 % z Rumunii, 6 % z Hiszpanii, 4 % z Niemiec, 2 % z Belgii, 1,5 % z Wielkiej Brytanii.

— Czy Komisja zamierza na podstawie wyników konsultacji z państw takich jak Łotwa (1 ankieta), Grecja (3 ankiety) i Estonia (4 ankiety) wysuwać pogłębione wnioski dla całej Unii Europejskiej?

— Czy Komisja uważa, że odpowiedzi udzielone przez mieszkańców, dotyczące szczegółowych kwestii prawnych i technologicznych, są miarodajne?

— Czy Komisja zamierza ustalić na ich podstawie dalsze działania dotyczące gazu ziemnego z łupków? Mając na uwadze znikomy odzew społeczny w większości Państw Członkowskich, czy Komisja planuje poszerzenie formuły konsultacji?

— Jakiej metody analizy i ekstrapolacji danych źródłowych będzie używać Komisja przy opracowywaniu dalszych zaleceń oraz finalnego raportu?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Janeza Potočnika w imieniu Komisji
(18 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiotowe konsultacje społeczne są częścią szerszego procesu konsultacji, który został zaplanowany tak, by zaangażować zainteresowane osoby fizyczne oraz inne podmioty w prowadzone obecnie prace Komisji, i dotyczą one zarówno szans, jak i zagrożeń związanych z wykorzystywaniem niekonwencjonalnych paliw kopalnych, takich jak gaz łupkowy.

W ramach tych konsultacji swoje uwagi może wprawdzie wyrazić każdy obywatel UE, jednak przewiduje się, że napłyną one głównie z państw posiadających złoża gazu łupkowego, w których prowadzona jest obecnie debata publiczna na ten temat.

Uwagi przekazane – w tym również przez poszczególnych obywateli – w ramach konsultacji społecznych będą stanowiły jedno ze źródeł informacji wykorzystywanych przez Komisję w trakcie przygotowywania oceny skutków. W pracach nad nią Komisja sięgnie jednak również do innych materiałów, w tym bardziej fachowych uwag zainteresowanych stron zgromadzonych w trakcie warsztatów, otrzymanych w postaci specjalistycznych stanowisk i opinii, zawartych w publikacjach akademickich i badaniach międzynarodowych, a także przekazanych przez państwa członkowskie.

Wyniki konsultacji zostaną przedstawione zarówno w postaci wartości bezwzględnych, jak i w formie uwzględniającej liczbę ludności poszczególnych państw członkowskich oraz reprezentatywność respondentów, ich wiedzę fachową i odpowiedzialność publiczną.

Wyniki konsultacji będą rozważane przy ocenie wariantów strategicznych opracowanych w związku z „Ramami oceny dotyczącymi środowiska, klimatu i energii, umożliwiającymi bezpieczne niekonwencjonalne wydobycie węglowodorów", z uwzględnieniem ich solidności i wiarygodności.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008401/13
to the Commission
Bogdan Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz (PPE), Andrzej Grzyb (PPE), Jolanta Emilia Hibner (PPE), Bogusław Sonik (PPE), Wojciech Michał Olejniczak (S&D) and Jan Kozłowski (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Preliminary results of public consultations on shale gas

In December 2012, the Commission began public consultations on developing the use of shale gas in Europe. Preliminary data from the consultations show that a variety of different opinions have been expressed on the subject.

A total of 23 631 responses were submitted, including 96.5% from individuals, 707 from organisations and 115 from public institutions. Fifty-three per cent came from Poland, 15% from France, 14% from Romania, 6% from Spain, 4% from Germany, 2% from Belgium and 1.5% from the United Kingdom.

— Does the Commission intend, on the basis of the results of the consultations obtained from Member States such as Latvia (one response), Greece (three responses) and Estonia (four responses), to draw detailed conclusions which will affect the whole of the European Union?

— Does the Commission think that responses made by ordinary citizens on detailed questions of law and technology are reliable as a source of information?

— Does the Commission intend to use these responses as the basis for initiating further action on natural gas obtained from shale? In view of the negligible public response in the majority of the Member States, is the Commission planning to undertake more extensive consultations?

— What method of analysis and extrapolation of raw data is the Commission going to use when developing further recommendations and drawing up the final report?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(18 September 2013)

This public consultation is part of a broader consultation process designed to involve interested individuals and stakeholders in the Commission's ongoing work and addresses the opportunities as well as the risks of unconventional fossil fuels such as shale gas.

While all EU citizens are invited to contribute to the consultation, it is expected that submissions come primarily from countries with shale gas resources and where a public debate on the subject is ongoing.

Responses to public consultation — including those submitted by individual citizens — will serve as one of the inputs to the Commission's work on impact assessment. However, many other inputs are used for the impact assessment work: more specialised stakeholders' views collected during workshops, received through position papers, academic papers, Member States and international studies.

Consultation results will be presented both in unweighted form and weighted form, taking into account the population of different Member States, the representativeness of respondents, their expertise or their public responsibility.

The results of the consultation will be considered in the assessment of policy options developed in conjunction with the 'Environmental, Climate and Energy Assessment Framework to Enable Safe and Secure Unconventional Hydrocarbon Extraction' while taking into account their robustness and reliability.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-008402/13
adresată Comisiei
Corina Crețu (S&D)
(11 iulie 2013)

Subiect: Dezastre naturale

Inundațiile din ultimele săptămâni, care au afectat grav centrul și estul Europei, și caracterul transfrontalier al catastrofelor determinate de schimbările climatice sunt o dovadă clară a necesității unei acțiuni coordonate la nivelul Uniunii Europene.

Exista, din păcate, o serie de carențe în gestiunea răspunsului la catastrofe. Fondul European de Solidaritate a fost creat după inundațiile grave din 2002, tocmai pentru a susține victimele unor provocări similare. Din păcate, acest instrument de solidaritate comunitară nu își poate îndeplini acum menirea din cauza blocajului bugetar, care a fost determinat inclusiv de opoziția unor state membre față de suplimentarea Fondului de solidaritate.

Europa este predispusă la inundații majore. Avem, din 2001, Mecanismul de protecție civilă, există acest Fond de solidaritate, dar e evident că frecvența și intensitatea dezastrelor, implicit nevoia sporită de asistență, ne obligă la coordonare și eficiență mai mari. Capacitatea europeană de gestionare a catastrofelor naturale trebuie să includă un sistem de prevenire și de evacuări preventive în caz de pericol și un centru de reacție urgentă, pentru a coordona intervenția.

Are în vedere Comisia o restructurare a Fondului de solidaritate după modelul bugetului pentru ajutor umanitar — disponibil pentru crizele umanitare din afara UE — astfel încât sumele să poată fi alocate în regim de urgență?

Răspuns dat de dl Hahn în numele Comisiei
(13 septembrie 2013)

Temeiul juridic al Fondului de Solidaritate este diferit de cel al ajutorului umanitar, deoarece este finanțat din credite care sunt în plus față de cadrul bugetar normal al UE, de la caz la caz. Acest mod de finanțare al Fondului de solidaritate a fost recent confirmat în cadrul financiar pentru 2014-2020 și în acordul interinstituțional însoțitor. Având în vedere faptul că Comisia a prezentat recent o propunere de regulament de modificare a Regulamentului privind Fondul de solidaritate ([1]) care conține o serie de elemente destinate accelerării plăților, ea nu intenționează și nu are posibilitatea să alinieze Fondul de solidaritate cu instrumentele ajutorului umanitar.

([1]) COM(2013)522 din 25 iulie 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008402/13
to the Commission
Corina Crețu (S&D)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Natural disasters

The floods of recent weeks that seriously affected Central and Eastern Europe, and the cross-border nature of climate change-driven disasters, provide clear evidence for the need for coordinated action at EU level.

Unfortunately however, there are a number of shortcomings with regard to disaster response management. The European Union Solidarity Fund was created following the serious flooding of 2002, precisely to support the victims of similar challenges. Regrettably, this instrument of community solidarity cannot now fulfil its mission due to budget deadlock, which was caused, amongst other things, by some Member States opposing the topping up of the Solidarity Fund.

Europe is prone to major floods. Since 2001, we have had the Community Mechanism for Civil Protection and the aforementioned EU Solidarity Fund, but it is evident that the frequency and intensity of disasters represent an increased need for assistance, requiring greater coordination and efficiency. EU capacity for managing natural disasters must include an early warning prevention and evacuation system in the event of danger, and an emergency response centre to coordinate interventions.

Does the Commission envisage a restructuring of the Solidarity Fund based on the budgetary model for humanitarian aid, available for humanitarian crises outside the EU, so that funds can be allocated on an emergency basis?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(13 September 2013)

The legal basis of the Solidarity Fund is different from that for humanitarian aid as it is financed with appropriations raised over and above the normal EU budget on a case by case basis. This way of financing the Solidarity Fund has just been confirmed in the financial framework for 2014-20 and the accompanying Interinstitutional Agreement. Given that the Commission has just presented a proposal for a regulation amending the Solidarity Fund Regulation ([1]) which contains a number of elements intended to speed up payments it has no intention or the possibility of aligning the Solidarity Fund with the instruments for humanitarian aid.

([1]) COM(2013) 522 of 25 July 2013.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-008403/13
adresată Comisiei
Corina Crețu (S&D)
(11 iulie 2013)

Subiect: Primul pas în reconstrucția Europei sociale trebuie să fie crearea de locuri de muncă pentru tineri

Pentru combaterea șomajului care afectează tânăra generație, au fost asigurate 6 miliarde de euro, după ce Uniunea Europeană a alocat 1 600 de miliarde pentru salvarea băncilor.

Primul pas în reconstrucția Europei sociale trebuie să fie crearea de locuri de muncă pentru tineri. În acest sens, consider că este necesară suplimentarea bugetului alocat Inițiativei privind ocuparea forței de muncă în rândul tinerilor.

Ce măsuri are în vedere Comisia pentru a stimula crearea de locuri de muncă, îmbunătățirea competențelor lucrătorilor și corelarea mai atentă a calificărilor cu necesarul de pe piața forței de muncă?

Răspuns dat de dl Andor în numele Comisiei
(30 august 2013)

Eforturile Comisiei de a spori numărul de oferte de muncă au fost subliniate în special în Pachetul privind ocuparea forței de muncă din aprilie 2012 ([1]). Pachetul a propus consolidarea creării de locuri de muncă în toate sectoarele economiei prin: încurajarea cererii de locuri de muncă (de exemplu, prin subvenții la angajare specifice, reducerea sarcinii fiscale asupra costului forței de muncă, promovarea spiritului antreprenorial și a activităților independente, transformarea muncii informale sau nedeclarate într-o încadrare în muncă reglementată, stimularea salariilor nete), exploatând pe deplin potențialul de creare de locuri de muncă din sectoarele industriale în creștere, precum economia ecologică, sectorul serviciilor sociale și de sănătate și economia digitală, și prin mobilizarea instrumentelor financiare ale UE menite să sprijine crearea de locuri de muncă.

În ceea ce privește îmbunătățirea competențelor tinerilor în funcție de nevoile pieței forței de muncă, statele membre au adoptat, la 22 aprilie 2013, o recomandare a Consiliului privind înființarea unei garanții pentru tineret ([2]), care stabilește cum ar trebui create programe complexe menite să îmbunătățească integrarea tinerilor pe piața forței de muncă. Garanția pentru tineret cuprinde măsuri destinate să crească nivelul de competențe (de exemplu, programe de învățământ sau programe de formare cu rolul de a oferi o a doua șansă) și numărul de locuri de muncă disponibile (de exemplu, subvenții țintite și bine concepute pentru salarii și angajări în câmpul muncii, pentru a încuraja angajatorii să creeze noi oportunități pentru tineri).

Recenta Comunicare a Comisiei intitulată „Apel la acțiune pentru combaterea șomajului în rândul tinerilor” ([3]) prezintă alte propuneri menite să sprijine statele membre în eforturile lor de combatere a șomajului în rândul tinerilor, inclusiv privind punerea în aplicare rapidă a garanției pentru tineret, prin utilizarea FSE, prin accelerarea utilizării resurselor bugetare din cadrul inițiativei „Locuri de muncă pentru tineri”, prin sprijinirea IMM-urilor și prin alte măsuri destinate să faciliteze tranziția de la școală la viața activă.

([1]) COM(2012) 173 final, 18.4.2012.
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2013:120:0001:0006:RO:PDF
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0447:FIN:RO:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008403/13
to the Commission
Corina Crețu (S&D)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: The first step in reconstructing Social Europe must be job creation for young people

EUR 6 billion have been provided to combat youth unemployment, after the European Union had allocated EUR 1 600 billion to save the banks.

The first step in reconstructing Social Europe must be job creation for young people. In this regard, I believe that it is necessary to supplement the budget allocated to the youth employment initiative.

What measures does the Commission envisage to stimulate the creation of jobs, the improvement of workers' skills and a closer correlation of qualifications with the needs of the labour market?

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

Commission efforts to boost the number of jobs on offer were outlined in particular in the Employment Package of April 2012 ([1]). The Package proposed to step up job creation across the economy by: encouraging labour demand (e.g.: through targeted hiring subsidies, reducing labour taxation, promoting entrepreneurship and self-employment, conversion of informal or undeclared work into regular employment, boosting take home pay) fully exploiting the job creation potential of rising industries, such as the green economy, the health and social care sector and the digital economy; and mobilising EU financial instruments in support of job creation.

As regards the improvement of skills of young people in line with labour market needs, Member States adopted a Council Recommendation on Establishing a Youth Guarantee ([2]) on 22 April 2013, which sets out how comprehensive schemes improving young people's integration into the labour market should be designed. The Youth Guarantee comprises both measures that enhance skills levels (for example second-chance education programmes or skills training), and that increase the number of available jobs (e.g. targeted and well-designed wage and recruitment subsidies to encourage employers to create new opportunities for young people).

The Commission's recent Communication '*Call to action on youth unemployment*' ([3]) presents further proposals to support Member States in the fight again youth unemployment, including on rapid implementation of the Youth Guarantee; the use of the ESF; the front-loading of budgetary resources under the Youth Employment Initiative; support for SMEs; and other measures to ease the transition from education to work.

([1]) COM(2012) 173 final of 18 April 2012.
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2013:120:0001:0006:EN:PDF
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=10298&langId=en

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008404/13
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Descentralização Serviços EURES

Numa recente visita ao à Associação Empresarial de Viana do Castelo, entidade que trabalha com o Programa EURES da União Europeia, a direção desta referiu que considera existirem lacunas ao nível da descentralização de meios e recursos humanos no quadro do Programa EURES. Especificamente, foi-me relatado que as entidades que gerem o Programa se concentram, sobretudo, em Lisboa, o que provoca um desconhecimento em relação ao trabalho efetivo das empresas que estão sedeadas nos diversos distritos de Portugal

Assim sendo, pergunto à Comissão:

— Qual a avaliação que faz da execução e dos resultados do Programa EURES, em Portugal, nos últimos anos?

— Tem prevista alguma medida para reforçar o quadro de recursos humanos que trabalham com o Programa EURES, nomeadamente promovendo um trabalho de maior proximidade com as empresas?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(4 de setembro de 2013)

O Instituto de Emprego e Formação Profissional ([1]) executa o programa EURES em Portugal.

Esse serviço conta com 35 membros do pessoal: 29 Conselheiros EURES ([2]), dos quais 12 a nível regional. O Painel de Avaliação do Mercado Único ([3]) revela que o desempenho do EURES Portugal é adequado no que se refere ao rácio Conselheiros EURES — população total e ao número de contactos com os candidatos a emprego.

Apesar de o IEFP se encontrar sob grande pressão, existe uma intenção clara de melhorar a prestação de serviços EURES através da sua integração nos principais serviços de emprego. Os gestores e os funcionários dos centros de emprego descentralizados receberam informações e formação sobre o programa EURES e existem serviços de atendimento que prestam informações básicas sobre a mobilidade e o recrutamento transnacional a candidatos a emprego e empregadores. Em 2012, foram dispensadas mais de 40 ações de formação a mais de 600 membros (cerca de 1/5) do IEFP, um processo que irá continuar.

Estão a ser realizadas atividades descentralizadas como as Jornadas Europeias do Emprego organizadas anualmente em diferentes cidades como Coimbra, Porto, Braga e Aveiro. Em fevereiro-março de 2013, o «Welcome to Germany Tour» mobilizou 9 cidades no continente. Desde abril-maio de 2013, 14 cidades foram visitadas por uma campanha informativa sobre as opções de empregabilidade para os jovens, inclusive através do EURES.

O EURES Portugal está também a organizar eventos específicos de recrutamento com uma elevada participação de empregadores estrangeiros (o Dia Europeu do Emprego de abril de 2013, em Lisboa, centrou-se nos engenheiros ([4])) e, ao mesmo tempo, encontra-se a desenvolver relações privilegiadas com parceiros da Europa do Norte e Central.

([1]) IEFP.
([2]) Na maior parte dos casos a tempo parcial, 50 %.
([3]) http://wcmcom-ec-europa-eu-wip.wcm3vue.cec.eu.int:8080/internal_market/scoreboard/performance_by_governance_tool/eures/index_en.htm#maincontentSec2
([4]) www.engineersmobilitydays.eu

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008404/13
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Decentralisation of EURES services

On a recent visit to the Viana do Castelo Business Association, a body that works with the European Union EURES programme, its management commented that it believes there are gaps in the decentralisation of physical and human resources within the EURES programme. In particular, I was told that the bodies managing the programme are mostly concentrated in Lisbon, which means they know little about the actual work carried out by businesses located in other areas of Portugal.

— What is the Commission's assessment of the performance and results of the EURES programme in Portugal in recent years?

— Are there any plans to strengthen the network of human resources working on the EURES programme, namely in promoting closer working relations with businesses?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(4 September 2013)

The Institute for Employment and Vocational Training ([1]) delivers EURES in Portugal.

It counts 35 staff members: 29 EURES Advisers ([2]), of which 12 at the regional level. The Single Market Scoreboard ([3]) shows that the performance of EURES Portugal is appropriate when it comes to the ratio EURES advisers — total population and the number of contacts with job seekers.

While IEFP is under considerable strain, there is a clear intention to improve EURES service delivery by integrating it into core employment services. Line Managers and employment officers of decentralised offices have received information and training on EURES, there are complementary front office support to provide basic information on mobility and transnational recruitment services to jobseekers and employers. In 2012 over 40 training actions were delivered to more than 600 members (approx. 1/5th) of IEFP and this will continue.

Decentralised activities are being carried out with annual European Job Days organised in different cities such as Coimbra, Porto Braga and Aveiro. In February-March 2013, a Welcome to Germany tour engaged 9 cities in the mainland. Since April-May 2013 an informative tour about employability options for young people, including through EURES, has reached 14 cities.

EURES Portugal is also organising targeted recruitment events with a high attendance of foreign employers (the April 2013 European Job Day in Lisbon focused on engineers ([4])) while privileged relations with North and Central European partners are being developed.

([1]) IEFP.
([2]) Mostly part-time, 50%.
([3]) http://wcmcom-ec-europa-eu-wip.wcm3vue.cec.eu.int:8080/internal_market/scoreboard/performance_by_governance_tool/eures/index_en.htm#maincontentSec2
([4]) www.engineersmobilitydays.eu

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008405/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Declarações da Comissão Europeia sobre um possível segundo programa para Portugal

O diário espanhol «El Pais», citando fontes da Comissão Europeia, noticiou ontem que «Bruxelas prepara uma segunda linha de ajuda» a Portugal. A notícia referia-se a um novo programa após o término do atual programa UE-FMI. O ponto de partida para a definição deste segundo programa é a constatação do facto de que nenhum dos problemas que o atual programa se propunha resolver foi resolvido, pelo contrário, tudo se agravou, sendo notória a improbabilidade de regresso aos ditos mercados financeiros sem a imposição ao país de taxas de juro usurárias e proibitivas. A Comissão Europeia, reagindo à notícia, afirmou que não está neste momento a ser negociado nenhum programa, mas avançou com a possibilidade de se considerarem opções para facilitar o que designou de «saída suave» de Portugal do programa atual. Já no passado dia 18 de junho, o Comissário dos Assuntos Económicos havia afirmado que a Comissão estava a «avaliar que tipo de acordos cautelares podem ser necessários ou úteis para assegurar que a saída do programa venha a ser uma história de sucesso».

Perguntamos à Comissão:

1. Qual o resultado, até à data, da avaliação mencionada pelo Comissário para os Assuntos Económicos? Quando espera ter concluída a referida avaliação?

2. Quais as características dos acordos/programas cautelares que estão a ser considerados pela Comissão?

3. Qual a condicionalidade que lhes está associada?

4. Foi já discutida com o Governo português esta possibilidade?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(19 de setembro de 2013)

Como princípio geral, a Comissão não comenta informações publicadas nos meios de comunicação social, em especial quando tais informações se baseiam em rumores ou em citações de fontes anónimas, como é o caso.

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. Infelizmente, a recente crise política provocou um retrocesso, uma vez que os mercados reagiram de forma negativa aos riscos em termos da indispensável coesão no seio do Governo. Todavia, na sequência da 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 especular com qual seria o esquema mais adequado para Portugal, neste momento parece provável que Portugal possa solicitar algum tipo de apoio para facilitar o seu regresso aos mercados.Os instrumentos disponíveis são bem conhecidos. 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.

([1]) Linha de Crédito Preventiva Condicionada.
([2]) Transações Monetárias Diretas.
([3]) Linha de Crédito com Condições Reforçadas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008405/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Statements by the European Commission on a possible second aid programme for Portugal

Quoting sources at the European Commission, the Spanish daily newspaper '*El País*' reported yesterday that 'Brussels is preparing a second bailout plan' for Portugal. The report referred to a new programme after the current EU-IMF programme comes to an end. The starting point for this second programme is the realisation that none of the problems the current programme aimed to resolve has actually been resolved. In fact the opposite is true, things have got worse and it is widely acknowledged that the country is unlikely to return to said financial markets without usurious and prohibitive interest rates being imposed. Reacting to the report, the Commission confirmed that no programme was currently being negotiated, but that it was pursuing the possibility that options might be considered to facilitate what it called Portugal's 'smooth exit' from the current programme. On 18 June, the Commissioner for Economic and Monetary Affairs had already stated that the Commission was 'assessing what sort of precautionary arrangements might be necessary or useful to ensure that exit from the programme was a success story'.

1. What are the results to date of the assessment mentioned by the Commissioner for Economic and Monetary Affairs? When does the Commission expect to have completed this assessment?

2. What are the features of the precautionary arrangements/programmes being considered by the Commission?

3. What conditions are attached to them?

4. Has this option been discussed with the Portuguese Government yet?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(19 September 2013)

As a general principle, the Commission does not comment press reports, particularly when these are based on rumours or quotes by anonymous sources, as it is the case here.

The question of how Portugal can ensure a smooth exit from the current programme has been discussed between the Portuguese authorities and its international partners for some time. Unfortunately, the recent political crisis has meant a setback in this regard, as markets reacted negatively to the risks for the indispensable cohesion in the government. However, following 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 to markets, so that Portugal, in cooperation with its international 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 which scheme will be the most suitable for Portugal, at the present stage it seems likely that Portugal may require some kind of backstop to faciliate its return to markets.The tools available are well known. 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 programmes come with some form of conditionality which would, however, not be very different from post-programme surveillance that will apply to Portugal in any case in accordance with the provisions of the Two-Pack.

([1]) Precautionary Conditions Credit Line.
([2]) Outright Monetary Transactions.
([3]) Enhanced Conditions Credit Line.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008406/13
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Logística — Fundo de Auxílio Europeu às Pessoas Mais Carenciadas

Numa recente visita ao Centro Distrital de Segurança Social de Viana do Castelo, foram-nos transmitidas várias preocupações em relação à operacionalidade do Fundo de Auxílio Europeu às Pessoas mais Carenciadas. Tendo em conta a experiência de trabalho com o anterior fundo, foi-nos dito que um dos maiores problemas se relacionava com a dificuldade de organizar o processo de distribuição de alimentos, que acarreta enormes dificuldades do ponto de vista da necessidade de mobilizar avultados meios financeiros, humanos e técnicos.

Assim, pergunta-se à Comissão:

Tendo em conta que está ainda em elaboração e discussão o futuro regulamento do Fundo de Auxílio Europeu às Pessoas Mais Carenciadas, de que forma pretende a Comissão simplificar o processo de distribuição de alimentos?

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

A proposta da Comissão prevê que o Fundo Europeu de Auxílio às Pessoas Mais Carenciadas seja executado em gestão partilhada, permitindo, assim, a cada Estado-Membro adaptar da melhor forma as modalidades de distribuição de alimentos, inclusivamente no sentido de uma simplificação do processo. Prevê-se também que o Fundo possa financiar medidas de assistência técnica dirigidas a organizações parceiras e de reforço das suas capacidades.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008406/13
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Logistics: Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived

On a recent visit to the Viana do Castelo District Social Security Centre, several concerns were raised with us about the operation of the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived. Considering the experience of working with the previous fund, we were told that one of the biggest problems was the difficulty of organising food distribution as a huge amount of effort is required to mobilise substantial financial, human and technical resources.

Given that future regulations governing the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived are still being drafted and discussed, how will the Commission simplify the food distribution process?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Andor au nom de la Commission
(30 août 2013)

La proposition de la Commission prévoit que le Fonds européen d'aide aux plus démunis sera mis en œuvre en gestion partagée, permettant ainsi à chaque État membre d'adapter au mieux les modalités de la distribution de nourriture, y compris dans le sens d'une simplification. Il est également prévu que le Fonds puisse financer des mesures d'assistance technique à des organisations partenaires et de renforcement des capacités de celles-ci.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008407/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Conferência internacional de alto nível para o desenvolvimento do Mali — consequências

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-005813/2013, a Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante declarou, em nome da Comissão, que «O seguimento dado a esta conferência será crucial para incentivar ainda mais a execução do plano de recuperação sustentável e coordenar a disponibilização efetiva de todos os compromissos financeiros assumidos. As autoridades malianas e a comunidade internacional decidiram dar um seguimento de alto nível à conferência, em Bruxelas, através de reuniões de representantes das capitais na sede, realizadas alternadamente em Bamaco e fora do Mali, e com a participação das partes interessadas não-governamentais. A UE, a França e o Mali, na qualidade de copresidentes da conferência de alto nível, estão determinados a tomar rapidamente iniciativas com base nessas reuniões».

Assim, pergunto à Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante:

— A UE, a França e o Mali tomaram já iniciativas com base nessas reuniões?

— Pode indicar quais e se já estão em aplicação?

— Que iniciativas propôs ou propõe visando a recuperação e a estabilização do Estado maliano?

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

Na sequência da Conferência de alto nível de doadores para o Mali, realizada em 15 de maio de 2013, as autoridades do Mali manifestaram a sua determinação em acompanhar de perto a aplicação do plano para a recuperação sustentável do Mali 2013-2014 e o respeito dos compromissos dos doadores. Para o efeito, foi lançada a ideia de estabelecer um mecanismo específico de acompanhamento através de reuniões de representantes das capitais, como complemento da plataforma local existente de coordenação dos doadores.

O governo de transição não tinha condições para lançar este processo, mas espera-se que o Presidente recentemente eleito e a sua administração assumam a plena responsabilidade deste processo e promovam a criação do referido mecanismo de acompanhamento. Diplomatas da UE manterão consultas frequentes com as autoridades do Mali a este respeito, no âmbito do seu diálogo político.

A UE continua a ser o principal doador do Mali, com 1,28 mil milhões de EUR em 15 de maio de 2013. A UE presta uma atenção especial ao restabelecimento da autoridade do Estado e dos serviços de base em todo o país. No centro e no norte do Mali, em especial, uma percentagem importante do apoio da UE é prestado com o objetivo de estabilizar o país e estabelecer a interligação das operações de emergência, reabilitação e desenvolvimento.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008407/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — International high level conference for the development of Mali: consequences

In response to my Written Question E-005813/2013, the Vice-President/High Representative said, on behalf of the Commission, that 'The follow-up to this conference will be crucial to further encourage the implementation of the Plan for the Sustainable Recovery and coordinate the actual disbursement of all pledges made. The Malian authorities and the international community agreed to provide high-level follow-up to the Brussels conference via meetings of representatives of the capitals at headquarters, held alternately in Bamako and outside Mali, and involving non-governmental stakeholders. The EU, France and Mali as co-chairs of the high level conference are determined to take swiftly initiatives on this follow-up.'

— Have the EU, France and Mali already taken initiatives based on these meetings?

— Can the Vice-President/High Representative say what these initiatives are and whether they have been implemented?

— What initiatives has she proposed or does she propose to aid the recovery and stabilisation of Mali?

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

Following the 15 May 2013 high level donor's conference for Mali, Malian authorities have expressed their determination to closely monitor the implementation of the 2013-2014 Plan for the Sustainable Recovery of Mali and the respect of donor's commitments. To that effect, the idea was raised to establish a specific follow-up mechanism which will meet regularly at capitals' level as a complement to the existing local platform for donors' coordination.

While the transition Government was not in a position to launch this process, it is expected that the newly elected President and his administration will take full ownership of this process and call for the establishment of such follow-up mechanism. EU diplomats will keep consulting closely with Malian authorities on this issue as part of their political dialogue.

The EU remains the largest donor in Mali with EUR 1.28 billion pledged on 15 May 2013. The EU pays specific attention to the reestablishment of State authority and basic services throughout the country. In the centre and the north of Mali more particularly, an important proportion of EU support is delivered with the objective to stabilise the country and link relief, rehabilitation and development.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008408/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Reforço do empenhamento da União no Mali e no Sahel

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-005031/2013, a Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante declarou, em nome da Comissão, que «à luz dos recentes desenvolvimentos no Mali e dos ataques terroristas em toda a região, a UE está determinada a reforçar o seu empenhamento em conformidade com as orientações das recentes conclusões do Conselho sobre o Mali e o Sahel.»

Assim, pergunto à Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante:

Como se materializará este reforço do empenhamento da União no Mali e no Sahel?

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

Em 22 de julho de 2013, o Conselho dos Negócios Estrangeiros convidou a AR/VP e a Comissão a apresentar um relatório de execução da estratégia da UE para a segurança e o desenvolvimento no Sael e propostas no sentido de melhorar a sua aplicação. A AR/VP e a Comissão irão, em breve, dar seguimento a este pedido.

Mais concretamente no Mali, a UE, tanto individual como coletivamente, aumentou significativamente o nível da cooperação para o desenvolvimento e da ajuda humanitária. Os compromissos assumidos pela UE na conferência de doadores de 15 de maio cifram-se em 1,28 mil milhões de EUR (só a Comissão Europeia anunciou 520 milhões de EUR) em apoio ao plano nacional 2013-2014 para o desenvolvimento sustentável. A título de complemento à missão de formação e consultoria da UE no domínio militar, a UE está atualmente a analisar as opções para apoiar as forças de segurança interna.

A UE continua determinada a fomentar projetos de desenvolvimento e segurança na região do Sael-Sara, tal como ilustrado nomeadamente pelo lançamento de duas missões civis da PCSD no ano passado (EUBAM Líbia, EUCAP Sael Níger) e pela iniciativa AGIR (*Alliance Globale pour les Initiatives Résilience*) com o objetivo de reforçar a resiliência no intuito de evitar as crises alimentares recorrentes no Sael e na África Ocidental. Neste contexto, a UE avaliará em breve o âmbito de aplicação da estratégia e dos programas regionais associados para os países vizinhos do Mali, do Níger e da Mauritânia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008408/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Enhancing the EU's engagement in Mali and the Sahel

Responding to my Question E-005031/2013, the Vice-President/High Representative stated, on behalf of the Commission, that 'In the light of recent developments in Mali and terrorist attacks in the region across the board, the EU is determined to enhance further its level of engagement along the lines of recent Council conclusions on Mali and the Sahel'.

How does the Vice-President/High Representative believe the EU's enhanced engagement in Mali and the Sahel will materialise?

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

On 22 July 2013, the Foreign Affairs Council invited the HR/VP and the Commission to present an implementation report of the EU Strategy for Security and Development in the Sahel and proposals to further enhance its implementation. The HR/VP and the Commission will address this request shortly.

In Mali specifically, the EU both collectively and individually has significantly increased the level of development cooperation and humanitarian aid. Pledges made by the EU at the 15 May donor's conference amount to EUR 1.28 billion (the European Commission alone announced EUR 520 million) in support of the 2013-2014 national plan for sustainable development. As a complement to the EU military training and advisory mission, the EU is currently considering options to support internal security forces.

In the Sahel-Saharan region across the board, the EU remains determined to enhance development and security projects, as illustrated notably by the launch of two CSDP civilian missions over the last year (EUBAM Libya, EUCAP SAHEL Niger) and by the AGIR (Alliance Globale pour les Initiatives Résilience) initiative to build resilience to avoid recurrent food crises in the Sahel and West Africa. In this context, the EU will shortly assess the scope of the strategy and related regional programs to countries surrounding Mali, Niger and Mauritania.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008409/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Missões PCSD em 2012 e 2013

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-005031/2013, a Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante declarou, em nome da Comissão, que «Em 2012 e 2013, a UE lançou três missões PCSD (Política Comum de Segurança e Defesa) — duas delas parcial ou totalmente dedicadas à luta contra o terrorismo e a criminalidade transnacional na Líbia e no Níger. Estes esforços para aumentar a capacidade local baseiam-se nos projetos de desenvolvimento executados pela UE na região, quer a título individual quer coletivamente.»

Assim, pergunto à Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante:

Que avaliação global faz das três missões PCSD e especificamente quanto ao reforço da capacidade local?

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

Os esforços das três missões, EUCAP Sael, EUCAP Nestor e EUBAM Líbia, visaram o desenvolvimento de capacidades nacionais nos respetivos países de acolhimento. Ao avaliar estas missões, importa ter em mente que tiveram um período de duração relativamente curto ([1]), o que dificulta a sua avaliação.

A EUCAP Sael Níger apoia o reforço das capacidades das forças de segurança do Níger (FSN) no combate ao terrorismo e à criminalidade organizada. A missão aconselha e assiste as autoridades a implementar a vertente de segurança da sua estratégia para a segurança e o desenvolvimento e apoia o desenvolvimento de sistemas de coordenação regional e internacional no domínio da luta contra o terrorismo e a criminalidade organizada.

Nos primeiros meses, a capacidade de apoio da missão não foi totalmente explorada devido a insuficiente apropriação pelo Níger e a deficiências a nível de equipamento, material e infraestruturas. No entanto, registam-se atualmente alguns resultados positivos, sendo também visível uma maior participação das autoridades nigerinas através da criação de um comité interministerial responsável pela execução.

A EUCAP NESTOR tem por objetivo apoiar as capacidades de segurança marítima em cinco países do Índico Ocidental. A missão desenvolveu uma boa cooperação com as autoridades, com base no êxito da cooperação paralela da UE com estes países na luta contra a pirataria, financiada pelo Instrumento de Estabilidade (IE) e pelo Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento (FED).

As ações no âmbito do IE cooperam com estas missões no desenvolvimento de capacidades locais a longo prazo. Em especial, o projeto relativo ao combate ao terrorismo no Sael, financiado pelo IE, apoia a aplicação da lei e as estruturas judiciais na região. Por seu turno, o projeto Marsic ([2]) financiado pelo IE apoia o intercâmbio de informações e de formação.

([1]) A EUCAP Nestor foi lançada a 16 de julho de 2012, a EUCAP Sael Níger a 8 de agosto de 2012 e a EUBAM Líbia só foi lançada a 23 de maio de 2013.

([2]) Reforça a segurança e proteção marítimas graças ao intercâmbio de informações e ao reforço de capacidades.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008409/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions in 2012 and 2013

In response to my Question E-005031/2013, the Vice-President/High Representative stated, on behalf of the Commission, that 'In 2012 and 2013, the EU launched three CSDP missions — two of them being partly or totally dedicated to the fight against terrorism and transnational crime in Libya and Niger. These efforts to increase local capacity build on development projects carried out by the EU both individually or collectively in the region'.

What is the Vice-President/High Representative's overall assessment of the three CSDP missions, especially with regard to strengthening local capacity?

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

EUCAP Sahel, EUCAP Nestor and EUBAM Libya were established in efforts to help build national capacity in their host countries. When assessing the missions, it is important to keep in mind that they have been in place for a short period of time ([1]) making an assessment difficult.

EUCAP Sahel Niger supports capacity building of the Nigerien Security Forces (NSF) to fight terrorism and organised crime. It advises and assists Authorities in the implementation of the security dimension of their Strategy for Security and Development as well as supports the development of regional and international coordination in the fight against terrorism and organised crime.

In its initial months mission's capacity to provide support was not fully exploited due to insufficient Nigerien ownership, equipment, material and infrastructure shortfalls. However, now, some positive results exist and increased buy-in from the Nigerian authorities is also noticeable through the establishment of an inter-ministerial committee in charge of implementation.

EUCAP Nestor aims to support maritime security capacities in five countries of the Western Indian Ocean. The mission developed good cooperation with authorities, building on the parallel successful cooperation of the EU with these countries in the fight against piracy funded through the Instrument for Stability (IfS) and the European Development Fund (EDF).

Actions under the IfS work alongside these missions in developing long term local capacities. In particular the IfS Counter Terrorism Sahel project supports law enforcement and judicial structures in the Sahel. Similarly, the IfS funded MARSIC ([2]) project supports information sharing and training.

([1]) EUCAP Nestor was launched 16 July 2012. EUCAP Sahel Niger was launched on 8 August 2012. EUBAM Libya was launched only on 23 May 2013.

([2]) Enhancing maritime security and safety through information sharing and capacity building.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008410/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Guiné-Bissau — roteiro de governo e eleições em 2013

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-005052/2013, a Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante, em nome da Comissão, declarou que «A Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente tem conhecimento de um recente acordo entre os dois principais partidos da Guiné-Bissau (PAIGC e PRS), que deverá conduzir a um governo mais inclusivo e à realização de eleições presidenciais e legislativas antes do final do corrente ano. No entanto, ainda se aguarda a apresentação de um roteiro pormenorizado.».

Assim, pergunto à Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante:

— Dispõe de informações adicionais a este respeito?

— Nomeadamente, dispõe de informações quanto a uma data para a apresentação do referido roteiro e à adesão que o mesmo concitaria por parte dos principais partidos guineenses?

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

As autoridades de transição guineenses anunciaram oficialmente, em 8 de julho, que as eleições legislativas terão lugar em 24 de novembro de 2013. Para além deste anúncio, até à data, não foi tornado público qualquer roteiro oficial pormenorizado para o processo eleitoral.

Esse roteiro está atualmente a ser debatido entre as autoridades de transição, a comissão eleitoral nacional e os partidos políticos. Encontram-se igualmente em curso discussões com o parlamento, e no âmbito deste órgão, na medida em que pode ser necessário introduzir uma série de alterações à lei eleitoral, de modo a ter em conta o sistema de recenseamento eleitoral escolhido (melhoria do registo manual nos cadernos eleitorais ou registo dos dados biométricos). Os principais partidos políticos já declararam publicamente a sua vontade de avançar com o processo eleitoral com base na melhoria do sistema de recenseamento manual. O fórum dos partidos da oposição (a maior parte dos quais não tem representação parlamentar) opõe-se a esta solução.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008410/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Guinea-Bissau: roadmap for government and elections in 2013

In response to my Question E-005052/2013, the Vice-President/High Representative, on behalf of the Commission, stated that 'The High Representative/Vice-President is aware of a recent agreement between the two leading parties of Guinea-Bissau (PAIGC and PRS), which should lead to a more inclusive government and presidential and parliamentary elections before the end of this year. Nevertheless, a detailed roadmap is still awaited'.

— Does the Vice-President/High Representative have any further information about this?

— In particular, does she have any information regarding a date when the aforementioned roadmap might be available and what support can be expected from the main parties in Guinea-Bissau?

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

The transitional authorities announced formally on the 8 July that general elections would take place on the 24 November 2013. Further to this annoucement, no official detailed roadmap for the electoral process has been made public yet.

The roadmap is being currently discussed among transitional authorities, National Electoral Commission and political parties. Discussions are also held with and within the Parliament, as a number of modifications of the Electoral Law might be necessary to take into account the electoral registration system chosen (improved manual registration versus biometric registration). The main political parties have publicly declared their willigness to go ahead with the electoral process on the basis of the improved manual registration system. The Forum of Opposition parties (most of them not represented at the Parliament) opposes it.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008411/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Guiné-Bissau — Missão de observação eleitoral

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-005052/2013, à Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante, em nome da Comissão, declarou que «está, com efeito, a estudar a possibilidade de uma missão de observação eleitoral na Guiné-Bissau».

Assim, pergunto à Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante:

— Quando tenciona apresentar a conclusão do referido estudo?

— Quais são, em seu entender, as vantagens e desvantagens, riscos e desafios inerentes ao envio de uma futura missão de observação eleitoral à Guiné-Bissau?

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

Está atualmente a ser revista a lista prioritária relativa às missões de observação eleitoral em 2013, devendo ser aprovada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente após consultas formais com os Estados-Membros e com o Parlamento. Não foi previsto o envio de uma missão de observação eleitoral da UE (MOE) à Guiné-Bissau devido aos fundos limitados disponíveis e, em especial, devido ao facto de na Guiné-Bissau o problema ter menos a ver com processos eleitorais deficientes do que com o desrespeito dos respetivos resultados.

Será proposta uma missão de peritos eleitorais da UE (MPE). Será assim enviado um pequeno grupo de peritos que irão trabalhar no terreno cerca de quatro semanas antes do dia das eleições, bem como acompanhar o processo eleitoral até à publicação dos resultados. Esta missão de peritos eleitorais irá avaliar igualmente a implementação das recomendações das duas últimas MOE da UE e propor no seu relatório, que será submetido à apreciação das novas autoridades, de que modo essas recomendações devem ser transpostas para o próximo ciclo eleitoral.

A UE contribuirá igualmente para o processo eleitoral com um apoio financeiro de 2 milhões de EUR através do Instrumento de Estabilidade e de 100 000 EUR através do programa de apoio eleitoral PALOP-TL. Apoiará também o trabalho da Comissão Nacional de Eleições através de assistência técnica, financiada ao abrigo do 10.° Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento (FED).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008411/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Guinea-Bissau: Electoral observation mission

In response to my Written Question E-005052/2013, the Vice-President/High Representative, on behalf of the Commission, said that '[she] is indeed considering the possibility of an electoral observation mission to Guinea-Bissau.'

— When will the Vice-President/High Representative present the conclusion of this consideration?

— What does she believe are the advantages and disadvantages, risks and challenges of sending a future electoral observation mission to Guinea-Bissau?

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

The review of the Priority List for Election Observation Missions in 2013 is currently being undertaken and will be approved by the HR/VP after formal consultations with the Member States and Parliament. No EU Electoral Observation Mission (EOM) for Guinea-Bissau has been foreseen given the limited funds available and, in particular, the fact that in Guinea-Bissau, the problem is less of defective electoral processes, than of failure to respect their results.

An EU Election Expert Mission (EEM) will be proposed. A small number of experts will be on the ground around four weeks prior to Election Day and will follow the process until the publication of results. The EEM will also assess the implementation of the past two EU EOM recommendations and, for the consideration of the new authorities, propose in their report how these recommendations should be implemented for the next electoral cycle.

The EU will also contribute to the electoral process with a financial support of EUR 2 million through the Instrument for Stability and of EUR 100 000 through the PALOP-TL Electoral Support programme. It will also support the work of the National Electoral Commission by means of technical assistance financed with 10th European Development Fund (EDF) resources.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008412/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — África Ocidental — luta contra a droga III

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-005075/2013, a Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante declarou, em nome da Comissão, que «A União Europeia financia vários projetos de luta contra a droga na África Ocidental, aos níveis regional e nacional, dos quais os mais importantes são: — Plano da Praia (plano de ação regional da Cedeao para resolução dos problemas crescentes do tráfico de estupefacientes, do crime organizado e da toxicodependência na África Ocidental) — 16,5 milhões de EUR, ao abrigo do 10.° Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento; — Reforço das capacidades da Cedeao para lutar contra o branqueamento de capitais, através do seu Grupo de Ação Intergovernamental contra o Branqueamento de Capitais na África Ocidental (GIABA), responsável pelo reforço das capacidades dos Estados-Membros para prevenir e controlar o branqueamento de capitais e o financiamento do terrorismo na região — 3 milhões de EUR, ao abrigo do 10.° Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento; — "Programa da Rota da Cocaína", para combater o crime organizado e o tráfico de estupefacientes em mais de 36 países, muitos da África Ocidental, financiado pela Comissão Europeia ao abrigo do Instrumento de Estabilidade (componente a longo prazo) — mais de 30 milhões de EUR.»

Assim, pergunto à Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante:

Como avalia a execução e condução dos referidos projetos?

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

Em julho de 2013, os Estados-Membros aprovaram no Comité do FED o apoio da UE ao Plano da Praia, no montante de 16,5 milhões de EUR, ao abrigo da dotação regional do 10.° FED. Espera-se que os desembolsos no âmbito desse projeto possam ter início até ao final do ano.

O projeto de luta contra o branqueamento de capitais, no valor de 3 milhões de EUR, ao abrigo do 10.° FED, será aprovado no Comité do FED em setembro de 2013, prevendo-se também que os desembolsos possam ter início em 2014.

No que se refere ao Programa da Rota da Cocaína, este programa foi lançado em 2009 com o objetivo de contribuir para a luta contra a criminalidade organizada e o tráfico de droga ao longo da chamada rota da cocaína, desde os principais países produtores na América Latina até à Europa em especial através das Caraíbas e da África Ocidental. Com uma dotação de 34,9 milhões de EUR até à data, o programa é constituído por oito projetos complementares, executados por diversos parceiros, tais como um consórcio de Estados-Membros da UE e organizações internacionais. No âmbito desses projetos são desenvolvidas atividades que procuram nomeadamente reforçar as capacidades em três domínios principais, a saber, a interceção do tráfico ilícito, a partilha de informações e a luta contra o branqueamento de capitais. No contexto de um acompanhamento e avaliações periódicas regulares e independentes efetuadas para todos os programas, em junho de 2013 foi concluída uma revisão intercalar desse programa levada a cabo por peritos independentes. Como referido por estes últimos, o principal potencial deste programa reside na reunião de parceiros da África Ocidental e da América Latina em serviços responsáveis pela aplicação da lei a nível internacional para combater a criminalidade organizada transnacional.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008412/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — West Africa: fight against drugs III

In response to my Written Question E-005075/2013, the Vice-President/High Representative said, on behalf of the Commission, that 'The EU is financing several projects to fight drugs in West Africa both at regional and national level, the most important of these projects include: — EUR 16.5 million under the 10th European Development Fund to support the Ecowas regional action plan to address the growing problem of illicit drug trafficking, organised crime and drug abuse in West Africa (Praia Plan); — EUR 3 million under the 10th EDF to support the strengthening of anti-money laundering capacities of Ecowas via its Inter-Governmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa (GIABA), which is responsible for strengthening the capacity of Member States towards the prevention and control of money laundering and terrorist financing in the region; — More than EUR 30 million under the so-called Cocaine Route Programme, funded by the European Commission under the Instrument for Stability (long term component) to fight against organised crime and drug trafficking in over 36 countries, many in West Africa.'

How does the Vice-President/High Representative view the implementation and management of these projects?

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

The EUR 16,5 million EU support to the Praia Plan under the 10th regional EDF envelope has been approved by Member States in the EDF Committee in July 2013. It is expected that disbursements under this project can start before the end of the year.

The EUR 3 million Anti-Money laundering project under the 10th EDF will pass in the EDF Committee next September 2013 and it is also expected that disbursments will be able to begin in 2014.

As regards the Cocaine Route Programme, it was launched in 2009 to contribute to the fight against organised crime and drug trafficking along the so-called Cocaine Route, from the main production countries in Latin America to Europe, primarily via the Caribbean and West Africa. With a commitment so far of EUR 34.9 million, it is composed of eight complementing projects, implemented by different partners, such as consortium of EU Member States and international organisations. These projects conduct activities, primarily capacity building, in three main domains, i.e. interception of illicit trafficking, information sharing and anti-money laundering. In the context of the regular, independent monitoring and periodical evaluations conducted for all programmes, a mid-term review of the Programme was completed in June 2013 by independent experts. As identified by the latter, the main potential of the Programme lies in gathering West African and Latin American partners into an international law enforcement community to combat transnational organised crime.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008413/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — África Ocidental — luta contra a droga II

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-005075/2013, a Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante declarou, em nome da Comissão, que «É também necessário desenvolver a capacidade das organizações regionais para resolverem este problema crescente. Importa igualmente não descurar os aspetos criminais do tráfico de estupefacientes nem o reforço das capacidades de aplicação coerciva da lei e de repressão em toda a região.»

Assim, pergunto à Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante:

Quais são, em seu entender, as principais lacunas na capacidade das organizações regionais e em que medida estas tem sido adequadamente colmatadas pela ajuda da União Europeia?

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

A Comunidade Económica dos Estados da África Ocidental (Cedeao) é a principal organização da África Ocidental e o principal interlocutor da UE em matéria de política regional. Apesar de a sua capacidade de absorção dos fundos da UE ter sido dececionante, a Cedeao permanece um interlocutor decisivo numa série de domínios em que a UE está diretamente interessada, designadamente a luta contra o tráfico de droga. A União Económica e Monetária da África Ocidental (UEMOA) apresenta a mesma falta de capacidades.

A falta de capacidades de ambas as organizações deve-se a uma série de razões, sendo a principal as carências existentes a nível do pessoal. Para fazer face a este problema, no âmbito do 10.° FED, a UE tem apoiado a Cedeao com um projeto de 8,9 milhões de EUR («apoio ao gestor orçamental regional») e a UEMOA com um projeto no valor de 10 milhões de EUR intitulado «projeto de apoio ao reforço das capacidades institucionais». Os desembolsos no âmbito destes projetos irão ter início no próximo ano e ajudarão a colmatar algumas das lacunas identificadas em matéria de capacidades de absorção e de execução.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008413/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — West Africa: fight against drugs II

In response to my Written Question E-005075/2013, the Vice-President/High Representative said, on behalf of the Commission, that 'The capacity of Regional Organisations to tackle this growing problem also needs to be developed. It is also important to address both the criminal aspects of drug trafficking and the reinforcement of law enforcement capacities across [sic] the Region.'

What does the Vice-President/High Representative believe are the main gaps in the capacity of regional organisations and to what extent have these been adequately addressed with the EU's help?

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

The Economic Community of West African States (Ecowas) is the main actor in West Africa and the EU's main interlocutor for regional affairs. Despite a disappointing absorption capacity of EU funds it remains a crucial interlocutor in a number of areas in which the EU in involved including the fight against drug trafficking. The West Africa Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU/UEMOA) has a similar lack of capacity.

The capacity challenges at Ecowas and WAEMU/UEMOA are due to a number of reasons among which one of the key ones is insufficient staffing. To tackle this issue, under the 10th EDF, the EU is supporting Ecowas with a EUR 8,9 million project 'Support to the Regional Authorising Officer' and UEMOA with a 10 million EURO project 'Projet d'appui au renforcement des capacities institutionelles PARCI-UEMOA', both projects will begin disbursements early next year and will help to address some of the shortcomings identified as far as absorption and implementation capacity is concerned.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008414/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Mali — necessidades do exército II

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-005049/2013, a Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante declarou que «o Comandante da Missão "EUTM Mali" encontra-se sob a autoridade direta da AR/VP» e que «a União Europeia criou, no quadro de pessoal militar da UE integrado no SEAE, um mecanismo de recolha e transmissão, que satisfaz as necessidades do Mali com dádivas bilaterais».

Assim, pergunto à Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante:

— Considera suficiente o apetrechamento do exército maliano face às ameaças que presentemente enfrenta?

— Quem ministra formação em matéria de direitos humanos e direito humanitário às forças malianas? Dispõe de dados que permitam avaliar o sucesso da referida formação?

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

A formação em matéria de direitos humanos e de direito internacional humanitário (DIH) do exército do Mali é ministrada pelo Reino Unido. O formador do Reino Unido trabalha em estreita cooperação com as agências da ONU (ACNUR, OCHA, UNFPA, ONU Mulheres, Unicef e ACDH), bem como com representantes do Comité Internacional da Cruz Vermelha no Mali. A equipa francesa de aconselhamento do primeiro batalhão formado verifica a boa execução das instruções, em coordenação com a EUTM. Não foram comunicados incidentes até ao presente.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008414/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — The needs of the Malian army II

In response to my Written Question E-005049/2013, the Vice-President/High Representative said that 'The EUTM Mali Mission Commander is under the direct authority of the HR/VP' and that 'The EU has established a "clearing house" mechanism, within the EU Military Staff as part of the EEAS that matches bilateral donations with Malian needs.'

— Does the Vice-President/High Representative believe that the Malian army is adequately equipped to deal with the threats it currently faces?

— Who is providing training on human rights and humanitarian law to Malian forces? Does the Vice-President/High Representative have any data for evaluating the success of this training?

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

The training on human rights and international humanitarian law (IHL) to the Malian armed forces is provided by the United Kingdom (UK). The UK trainer works in close cooperation with the UN agencies (UNHCR, UNOCHA, UNFPA, UN women, Unicef, OHCHR)and with ICRC representatives in Mali. The mentoring French team of the first trained battalion, in coordination with EUTM, checks the correct implementation of the instruction. No incidents are reported as of now.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008415/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Instrumentos da UE de reconhecimento mútuo adotados no domínio da detenção

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-005835/2013, a Sra. Vice-Presidente Viviane Reding declarou, em nome da Comissão, que «Com base nos resultados do Livro Verde, a Comissão tenciona centrar-se na aplicação adequada dos instrumentos da UE de reconhecimento mútuo adotados no domínio da detenção. Neste contexto, publicará nos próximos meses um relatório sobre a aplicação dos instrumentos jurídicos da UE na matéria. A correta implementação e aplicação destes instrumentos contribuirão para o bom funcionamento do espaço europeu de justiça. A Comissão está convicta de que a aplicação adequada dos instrumentos da UE pode contribuir para a redução da sobrelotação das prisões, bem como para a realização de poupanças nos orçamentos dos Estados-Membros despendidos com os estabelecimentos prisionais e a sua gestão.»

Assim, pergunta-se à Comissão:

— Pode indicar uma data mais precisa para a sua publicação?

— Em que medida a correta implementação e aplicação destes instrumentos contribuirão para o bom funcionamento do espaço europeu de justiça?

— Está em condições de quantificar, ainda que a título de estimativa, a referida redução da sobrelotação das prisões, bem como a realização de poupanças nos orçamentos dos Estados-Membros despendidos com os estabelecimentos prisionais e a sua gestão?

Resposta dada por Viviane Reding em nome da Comissão
(21 de agosto de 2013)

A publicação do referido relatório está prevista para o outono de 2013.

As decisões-quadro ([1]) têm de ser entendidas como um pacote de legislação coerente e complementar que aborda a questão da detenção de cidadãos noutros Estados-Membros e que pode levar a uma redução da aplicação da medida de detenção (preventiva), facilitando a reinserção social dos não-residentes.

Por exemplo, a aplicação correta da decisão europeia de controlo judicial por todos os Estados-Membros permitirá que um suspeito alvo de um mandado de detenção europeu possa mais facilmente regressar ao seu país de residência enquanto aguarda o julgamento noutro Estado-Membro. Isto permitirá evitar longos de prisão preventiva noutro Estado-Membro na sequência da execução de um mandado de detenção europeu antes da realização do julgamento.

Por outro lado, a aplicação da liberdade condicional e de sanções alternativas incentivará os juízes, que passam a ter a certeza de que a pessoa em causa é devidamente vigiada no outro Estado-Membro, a imporem sanções alternativas que possam ser executadas no estrangeiro em vez de uma pena de prisão.

Por último, a transferência de reclusos permitirá que estes regressem ao seu país de origem para cumprirem penas de prisão.

([1]) Decisão-Quadro 2008/909/JAI do Conselho, de 27 de novembro de 2008, relativa à aplicação do princípio do reconhecimento mútuo às sentenças em matéria penal que imponham penas ou outras medidas privativas de liberdade para efeitos da execução dessas sentenças na União Europeia, JO L 327 de 5.12.2008, p. 27 (Transferência de reclusos), Decisão-Quadro 2008/947/JAI do Conselho, de 27 de novembro de 2008, respeitante à aplicação do princípio do reconhecimento mútuo às sentenças e decisões relativas à liberdade condicional para efeitos da fiscalização das medidas de vigilância e das sanções alternativas, JO L 337 de 16.12.2008, p. 102 (Liberdade condicional e sanções alternativas), e Decisão-Quadro 2009/829/JAI do Conselho, de 23 de outubro de 2009, relativa à aplicação, entre os Estados-Membros da União Europeia, do princípio do reconhecimento mútuo às decisões sobre medidas de controlo, em alternativa à prisão preventiva, JO L 294 de 11.11.2009, p. 20 (Decisão europeia de controlo judicial).

O número de reclusos que podem ser abrangidos pelas referidas decisões-quadro figura nas estatísticas do Conselho da Europa em matéria penal (SPACE I) publicadas em 3 de maio de 2013 ([2]). O montante médio gasto por dia e por recluso em 2010 foi de 93 euros ([3]).

([2]) Ver p.82,quadro 3.2: Foreign prisoners on 1st September 2011, «Number of prisoners citizens of Member States of the EU» http://www3.unil.ch/wpmu/space/files/2013/05/SPACE-1_2011_English.pdf

([3]) Ver p.141, quadro 16: Average amount spent per day of detention of one person in penal institutions in 2010 (in euros) http://www3.unil.ch/wpmu/space/files/2013/05/SPACE-1_2011_English.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008415/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: EU mutual recognition instruments adopted in the field of detention

In response to my Written Question E-005835/2013, Vice-President Reding said, on behalf of the Commission, that 'Based on the outcome of the Green Paper, the Commission intends to focus on the proper implementation of the existing EU mutual recognition instruments adopted in the field of detention. In this context it will publish an implementation report on the relevant EU legal instruments in the coming months. A proper implementation and application of these instruments will contribute to a proper functioning of the European area of justice. The Commission is convinced that the proper implementation of the EU instruments may contribute to a reduction of prison overcrowding as well as allow for savings for the budgets spent by Member States on prisons and prison management.'

— Can the Commission give a more precise date for the report's publication?

— To what extent will the proper implementation and application of these instruments contribute to a proper functioning of the European area of justice?

— Is the Commission able to quantify, even roughly, the aforementioned reduction of prison overcrowding, as well as the savings for the budgets spent by Member States on prisons and prison management?

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

The publication of the report is foreseen in autumn 2013.

The framework Decisions ([1]) have to be seen as a package of coherent and complementary legislation that addresses the issue of detention of citizens in other Member States and has the potential to lead to a reduction in (pre-trial) detention and to facilitate social rehabilitation of non-residents.

For example, proper implementation of the European Supervision Order by all Member States will allow suspected persons who are subject to a European Arrest Warrant to swiftly go back to their country of residence while they are awaiting trial in another Member State. This will avoid long pre-trial detention in another Member State following the execution of a European Arrest Warrant and before the actual trial takes place.

Moreover, implementation of the Probation and Alternative Sanctions will encourage judges, who can be confident that a person will be properly supervised in another Member State, to impose an alternative sanction to be executed abroad instead of a prison sentence.

Finally, Transfer of Prisoners will allow prisoners to go back to their home country to serve their prison sentence.

The number of prisoners who might be subject to these Framework Decisions can be found in the Council of Europe Penal Statistics (SPACE I) published on 3 May 2013 ([2]). The average amount of money spent per day and per inmate in 2010 was 93 euros ([3]).

([1]) Framework Decision 2008/909/JHA of 27 November 2008 on the application of the principle of mutual recognition to judgments in criminal matters imposing custodial sentences or measures involving deprivation of liberty for the purpose of their enforcement in the European Union, OJ 5.12.2008, L 327/27 (Transfer of Prisoners), Framework Decision 2008/947/JHA of 27 November 2008 on the application of the principle of mutual recognition to judgments and probation decisions with a view to the supervision of probation measures and alternative sanctions, OJ 16.12.2008, L 337/102 (Probation and Alternative Sanctions), and Framework Decision 2009/829/JHA of 23 October 2009 on the application, between Member States of the European Union, of the principle of mutual recognition to decisions on supervision measures as an alternative to provisional detention, OJ 11.11.2009, L 294/20 (European Supervision Order).

([2]) http://www3.unil.ch/wpmu/space/files/2013/05/SPACE-1_2011_English.pdf, p.82, see Table 3.2: Foreign prisoners on 1st September 2011, 'Number of prisoners citizens of Member States of the EU'.

([3]) http://www3.unil.ch/wpmu/space/files/2013/05/SPACE-1_2011_English.pdf, p.141, see Table 16: Average amount spent per day of detention of one person in penal institutions in 2010 (in EUR).

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008416/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Assistência da UE ao Bangladeche — reflexão conjunta

Em resposta às perguntas E-005631/2013, E-005674/2013 e E-005812/2013, o Sr. Comissário László Andor declarou, em nome da Comissão, que «tanto a Comissão como o SEAE estão em contacto com a OIT e com o Governo do Bangladeche para decidir a melhor forma de resolver estas questões e de garantir os direitos dos trabalhadores, incluindo a liberdade de associação e a saúde e segurança no trabalho. Estamos a refletir em conjunto sobre a melhor forma de utilizar a assistência da UE ao Bangladeche para alicerçar os progressos e enfrentar os problemas subjacentes.»

Assim, pergunta-se à Comissão:

— De que forma se materializa ou materializará esta reflexão conjunta?

— A mesma dispõe de algum calendário ou meta temporal para produzir conclusões?

— Que cooperação e envolvimento no processo de reflexão conjunta encontraram por parte dos seus interlocutores?

— Como perspetiva o progresso dos direitos dos trabalhadores, incluindo a liberdade de associação e a saúde e segurança no trabalho naquele país?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(4 de setembro de 2013)

Em 8 de julho de 2013, em Genebra, os representantes da Comissão Europeia, do Governo do Bangladeche e da Organização Internacional do Trabalho (OIT), acompanhados por representantes da indústria, dos empregadores, dos sindicatos e de outras partes interessadas relevantes, adotaram o documento «Manter o Nosso Compromisso: um Pacto de Sustentabilidade para a Melhoria Contínua dos Direitos dos Trabalhadores e Segurança Laboral na Indústria de Vestuário Pronto-a-Vestir e Têxtil no Bangladeche» ([1]). O documento estabelece um certo número de compromissos em três domínios: 1) o respeito pelos direitos dos trabalhadores; 2) a integridadde estrutural dos edifícios e a segurança e saúde no trabalho; e 3) a responsabilidade das empresas.

Este documento foi elaborado em estreita cooperação com todas as partes interessadas. No que diz respeito à execução dos respetivos compromissos, foram definidos prazos específicos para um conjunto de ações descritas no Pacto. Além disso, as partes concordaram em realizar uma reunião de acompanhamento em 2014, a fim de fazer um balanço dos progressos realizados no que se refere às ações descritas no Pacto.

Desde então, o Parlamento do Bangladeche adotou alterações à legislação laboral e a OIT, à qual o pacto atribui um importante papel de coordenação, avançou nas consultas com as partes interessadas pertinentes tendo em vista a execução de outros compromissos. ([2])

A Comissão remete igualmente o Senhor Deputado para a resposta à pergunta E-006345/2013.

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/july/tradoc_151601.pdf
([2]) http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/activities/all/WCMS_218693/lang--en/index.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008416/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: EU assistance to Bangladesh — joint reflection

In response to Written Questions E-005631/2013, E-005674/2013 and E-005812/2013, Commissioner Andor said, on behalf of the Commission, that 'both the Commission and the EEAS are in contact with the ILO and the Government of Bangladesh to see how to best address these issues and how best to ensure workers' rights, including freedom of association and health and safety at work. We are jointly reflecting on how best to use EU assistance to Bangladesh to underpin progress and address the underlying problems.'

— How does/will this joint reflection work in practice?

— Has a timetable or a target date been set for reaching conclusions?

— How have the parties concerned cooperated and participated in the joint reflection process?

— How does the Commission view the advancement of workers' rights, including freedom of association and health and safety at work, in Bangladesh?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(4 September 2013)

On 8 July 2013, in Geneva, the representatives of the European Commission, the Government of Bangladesh and International Labour Organisation (ILO) accompanied by representatives of industry, employers, trade unions and other key stakeholders, launched a document 'Staying engaged: A Sustainability Compact for continuous improvements in labour rights and factory safety in the Ready-Made Garment and Knitwear Industry in Bangladesh' ([1]). It outlines commitments in three areas: 1) respect for labour rights; 2) Structural integrity of buildings and occupational safety and health; and 3) Responsible business conduct.

It has been elaborated in close cooperation of all parties concerned. As regards implementation of the respective commitments, specific deadlines have been established for a number of actions outlined in the compact. In addition, the parties agreed to hold a follow-up meeting in 2014 to take stock of progress made on actions outlined in the compact.

Since then, the Parliament of Bangladesh has adopted amendments to the Labour Act and the ILO, to which the compact attributes an important coordinating role, has moved forward in consultations with relevant stakeholders with a view to implementing other commitments. ([2])

The Commission also refers the Honorable Member to its response to Question E-006345/2013.

([1]) See: http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/july/tradoc_151601.pdf
([2]) http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/activities/all/WCMS_218693/lang--en/index.htm

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008417/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Assistência ao Bangladeche — aplicação das normas laborais

Em resposta às perguntas E-005082/2013, E-005364/2013 e E-005469/2013, o Sr. Comissário László Andor declarou, em nome da Comissão, que «A Comissão pondera igualmente de que modo a assistência ao Bangladeche pode ser utilizada para prosseguir a aplicação das normas laborais.»

Assim, pergunta-se à Comissão:

— Já retirou conclusões da referida ponderação?

— Quais serão, em seu entender, os modos mais eficazes de colocar a assistência ao Bangladeche ao serviço da boa aplicação das normas laborais?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008418/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Incentivo à promoção de normas de saúde e segurança e do diálogo social

Em resposta às perguntas E-005082/2013, E-005364/2013 e E-005469/2013, o senhor Comissário László Andor declarou, em nome da Comissão, que «A Comissão também incentiva as empresas sediadas na UE a promoverem normas de saúde e segurança, bem como o diálogo social nas suas cadeias de abastecimento.»

1. Por que formas e com que meios procede a Comissão aos incentivos referidos?

2. Que avaliação faz a Comissão do seu resultado?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008419/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: OIT — Roteiro para a segurança no trabalho com o Governo do Bangladeche

Em resposta às perguntas E-005082/2013, E-005364/2013 e E-005469/2013, o senhor Comissário László Andor declarou, em nome da Comissão, que «está a estudar de que modo a UE e as partes interessadas poderão auxiliar a OIT a finalizar e a implementar um roteiro para a segurança no trabalho com o Governo do Bangladeche e os parceiros sociais.»

1. Quando prevê a Comissão concluir este estudo? Pode a Comissão antecipar alguns dos seus resultados?

2. Quais são, no entender da Comissão, os principais entraves à finalização e implementação de um roteiro para a segurança no trabalho com o Governo do Bangladeche e os parceiros sociais?

Resposta conjunta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(3 de setembro de 2013)

Em 8 de julho de 2013, em Genebra, os representantes da Comissão, do Governo do Bangladeche e da Organização Internacional do Trabalho (OIT), acompanhados por representantes da indústria, dos empregadores, dos sindicatos e de outras partes interessadas relevantes, adotaram o documento «Manter o Nosso Compromisso: Um Pacto de Sustentabilidade para a Melhoria Contínua dos Direitos dos Trabalhadores e Segurança Laboral na Indústria de Vestuário Pronto-a-Vestir e Têxtil no Bangladeche» ([1]). O documento estabelece um certo número de compromissos em três domínios: 1) o respeito pelos direitos dos trabalhadores; 2) a integridade estrutural dos edifícios e a segurança e saúde no trabalho; e 3) a responsabilidade das empresas.

Em conformidade com esse Pacto, a Comissão responderá às necessidades imediatas de reabilitação dos trabalhadores com invalidez permanente, explorando a possibilidade de reafetar os fundos necessários a partir das intervenções em curso ([2]). Outros projetos em curso destinados a garantir condições de trabalho decentes no Bangladesh foram referidos em perguntas anteriores ([3]).

A Comissão remete igualmente o Senhor Deputado para a resposta à pergunta E-006345/2013 e, ainda, sobre a responsabilidade social das empresas, E-005179/2013.

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/july/tradoc_151601.pdf
([2]) «Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)», ASIE/2006/ 018-135 (EUR 14M), implementada pela OIT, e «Better Work and Standards» (BEST), DCI-ASIE/2008/ 019-620, (EUR 15M).
([3]) «Monitoring and assessing progress on Decent Work in Developing Countries», DCI-HUM/2008/164-787, «Assessing and addressing the effects of trade on employment», DCI-HUM/2008/164-791.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008417/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Assistance to Bangladesh — implementation of labour standards

In response to Written Questions E-005082/2013, E-005364/2013 and E-005469/2013, Commissioner Andor said, on behalf of the Commission, that 'The Commission is also reflecting on how assistance to Bangladesh can be used to further address implementation of labour standards'

— Has the Commission drawn any conclusions from this reflection?

— How can assistance to Bangladesh most effectively be used to properly implement labour standards?

Question for written answer E-008418/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Companies encouraged to promote health and safety standards and social dialogue

In response to Written Questions E-005082/2013, E-005364/2013 and E-005469/2013, Commissioner Andor said, on behalf of the Commission, that 'The Commission also encourages EU-based companies to promote health and safety standards and social dialogue in their supply chains.'

1. How is the Commission providing this encouragement?

2. What is its assessment of the resulting outcome?

Question for written answer E-008419/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: ILO — Roadmap for safety at work with the Bangladeshi Government

In response to Written Questions E-005082/2013, E-005364/2013 and E-005469/2013, Commissioner Andor said, on behalf of the Commission, that '[the Commission] is exploring how the EU and stakeholders can help the ILO to finalise and implement a roadmap for safety at work with the Bangladeshi Government and social partners.'

1. When does the Commission expect to conclude this research? Can it anticipate some of its findings?

2. What does the Commission believe are the main obstacles to finalising and implementing a roadmap for safety at work with the Bangladeshi Government and social partners?

Joint answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(3 September 2013)

On 8 July 2013, in Geneva, the representatives of the Commission, the Government of Bangladesh and International Labour Organisation (ILO) accompanied by representatives of industry, employers, trade unions and other key stakeholders, launched a document 'Staying engaged: A Sustainability Compact for continuous improvements in labour rights and factory safety in the Ready-Made Garment and Knitwear Industry in Bangladesh' ([1]). It outlines commitments in three areas: 1) Respect for labour rights; 2) Structural integrity of buildings and occupational safety and health; and 3) Responsible business conduct.

([1]) See: http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/july/tradoc_151601.pdf

Accordingly, the Commission will address immediate needs of rehabilitation of permanently disabled workers exploring the possibility of reallocating funds under ongoing interventions ([2]). Other ongoing decent-work related projects in Bangladesh have been referred in previous questions ([3]).

The Commission also refers the Honorable Member to its response to Question E-006345/2013 and in addition, on corporate social responsibility, to E-005179/2013.

([2]) Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), ASIE/2006/ 018-135 (EUR 14M), implemented by the ILO and Better Work and Standards (BEST), DCI-ASIE/2008/ 019-620, (EUR 15M).

([3]) Monitoring and assessing progress on Decent Work in Developing Countries, DCI-HUM/2008/164-787, Assessing and addressing the effects of trade on employment, DCI-HUM/2008/164-791.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008420/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Iniciativa Oportunidades para a Juventude

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-005822/2013, o senhor Comissário László Andor declarou, em nome da Comissão, que «A Comissão está consciente da situação alarmante dos jovens e do desemprego galopante que os assola, nomeadamente em Itália, onde aumentou drasticamente nos últimos dois anos. Já em dezembro de 2011, a Comissão lançou a Iniciativa Oportunidades para a Juventude, que incluía a criação de "equipas de ação" nos Estados-Membros com elevados níveis de desemprego da juventude.»

Que avaliação faz a Comissão da Iniciativa Oportunidades para a Juventude? Nomeadamente, quanto às «equipas de ação» criadas.

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

A análise pormenorizada da Comissão da Iniciativa Oportunidades para a Juventude pode ser consultada:

1. na Comunicação «Ajudar à transição dos jovens para o emprego», secção III (Primeiro ano da iniciativa Oportunidades para a Juventude) ([1]);

2. no relatório do Presidente Barroso ao Conselho Europeu da Primavera (14-15 de março de 2013) sobre as equipas de ação para promover o emprego dos jovens.

(http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/barroso/report_pt.pdf).

([1]) COM(2012)727 final, Bruxelas, 5 de dezembro de 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008420/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Youth Opportunity Initiative

In response to my Written Question E-005822/2013, Commissioner Andor said, on behalf of the Commission, that 'The Commission is aware of the alarming situation of young people and of growing unemployment within their ranks, particularly in Italy where it has dramatically increased over the last two years. The Commission launched the Youth Opportunity Initiative as early as December 2011 which included the establishment of "action teams" in Member States with high levels of youth unemployment, including Italy.'

What is the Commission's assessment of the Youth Opportunity Initiative, particularly as regards the 'action teams' established?

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

The Commission's detailed assessment of the Youth Opportunities Initiative can be found in

1. the communication 'Moving youth into employment' section III (The Youth Opportunities Initiative one year on) ([1]);

2. the report of President Barroso to the spring European Council (14-15 March 2013) about the youth employment action teams

(http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/barroso/report_en.pdf).

([1]) COM(2012)727 final, Brussels, 5 December 2012.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008421/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Próxima reunião do Comité Misto instituído pelo Acordo sobre a livre circulação de pessoas

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-005092/2013, a Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante declarou, em nome da Comissão, que «tal como no ano passado, a Comissão levantará esta questão na próxima reunião do Comité Misto instituído pelo Acordo sobre a livre circulação de pessoas. Contudo, qualquer decisão do Comité Misto tem de ser tomada por comum acordo entre as partes».

Assim, pergunto à Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante:

— Quando decorrerá a referida reunião?

— Que expectativas têm quanto ao seu resultado?

— Qual foi a reação suíça quando a questão foi levantada no ano passado?

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

A 13.ª reunião do Comité Misto instituído pelo Acordo sobre a livre circulação de pessoas, que versou sobre a questão em apreço, teve lugar em 19 de junho de 2013. Ambas as partes reafirmaram as suas posições, tal como ficou expresso nas declarações prestadas à imprensa pela Conselheira Federal Simonetta Sommaruga ([1]) e pela AR/VP ([2]), em 24 de abril de 2013. Como não foi possível chegar a um acordo, o Comité Misto não pôde tomar qualquer decisão.

No que respeita à reação suíça na 12.ª reunião do Comité Misto, em 2012, a Suíça fez referência à sua interpretação do acordo divulgada em março de 2011 ([3]) segundo a qual a cláusula de salvaguarda pode ser aplicada separadamente aos países da UE-8 e da UE-17. Esta interpretação diverge da interpretação dada à mesma disposição pela União Europeia.

([1]) http://www.ejpd.admin.ch/content/ejpd/de/home/dokumentation/red/2013/2013-04-24.html
([2]) http://www.consilium.eu.int/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/136936.pdf
([3]) http://www.ejpd.admin.ch/content/ejpd/de/home/dokumentation/mi/2011/2011-03-300.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008421/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Next meeting of the Joint Committee established by the Agreement on the free movement of persons

In response to my Written Question E-005092/2013, the Vice-President/High Representative said, on behalf of the Commission, that 'As last year, the Commission will raise this question at the next meeting of the Joint Committee established by the Agreement on the free movement of persons. However, any decision by the Joint Committee would need to be taken by common agreement of the parties.'

— When will this meeting take place?

— What are the Vice-President/High Representative's expectations regarding its outcome?

— How did Switzerland react when the question was raised last year?

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

The meeting of the 13th Joint Committee on Free Movement of Persons agreement, dealing with the subject matter, took place on 19 June 2013. Both sides restated their positions as expressed in the press statements of Federal Councillor Simonetta Sommaruga ([1]) and HR/VP ([2]) on 24 April 2013. As no common agreement was achieved, the Joint Committee could not take any decision.

Regarding the Swiss reaction at the 12th Joint Committee in 2012, Switzerland referred to its interpretation of the Agreement published in March 2011 ([3]), in which Switzerland argues that safeguard clause may be applied separately to the countries of the EU-8 and EU-17. This interpretation is not in line with the interpretation of the EU.

([1]) http://www.ejpd.admin.ch/content/ejpd/de/home/dokumentation/red/2013/2013-04-24.html
([2]) http://www.consilium.eu.int/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/136936.pdf
([3]) http://www.ejpd.admin.ch/content/ejpd/de/home/dokumentation/mi/2011/2011-03-300.html

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008422/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Ausência de uma definição internacionalmente aceite de tráfico de partes do corpo

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-005101/2013, o Comissário Andris Piebalgs declarou, em nome da Comissão, que «A Liga dos Direitos Humanos de Moçambique publicou, em 2008, um estudo sobre o tráfico de partes do corpo humano em Moçambique e na África do Sul. A Comissão participou ativamente nos seminários organizados após a publicação do estudo.» e que «O estudo chama a atenção para a ausência de uma definição internacionalmente aceite de tráfico de partes do corpo e salienta que, sem esta definição, qualquer tentativa para combater esta atividade terá poucas hipóteses de sucesso e estas violações dos direitos humanos continuarão a verificar-se».

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Está disponível para contribuir para colmatar a ausência de uma definição internacionalmente aceite de tráfico de partes do corpo?

— De que modo tenciona fazê-lo?

— Confirma que semelhante lacuna reduz as probabilidades de sucesso das tentativas de combate a esse tráfico?

Resposta dada por Andris Piebalgs em nome da Comissão
(13 de setembro de 2013)

A Comissão apoia as organizações especializadas que preconizam uma definição mais clara das normas em matéria de direitos humanos e o seu reconhecimento internacional, o que permitirá instaurar mecanismos adequados de controlo, de acompanhamento e de comunicação de informações.

Juntamente com a ONU, nomeadamente ao apoiar de forma constante o trabalho do Alto Comissariado para os Direitos do Homem, a Comissão tem contribuído para a elaboração de normas pormenorizadas em matéria de direitos humanos, algumas das quais estão consagradas em convenções e resoluções. Estes esforços serão prosseguidos no futuro.

No contexto do tráfico de seres humanos, a exploração para remoção de órgãos, foi incluída na definição de tráfico de seres humanos nos vários instrumentos jurídicos internacionais e da UE, nomeadamente no Protocolo da ONU relativo à Prevenção, Repressão e Punição do Tráfico de Pessoas. Os criminosos que se dedicam ao tráfico de seres humanos podem ser processados e condenados e as vítimas podem receber a assistência e a proteção necessárias. ([1])

Embora sem uma definição de «tráfico de partes do corpo» as tentativas para fazer face a este tipo de tráfico sejam dificultadas, em virtude da sua humanidade e da interdependência dos direitos, existe margem de manobra para serem tomadas medidas a nível nacional relativamente a cada caso.

A Comissão remete o Senhor Deputado para a resposta dada à sua anterior pergunta escrita E-005101/2013 ([2]) em que se indicava que, em Moçambique, uma das principais instituições governamentais empenhadas na luta contra este tráfico é o Ministério Público. No âmbito do projeto da UE para o «Estado de direito», lançado recentemente, esta instituição receberá 4 milhões de EUR a título de apoio institucional. A USAID e a Unicef cooperam igualmente com o Ministério Público na luta contra o tráfico de seres humanos.

([1]) Em Moçambique (e na África do Sul), «tráfico de partes do corpo» é considerado diferente de «tráfico de órgãos», na medida em que o objetivo final deste tráfico está associado a crenças tradicionais e a práticas «muti» (medicina tradicional na África do Sul).
Se alguém for encontrado na posse de uma parte de um corpo em Moçambique e não for possível identificar a vítima à qual pertence essa parte do corpo, dificilmente a polícia conseguirá, no quadro da legislação atualmente em vigor, processar essa pessoa. O atual quadro jurídico geral de Moçambique não é adequado para combater o tráfico de partes do corpo.

([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/fr/parliamentary-questions.html;jsessionid=80FB10F36DD17D42094B52A1AF55DB94.node2#sidesForm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008422/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Lack of an internationally recognised definition of trafficking in body parts

In response to my Written Question E-005101/2013, Commissioner Piebalgs said, on behalf of the Commission, that 'The Mozambican League for Human Rights published a study in 2008 on trafficking in body parts in Mozambique and South Africa. The Commission was involved and active in the seminars that took place after the publication of the study.' He added that 'The study draws attention to the lack of an internationally recognised definition of trafficking in body parts and highlights that without such a definition, any attempt to counter this activity will be impaired and these Human Rights violations will continue.'

— Is the Commission willing to help address the lack of an internationally recognised definition of trafficking in body parts?

— How does it intend to do this?

— Can it confirm that without such a definition, any attempt to counter this trafficking will be impaired?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(13 September 2013)

The Commission supports specialized organisations which advocate for more clearly defined and internationally recognised human rights standards, enabling the creation of appropriate supervisory, monitoring and reporting mechanisms.

Together with the UN, namely by continuously supporting the work of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Commission has contributed to the development of detailed human rights standards, some laid down in conventions and resolutions. These efforts will continue.

Within the context of trafficking in human beings, exploitation for the purpose of removing organs has been included in the definition of trafficking in human beings in the different international and EU legal instruments, including in the UN Protocol to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons. Offenders who traffic in human beings can be prosecuted and convicted and victims can receive the necessary assistance and protection. ([1])

Even though, without a definition of trafficking in body parts, attempts to counter this trafficking will be impaired, by virtue of their humanity and of interdependence of rights there is a space for national action relating to individual cases.

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its reply to Written Question E-005101/2013 ([2]) in which it was indicated, that in Mozambique one of the leading Government institutions working against trafficking is the Attorney-General's Office. Under the recently started EU Rule of Law project, this institution will receive EUR 4 million in institutional support. USAID and Unicef are also involved with the Attorney-General's Office in the specific area of trafficking.

([1]) 'Trafficking in body parts' in Mozambique (and South Africa) is considered different from 'organ trafficking' as the final purpose of this trafficking is linked to traditional beliefs and 'muti' (traditional medicine in Southern Africa).
If someone is found in possession of a body part in Mozambique and there is no way to trace the body part to a victim, it is difficult, under current legislation, for the Police to prosecute. The overall legal framework in Mozambique is currently not suitable for countering trafficking in body parts.

([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/fr/parliamentary-questions.html;jsessionid=80FB10F36DD17D42094B52A1AF55DB94.node2#sidesForm

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008423/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Apoio da UE ao povo líbio

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-005102/2013, a Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante declarou, em nome da Comissão, que «a UE continua empenhada em apoiar o povo líbio para que alcance a democracia, a estabilidade e a prosperidade através de um processo de transição pautado pela justiça e pela reconciliação».

Assim, pergunto à Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante:

— De que formas concretas a UE manifesta este empenho?

— Que resultados está em condições de apresentar a este título?

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

Nos últimos dois anos, a UE cumpriu o seu compromisso de apoiar o povo líbio na transição do seu país para a democracia.

Em 2011, a UE lançou ações imediatas para dar resposta às necessidades urgentes e apoiar as prioridades de estabilização definidas pelas autoridades nos domínios da sociedade civil, saúde, educação e apoio à administração pública. Este apoio foi seguido de um pacote global de programas com uma perspetiva a mais longo prazo. O montante total dos programas da UE na Líbia eleva-se atualmente a 95 milhões de EUR, incidindo especialmente nos domínios da administração pública, segurança, transição democrática, sociedade civil, saúde, formação profissional e educação. Este montante vem acrescentar-se aos 80,5 milhões de EUR disponibilizados em ajuda humanitária durante o conflito de 2011.

No que respeita à reconciliação, a UE está atualmente a financiar um projeto que incide nas questões prioritárias que afetam a transição na Líbia numa perspetiva de reconciliação. Entre outras atividades, no âmbito deste projeto foi realizada uma ronda de diálogos entre figuras proeminentes das diferentes comunidades de Sabha para debater os mecanismos destinados a consolidar o Acordo de Paz de Sabha, assinado em abril de 2013. Além disso, a pedido do Gabinete do Primeiro-Ministro (GPM), o parceiro de execução deste programa apresentou uma proposta para um processo de mediação, a fim de encontrar uma solução equitativa e sustentável a longo prazo para o conflito entre as cidades de Misrata e Tawerga, que foi já apresentada ao GPM para aprovação.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008423/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — EU support for the Libyan people

In response to my Written Question E-005102/2013, the Vice-President/High Representative said, on behalf of the Commission, that 'The EU remains committed to supporting the Libyan people in achieving a successful transition towards democracy, stability and prosperity through a process of transitional justice and reconciliation.'

— How, specifically, is the EU demonstrating this commitment?

— What results is it able to present in this connection?

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

Over the last two years, the EU has delivered on its commitment to support the Libyan people in their transition towards democracy.

In 2011, the EU launched immediate actions to address urgent needs and to support the stabilisation priorities of the authorities, in the area of civil society, health, education and support to public administration. This was followed by a comprehensive package of programmes with a longer-term perspective. The total of EU programmes in Libya now stands at EUR 95 million, focusing on public administration, security, democratic transition, civil society, health, vocational training and education. This is an addition to EUR 80.5 million disbursed in humanitarian assistance during the conflict in 2011.

Regarding the area of reconciliation, the EU is currently funding one project which focuses on priority issues affecting Libya's transition from a reconciliation perspective. Among other activities, this project has convened a round of dialogue between leading figures from the different communities of Sabha to discuss mechanisms to build upon and consolidate the Sabha peace agreement, which was signed in April 2013. Furthermore, at the request of the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), the implementing partner of this programme has developed a proposal for a mediation process to find a long-term sustainable and equitable solution to the conflict between the towns of Misrata and Tawerga, which has now been submitted to the PMO for approval.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008424/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — União Europeia — Mongólia

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-005060/2013, a Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante declarou, em nome da Comissão, que «a visita revelou um potencial inexplorado nas relações entre a UE e a Mongólia.»

Assim, pergunto à Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante:

— Em que áreas principais identifica o referido potencial inexplorado entre a UE e a Mongólia?

— De que formas poderão a União Europeia, os seus cidadãos e empresas contribuir para explorar este potencial?

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

A UE e a Mongólia têm um relacionamento caloroso e construtivo. Propomos o reforço da cooperação com incidência em três domínios: apoio à diversificação da economia da Mongólia, assistência na criação de um ambiente favorável ao investimento estrangeiro e reforço da cooperação no domínio das matérias-primas, promovendo ao mesmo tempo um crescimento económico inclusivo e a redução da pobreza, tal como acordado no Acordo de Parceria e Cooperação (APC). O APC foi assinado em 30 de abril de 2013. No âmbito do APC, aprofundaremos as nossas relações, que passarão a abranger novos domínios, tais como a cooperação regional e internacional, o comércio e o investimento, a justiça, a liberdade e a segurança, juntamente com a cooperação nos domínios da investigação e inovação, turismo, educação, cultura, emprego, para referir apenas alguns. Através dos nossos programas de cooperação para o desenvolvimento, apoiaremos a Mongólia na governação económica dos rendimentos da exploração mineira, para promover o crescimento equitativo. A bem sucedida visita à Mongólia do Comissário Dacian Ciolos recentemente realizada explorou as possibilidades de aumentar a nossa cooperação no domínio da agricultura e do desenvolvimento rural. O próximo Comité Misto (planeado para setembro de 2013) constituirá uma boa oportunidade para discutir a execução do APC, incluindo as questões comerciais a abordar no subcomité sobre comércio e investimento.

A Mongólia é uma democracia dinâmica, com uma economia vibrante. Encorajamos as empresas da UE a ponderar o investimento e o desenvolvimento de atividades comerciais na Mongólia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008424/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — EU-Mongolia relations

In reply to my Question E-005060/2013, the Vice-President/High Representative, representing the Commission, stated that her official visit to Mongolia had shown that there is 'untapped potential in … EU-Mongolia relations'.

In which main areas of EU-Mongolia relations does the Vice-President/High Representative believe this untapped potential to lie?

In what ways could the EU, EU citizens, and EU businesses help to tap that potential?

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

The EU and Mongolia have warm and constructive relations. We propose to increase cooperation by focusing on three areas: support for diversification of the Mongolian economy; assistance in setting up a favourable environment for foreign investment, and strengthening cooperation in the field of raw materials while promoting inclusive economic growth and poverty reduction, as agreed in the partnership and cooperation agreement (PCA). The PCA was signed on 30 April 2013. Under the PCA we will deepen our relations to encompass new areas such as regional and international cooperation, trade and investment, justice, freedom and security alongside cooperation in the areas of research and innovation, tourism, education, culture, employment to name a few. Through our development cooperation programmes, we will support Mongolia in the economic governance of the mining revenues to promote equitable growth. Commissioner Ciolos' recent successful visit to Mongolia explored possibilities to increase our cooperation in agriculture and rural development. The next Joint Committee (planned for September 2013) will be a good opportunity to discuss the implementation of the PCA, including trade issues to be discussed at the sub-committee on trade and investment.

Mongolia is a thriving democracy with a vibrant economy. We encourage EU companies to consider investing and doing business in Mongolia.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008425/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Modulação da estratégia de consolidação

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-005807/2013, o senhor Comissário Olli Rehn declarou, em nome da Comissão, que «a Comissão considera que o considerável esforço orçamental já desenvolvido até à data e a deterioração da situação económica, em especial nos Estados-Membros mais vulneráveis, poderão permitir uma modulação da estratégia de consolidação» e que «o ritmo da consolidação seja modulado em função da evolução da situação económica».

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Concretamente, em que se traduziria essa modulação?

— Não crê que alguns dos Estados mais vulneráveis apresentam já sérios sinais de fadiga nos seus processos de ajustamento e consolidação e que esta recomendaria uma efetiva e célere morigeração do ritmo e das medidas previstas para os respetivos processos?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(22 de agosto de 2013)

Os progressos alcançados até agora a nível da consolidação orçamental permitem que os Estados-Membros abrandem o ritmo de ajustamento. Este facto é visível tanto nos planos orçamentais dos Estados-Membros como nas recomendações políticas emitidas há pouco pela UE relativamente aos Estados-Membros no contexto do Semestre Europeu de 2013 e no controlo periódico ao abrigo do Pacto de Estabilidade e Crescimento.

A melhoria da situação orçamental dos Estados-Membros da UE permitiu ao Conselho — com base nas recomendações da Comissão — revogar os procedimentos relativos aos défices excessivos respeitantes à Hungria, Itália, Letónia, Lituânia e Roménia, que corrigiram os respetivos défices excessivos de forma duradoura.

A sete Estados-Membros foi concedido mais tempo para atingirem os objetivos em matéria de défice. Trata-se de Estados-Membros que tomaram medidas orçamentais que seguiam as recomendações do Conselho, mas nos quais a situação económica comprometeu a correção atempada dos défices excessivos.

Estas decisões mostram a flexibilidade do Pacto de Estabilidade e Crescimento, que permite ao Conselho estender o prazo para a correção dos défices excessivos, nos casos em que foram tomadas medidas concretas mas as condições económicas impediram que os objetivos fixados para o défice fossem atingidos. O Pacto de Estabilidade e Crescimento constitui um quadro flexível, claro e transparente para a política orçamental. A Comissão considera crucial que os Estados-Membros continuem a cumprir as obrigações que lhes incumbem por força do Pacto de Estabilidade e Crescimento, a fim de manter a confiança dos investidores e evitar o regresso da turbulência do mercado, que afetou a maior parte dos Estados-Membros vulneráveis.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008425/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Modulation of Consolidation Strategy

In response to my Question E-005807/2013, Commissioner Olli Rehn on behalf of the Commission stated that 'the Commission deemed that the considerable budgetary measures developed to date and the worsening economic situation, especially in the most vulnerable Member States, may lead to a modulation of the consolidation strategy' and that 'the rate of consolidation would be adjusted according to the economic situation'.

— Can the Commission explain what this modulation would entail?

— Does the Commission believe that some of the most vulnerable States are already showing serious signs of fatigue in their adjustment and consolidation procedures, and that this situation points to the need for an effective and early moderation in the pace and in the measures envisaged for these procedures?

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

The progress made so far in fiscal consolidation allows Member States to slow down the pace of adjustment. This is visible in both Member States' fiscal plans and the EU policy advice issued recently to Member States in the context of the 2013 European Semester and the regular surveillance under the Stability and Growth Pact.

The improvements in the fiscal positions of EU Member States allowed the Council — based on Commission's recommendations — to abrogate Excessive Deficit Procedure for Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania and Romania, which corrected their excessive deficits in a lasting manner.

Seven Member States were given more time to reach their deficit targets. These are Member States which took fiscal measures in line with Council recommendations, but where the economic situation hampered the timely correction of their excessive deficits.

These decisions show the flexibility of the Stability and Growth Pact, which allows the Council to extend the deadline for the correction of an excessive deficit in cases where effective action has been taken, but adverse economic conditions prevented the headline deficit targets from being reached. The Stability and Growth Pact offers a flexible, clear and transparent framework for fiscal policy. The Commission considers it crucial that Member States continue fulfilling their obligations under the Stability and Growth Pact in order to maintain investors' confidence and avoid a return of market turbulence, which affected most the vulnerable Member States.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008426/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: 9.ª Conferência Ministerial da OMC

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-005824/2013, o senhor Comissário Karel De Gucht declarou, em nome da Comissão, que «Nos dois últimos anos, a UE tem dinamizado os esforços no sentido de preparar o êxito da 9.ª Conferência Ministerial da OMC, ao lançar negociações ativas, ao preparar textos de compromisso sobre determinados elementos do projeto de acordo em matéria de facilitação do comércio, ao tentar conciliar as principais diferenças entre os membros da OMC e ao propiciar discussões sobre questões essenciais a nível de embaixadores e de altos funcionários.»

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Dos esforços que dinamizou quais destaca pelo seu resultado?

— Quais são, em seu entender, os principais obstáculos ao êxito da 9.ª Conferência Ministerial da OMC?

Resposta dada por Karel de Gucht em nome da Comissão
(20 de setembro de 2013)

A Comissão desenvolveu esforços repetidos no sentido fazer avançar os preparativos para o êxito da 9.ª Conferência Ministerial (MC9) da Organização Mundial do Comércio (OMC). O envolvimento da UE contribuiu sobremaneira para que os membros da OMC possam agora acreditar que é possível esperar bons resultados de Bali. Por exemplo, a fim de tranquilizar os países em desenvolvimento, a Comissão emitiu uma declaração conjunta ([1]) que confirma que a UE está disposta a oferecer apoio financeiro, de modo a que os países em desenvolvimento possam colher os benefícios de um acordo de facilitação de comércio da OMC. Além disso, tem manifestado toda a flexibilidade em relação às principais exigências dos restantes membros da OMC, como é o caso da proposta G-33 da Índia e de determinados pedidos provenientes de países menos desenvolvidos.

É agora da maior importância que todos os membros cessem as manobras táticas, de modo a que possamos avançar com os temas de facilitação do comércio e de agricultura e desenvolvimento. Só um esforço comum para se apresentarem posições construtivas sobre este pacote garantirá o bom termo das negociações na Conferência Ministerial.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-211_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008426/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Ninth WTO Ministerial Conference

In response to my Question E-005824/2013, Commissioner Karel De Gucht on behalf of the Commission stated that 'in the last two years, the EU has invigorated efforts in its preparations for a successful Ninth WTO Ministerial Conference by launching active negotiations, preparing compromise agreements on specific elements of the accord to facilitate business, reconciling major differences between WTO members and facilitating discussions on essential issues between ambassadors and high officials'.

— Can the Commission identify the most significant efforts made, based on the results achieved?

— What does the Commission think are the main obstacles to the success of the Ninth WTO Ministerial Conference?

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

The Commission has made numerous efforts designed to move forward preparations for a successful 9th World Trade Organisation (WTO) Ministerial Conference (MC9). The EU's engagement has strongly contributed to the fact that that there is a positive expectation among WTO Members that a good result is achievable for Bali. For example, with a view to reassuring developing countries, the Commission issued a joint statement ([1]) confirming that the EU stands ready to provide financial support so that developing countries can reap the benefits of a WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement. Moreover, we have displayed flexibility vis-à-vis key demands from other WTO members, such as the G-33 proposal from India and certain requests from least developed countries.

It is now of the utmost importance for all members to put an end to tactical manoeuvring so as to allow allow enough progress to be made on Trade Facilitation and the agricultural and development issues that are on the table. Only a joint effort to come forward with constructive positions on such a package will ensure a conclusion of negotiations at the ministerial conference.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-211_en.htm

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008427/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Bolívia — expulsão da USAID

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-005036/2013, a Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante declarou que «A Delegação da UE em La Paz e os serviços competentes em Bruxelas, nomeadamente o SEAE, debateram as preocupações da UE com as autoridades da Bolívia.»

Assim, pergunto à Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante:

Que recetividade manifestaram as autoridades bolivianas às preocupações europeias?

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

As autoridades da Bolívia tomaram nota das preocupações da UE e indicaram as razões subjacentes ao seu afastamento da USAID. As relações da Bolívia com o Governo dos EUA permanecem tensas.

As autoridades da Bolívia manifestaram o seu apreço pela assistência e cooperação da UE, as quais são altamente valorizadas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008427/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Bolivia — expulsion of USAID

In reply to my Question E-005036/2013, the Vice-President/High Representative stated that 'The EU Delegation in La Paz and the competent services in Brussels, including the EEAS, have discussed the EU's concerns with the Bolivian authorities'.

That being the case, how much heed have the Bolivian authorities paid to European concerns?

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

The Bolivian authorities have taken note of the EU concerns and have explained the reasons behind their expulsion of USAID. Bolivian relations with the US Government remain strained.

The Bolivian authorities have expressed their appreciation for EU assistance and cooperation, which is highly valued.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008428/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Conferência internacional de paz sobre a Síria

Em resposta às perguntas E-004995/2013, E-005081/2013 e E-005189/2013, a Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante declarou que «exprimiu oficialmente o seu inteiro apoio ao pedido conjunto do Secretário de Estado norte-americano John Kerry e do Ministro dos Negócios Estrangeiros Sergey Lavrov para a realização, o mais rapidamente possível, de uma conferência de paz internacional sobre a Síria que dê seguimento à conferência de Genebra de junho de 2012.»

Assim, pergunto à Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante:

— Que sequência teve este pedido conjunto?

— Encontra-se já agendada a referida conferência?

— Prevê que tal venha a suceder com a desejada brevidade?

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

Os organizadores da prevista Conferência de Genebra sobre a Síria (Genebra II), ou seja, os EUA, a Rússia e a ONU têm-se reunido regularmente para discutir o formato, a participação e eventuais resultados da conferência. Os EUA e a Rússia concordaram que o resultado deverá desembocar num governo provisório com plenos poderes executivos, inclusivamente em relação aos serviços de segurança e de polícia. O formato acordado estabelece que a conferência abrirá com uma reunião intergovernamental entre todos os participantes e será presidida pelo Secretário-Geral Ban-Ki Moon, seguida de negociações efetivas entre interlocutores habilitados das duas partes mediadas pelo Representante Especial Conjunto L. Brahimi.

Os organizadores acreditam que a conferência terá lugar, provavelmente, no outono de 2013. A tarefa mais importante é preparar adequadamente a conferência e trabalhar previamente com ambas as partes, a fim de que as negociações preparem os resultados esperados. Os atrasos são devidos aos diferendos sobre a participação de algumas partes interessadas e ao facto de que os dois lados parecem centrar-se nas operações militares no terreno. A AR/VP espera que os esforços diplomáticos criem um consenso suficiente para que as duas partes se possam sentar à volta da mesma mesa para negociarem. A AR/VP continua disposta a ajudar os organizadores de todas as formas possíveis.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008428/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — International peace conference on Syria

The answer to questions E-004995/2013, E-005081/2013, and E-005189/2013 stated that 'The HR/VP has officially expressed her full support for the joint call made by United States Secretary of State Kerry and Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov to convene an international peace conference on Syria as soon as possible as a follow-up to the Geneva Conference of June 2012'.

What has ensued from this joint call?

Has a date already been set for the conference?

Is the Vice-President/High Representative expecting this to happen with the desirable speed?

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

The organisers of the planned Geneva Conference on Syria (Geneva II) i.e. the US, Russia and the UN have met regularly to discuss the format, participation and possible outcomes of the conference. US and Russia agreed that the result should be a transitional governing body with full executive powers including over the security and police services. The agreed format stipulates that the conference will open with an intergovernmental meeting among all participants to be chaired by SG Ban-ki Moon and followed by actual negotiations between empowered interlocutors from the two sides mediated by the Joint Special Representative L. Brahimi.

The organisers believe that the conference will most likely take place in the autumn of 2013. The most important task is properly prepare the conference and work with the two sides beforehand so that the negotiations will bear out the expected results. The delays are due to disagreements on the participation of some stakeholders and the fact that the two sides seem to be focusing on the military operations on the ground. The HR/VP hopes that diplomatic efforts will create enough common ground for the two sides to sit down to talk. The HR/VP remains ready to assist the organisers in any way possible.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008429/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Aliança Europeia para a Aprendizagem

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-005160/2013, o senhor Comissário László Andor declarou, em nome da Comissão, que «A comunicação principal do YEP anunciou também uma Aliança Europeia para a Aprendizagem, que a Comissão irá lançar em julho de 2013, para melhorar a qualidade e a oferta de aprendizagens e promover a excelência na aprendizagem baseada no trabalho no âmbito do ensino e formação profissionais.»

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

Pode adiantar as principais características da referida Aliança e quais os seus integrantes e parceiros futuros?

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

A Aliança Europeia para a Aprendizagem é uma plataforma que congrega autoridades públicas, empresas e parceiros sociais, prestadores de EFP, representantes da juventude e outros intervenientes, como câmaras do comércio, para coordenar e valorizar diferentes iniciativas de tipos de sistemas de aprendizagem bem sucedidos, assim como para promover parcerias nacionais no âmbito de sistemas de formação em alternância. Os eixos de ação são: 1) transferência de conhecimento orientada e apoio da reforma dos sistemas de aprendizagem; 2) promoção das vantagens das aprendizagens; e 3) boa utilização do financiamento e dos recursos da UE.

Na sessão de lançamento, em 2 de julho de 2013, uma declaração conjunta dos parceiros sociais europeus, da Presidência lituana do Conselho da UE e da Comissão Europeia apoiou os compromissos feitos no âmbito das aprendizagens. Além disso, 19 organizações (por exemplo, câmaras de comércio, empresas, prestadores de EFP) comprometeram-se a levar a cabo ações concretas nos próximos meses, incluindo o intercâmbio de boas práticas, ações de sensibilização e medidas para aumentar a qualidade e a oferta de contratos de aprendizagem. A ERT está atualmente a organizar uma rede de «embaixadores de empresas».

No sítio Web consagrado à Aliança encontram-se mais informações sobre os eixos de ação e o estado de atualização dos compromissos, embaixadores e eventos: http://ec.europa.eu/apprenticeships-alliance

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008429/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: European Alliance for Apprenticeships

In response to my Question E-005160/2013, Commissioner László Andor on behalf of the Commission stated that 'The main communiqué from the YEP (Youth Employment Package) also mentions the "European Alliance for Apprenticeships", which the Commission is set to launch in July 2013 to improve the quality and range of apprenticeships on offer, and to promote excellence in learning through education and professional training'.

Can the Commission explain the main features of this Alliance, and who will be its members and future partners?

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

The European Alliance for Apprenticeships is a platform that brings together public authorities, businesses and social partners, VET providers, youth representatives and other key actors such as chambers in order to coordinate and upscale different initiatives for successful apprenticeship type schemes, as well as to promote national partnerships for dual vocational training systems. The strands of action are: (1) targeted knowledge transfer and support for reform of apprenticeship systems; (2) promoting the benefits of apprenticeships; and (3) making smart use of EU funding and resources.

At the launch event on 2 July 2013, a joint declaration by the European Social Partners, the Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the EU and the European Commission underpinned the commitments to apprenticeships. Furthermore, 19 organisations (e.g. chambers, businesses, VET providers) pledged concrete action to be taken within the next months, including best practices exchange, awareness raising and steps to increase quality and supply of apprenticeships. A pool of 'business ambassadors' is currently being set up on initiative by the ERT.

More information on the strands of actions and an update on the state of pledges, ambassadors and events can be found on the dedicated Alliance website http://ec.europa.eu/apprenticeships-alliance.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-008451/13
komissiolle
Eija-Riitta Korhola (PPE)
(11. heinäkuuta 2013)

Aihe: Päällekkäisten energia- ja ilmastotavoitteiden vaikutukset

Vuonna 2008 päätettiin Euroopan energia- ja ilmastopaketista, johon sisältyivät 20-20-20-tavoitteet. Näitä päätöksiä edelsi useamman vuoden ajan jatkunut vahva talouskasvu. Tuolloin, suotuisassa taloustilanteessa, painopiste oli ilmastonmuutoksen hillitsemisessä, uusiutuvien energialähteiden käytön lisäämisessä sekä energiatehokkuuden parantamisessa. EU:n kilpailukyky ja taloudellinen kasvu sen sijaan jäivät vähemmälle huomiolle.

Päästöjä, uusiutuvia energialähteitä ja energiatehokkuutta koskevat kolme energia- ja ilmastopaketin tavoitetta ovat selkeästi päällekkäisiä ja usein jopa keskenään ristiriitaisia. Esimerkiksi maakaasun korvaaminen biomassalla vähentää päästöjä ja lisää uusiutuvien energialähteiden käyttöä, mutta vähentää samalla energiatehokkuutta.

Komissio valmistelee parhaillaan uusia tavoitteita vuodelle 2030. Komissio ei ole tiettävästi tehnyt kattavaa selvitystä päällekkäisten ja kilpailevien tavoitteiden ja toimenpiteiden vaikutuksista. Aikooko komissio selvittää nykyisten linjausten vaikutuksia ennen kuin se tekee päätöksiä uusien tavoitteiden asettamista vuodelle 2030? Huomioidaanko mahdollisessa selvityksessä ainakin seuraavat näkökulmat:

— Onko EU:n päästökauppajärjestelmällä päällekkäisine tavoitteineen ja toimenpiteineen (erityisesti tuettujen uusiutuvien energialähteiden osalta) edistetty hiilidioksidipäästöjen vähentämiseen, energiavarmuuteen ja kilpailukykyyn liittyvien tavoitteiden saavuttamiseen tähtääviä toimia?

— Millaiset ovat työllisyyteen kohdistuvat nettovaikutukset ja työllistämiskustannukset?

— Onko näistä päällekkäisistä tavoitteista ja toimenpiteistä aiheutunut ilmastotavoitteiden saavuttamiseen liittyviä lisäkustannuksia? Mikäli lisäkustannuksia on aiheutunut, kuinka paljon tarkalleen ottaen? Mikäli lisäkustannuksia ei ole aiheutunut, onko kolmitavoitteinen järjestelmä ollut kustannustehokas?

— Millaiset ovat olleet vaikutukset sähkömarkkinoihin?

Connie Hedegaardin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(28. elokuuta 2013)

Komissio laatii säännöllisesti kattavia selvityksiä nykyisistä kehityssuuntauksista ja linjauksista. Tällaiset selvitykset kattavat kaikki valitut linjaukset ja niiden keskinäisen vuorovaikutuksen, ja näin ollen myös EU:n päästökauppajärjestelmän ja oikeudellisesti sitovat tavoitteet sekä tarvittaessa myös sähkömarkkinat ja työllisyysvaikutukset ([1]). Vuoden 2030 ilmasto- ja energiapoliittisia puitteita koskeva selvitys perustuu tällaiselle myöhemmin tänä vuonna julkaistavalle kehityssuuntausten ja linjausten ajantasaistetulle selvitykselle.

Jo energia- ja ilmastopaketin vaikutustenarvioinnissa tarkasteltiin eri tavoitteiden välistä vuorovaikutusta ja paketin vaikutusta ilmastotavoitteiden kustannustehokkuuteen. Siinä tehtiin niin ikään tarkka analyysi energiavarmuuden tavoitteista sekä kilpailukyvystä ja esitettiin konkreettisia toimia hiilivuotoriskin ehkäisemiseksi sekä tarkasteltiin, toteutuuko tasapuolisuus jäsenvaltioiden välillä ([2]).

Vuoden 2030 puitteiden perustana toimivassa selvityksessä muun muassa tarkastellaan yksityiskohtaisesti vuoden 2013 eri tavoitteiden yhdistelmän vaikutuksia sekä energiavarmuutta, kilpailukykyä ja muita asiaan liittyviä vaikutuksia, jotta poliittisilla päättäjillä olisi käytössään vankka tietopohja.

([1]) Ks. mm. http://ec.europa.eu/energy/observatory/trends_2030/doc/trends_to_2030_update_2009.pdf energia- ja sähkö-alan kehityssuuntauksista (mukana myös energia-alan etenemissuunnitelman 2050 vaikutustenarviointiin sisältyvä osittainen ajantasaistus http://ec.europa.eu/energy/energy2020/roadmap/doc/sec_2011_1565_part1.pdf); maatalouden ja hiilidioksidipäästöttömien vaihtoehtojen kehityssuuntauksista http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/package/docs/non_co2emissions_may2010_en.pdf; http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/package/docs/sec_2010_650_part2_en.pdf energia- ja ilmastopaketin täytäntöönpanosta, sen kustannuksista ja työllisyysvaikutuksista) sekä energiatehokkuuden tavoitteiden vuorovaikutuksesta mm. http://ec.europa.eu/energy/efficiency/eed/doc/2011_directive/sec_2011_0779_impact_assessment.pdf. Työllisyysvaikutuksia on tarkasteltu myös etenemissuunnitelmaa vähähiiliseen talouteen vuonna 2050 koskevassa vaikutustenarvioinnissa: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52011SC0288:EN:NOT

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/package/docs/sec_2008_85_ia_en.pdf; http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/package/docs/climate_package_ia_annex_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008451/13
to the Commission
Eija-Riitta Korhola (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: The impacts of overlapping energy and climate targets

Decisions about Europe's energy and climate package with 20-20-20 targets were made in 2008. These decisions had been preceded by several years of strong economic growth. At the time, in a good economic situation, the focus was on mitigating climate change and increasing renewable energy use and energy efficiency, while issues pertaining to competitiveness and economic growth in the EU were given less attention.

The three targets — as regards emissions, renewables and energy efficiency — clearly overlap and are often even conflicting. For example, while replacing natural gas by biomass reduces emissions and increases renewables, it also lowers energy efficiency.

At present, the Commission is preparing new targets for 2030. As far as is known, the Commission has not made any comprehensive analysis on the impacts of using overlapping and competing targets and measures.

Is the Commission going to analyse the impacts of current approaches before deciding on one or more targets for the year 2030? If so, will this analysis take into account of at least the following aspects:

— Has the EU emissions trading system, with its overlapping targets and measures (in particular as regards subsidised renewables), helped efforts to reach the objectives set with regard to CO_2 reduction, energy security and competitiveness?

— What is the net effect on employment, and what are the costs for employment?

— Have these overlapping targets and measures caused any extra costs in reaching climate objectives. If so, to what amount? If not, has this three-target scheme been cost-efficient?

— What impact has it had on the electricity market?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(28 August 2013)

The Commission regularly produces comprehensive analyses on the impacts of current trends and policies. Such analyses cover all adopted policies and their interaction, including the EU ETS and legally binding targets, and where relevant also electricity market and employment impacts ([1]). The analysis for the 2030 climate and energy framework will be based on a update of such a trend and policy analysis which will be published later this year.

Already the impact assessment for the climate and energy package assessed the interaction of different targets and its impact on cost-efficiency with regard to climate objectives. The package addressed also the objectives of energy security, competitiveness, both in terms of a detailed analysis as in terms of proposing concrete measures to prevent the risk of carbon leakage, as well as fairness between Member States ([2]).

The analysis underpinning the 2030 framework will among others investigate in detail the impacts of different 2030 target combinations, as well as energy security, competitiveness and other relevant impact dimensions to provide policy-makers with a sound information base.

([1]) See e.g. http://ec.europa.eu/energy/observatory/trends_2030/doc/trends_to_2030_update_2009.pdf on energy and electricity trends (with a partial update contained in the Energy Roadmap 2050 impact assessment: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/energy2020/roadmap/doc/sec_2011_1565_part1.pdf), on agriculture and non-CO_2 trends: http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/package/docs/non_co2emissions_may2010_en.pdf; http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/package/docs/sec_2010_650_part2_en.pdf on the implementation of the climate and energy package, its costs and employment impacts), and for interactions of EE targets e.g. http://ec.europa.eu/energy/efficiency/eed/doc/2011_directive/sec_2011_0779_ Employment impacts are also covered in the impact assessment for the Low carbon economy roadmap 2050: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52011SC0288:EN:NOT

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/package/docs/sec_2008_85_ia_en.pdf
http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/package/docs/climate_package_ia_annex_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008452/13
to the Council
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Property in Serbia

In view of the fact that Serbia wishes to join the European Union, is the Council aware that admissible authorities in Serbia which are supported by the Serbian Government are in the process of requisitioning property purchased by Serbian non-nationals, the said property having been legally acquired by the purchasers? Does the Council agree that such a policy runs counter to the spirit of the European Union and should pose an impediment to Serbian membership of the European Union?

Reply
(16 October 2013)

The Council has not discussed any specific case covered by the issue raised by the Honourable Member.

More generally, it is important that all investments in Serbia have the necessary legal protection. The Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) between the European Union and Serbia, which entered into force on 1 September 2013, allows the Commission to assess the implementation on a non-discriminatory basis of the provisions relating to the right of establishment in Serbia, including those areas referred to in the question. In general, compliance with the SAA will be closely monitored in the future EU integration process for Serbia.

Furthermore, in its conclusions of 11 December 2012, the Council encouraged Serbia to reinvigorate, further develop and implement the reform agenda, particularly in the areas of rule of law, and further improving of the business environment.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008453/13
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Property in Serbia

In view of the fact that Serbia wishes to join the European Union, is the Commission aware that admissible authorities in Serbia which are supported by the Serbian Government are in the process of requisitioning property purchased by Serbian non-nationals, the said property having been legally acquired by the purchasers? Does the Commission agree that such a policy runs counter to the spirit of the European Union and should pose an impediment to Serbian membership of the European Union?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(5 September 2013)

The Commission closely monitors the situation of the business environment in Serbia. In its 2012 Progress Report on Serbia ([1]), the Commission concluded that 'special attention is needed to further improve the business environment in Serbia'.

Regarding the specific situation mentioned, the Commission is aware that BPI, an Irish family owned company which has invested in the agricultural sector since 2006 in Serbia, is now the object of procedures launched by local authorities requesting the return of the land in the ownership of this company and its Serbian subsidiaries. The Commission also understands that the company in question is about to launch a lawsuit before Serbian courts against these requisition measures. The Commission will monitor the developments in this case.

More generally, the Stabilisation and Association Agreement between the European Union and Serbia, which entered into force on 1 September 2013, will allow the Commission to better supervise the protection of EU investments in Serbia. This agreement notably includes provisions on the right of establishment of EU companies in this country. The respect of the provisions of this agreement is one of the criteria closely followed by the Commission in its assesment of the progress made by Serbia towards accession to the EU.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2012/package/sr_rapport_2012_en.pdf

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008454/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 juillet 2013)

Objet: Naturopathie

La naturopathie est un système médical qui mise avant tout sur la stimulation des mécanismes naturels d'autoguérison du corps. Les interventions du naturopathe visent en premier lieu à activer, nourrir et renforcer ces mécanismes plutôt qu'à éliminer des symptômes ou à attaquer directement des agents pathogènes. Elles se veulent douces.

Dans cinq provinces canadiennes (la Colombie-Britannique, le Manitoba, la Nouvelle-Écosse, l'Ontario et la Saskatchewan) et une douzaine d'États américains, ainsi qu'en Australie, en Israël et dans quelques autres pays, on a commencé à autoriser les naturopathes à pratiquer une médecine de première ligne. Ils sont donc habilités à poser des diagnostics, à commander des analyses et des tests (radiographies, analyses de sang ou d'urine, etc.), à prescrire des traitements, à prodiguer des soins et à diriger les patients vers des médecins spécialistes.

Au Québec et dans la plupart des pays francophones d'Europe, la naturopathie n'est pas officiellement reconnue. Des associations de naturopathes travaillent toutefois en ce sens. Pour le moment, on peut y utiliser le titre de naturopathe, mais il ne désigne pas nécessairement des thérapeutes possédant une formation complète. De plus, leur pratique professionnelle n'est généralement pas soumise à des règles strictes. Ces naturopathes — quelle que soit la valeur de leur formation et de leurs compétences — ne sont pas autorisés à poser de diagnostics ni à prescrire de traitements médicaux. Ils ne peuvent qu'agir en tant que conseillers en santé, en complément des soins fournis par des professionnels de la santé dûment licenciés.

1. Quelle est la position de la Commission sur la naturopathie?

2. Est-elle encline à la reconnaissance de ce type de système médical?

3. La Commission a-t-elle effectué des recherches et/ou a-t-elle des conseils à formuler?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(3 septembre 2013)

Dans le cadre juridique en vigueur, l'établissement d'un régime réglementaire pour les professionnels de la santé, y compris les naturopathes, relève de la compétence de chaque État membre. C'est également à chaque État membre qu'il appartient de déterminer s'il existe suffisamment de preuves de l'efficacité clinique de la naturopathie avant de pouvoir offrir aux citoyens une solution thérapeutique de rechange via le système de santé publique.

Conformément aux données disponibles dans la base de données des professions réglementées ([1]), la naturopathie (médecine naturelle) est réglementée dans un seul État membre de l'Union, la Hongrie, ainsi qu'en Islande et au Liechtenstein. Elle n'est pas reconnue comme profession réglementée dans les autres États membres. On entend par «profession réglementée» une activité professionnelle dont l'accès et l'exercice sont subordonnés directement ou indirectement à la possession d'une qualification professionnelle. C'est aux États membres qu'il appartient de déterminer les professions qu'ils souhaitent réglementer ([2]).

La Commission a cofinancé une étude de fond sur les médecines parallèles dans le cadre du 7e programme-cadre de recherche ([3]). Ce projet a permis l'établissement d'un réseau de recherche paneuropéen pour les médecines complémentaires et alternatives et l'élaboration d'une feuille de route pour la recherche future.

([1]) La base de données des professions réglementées est accessible à l'adresse suivante: http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/qualifications/regprof/index.cfm?newlang=fr

([2]) Au-delà des professions pour lesquelles les conditions minimales de formation sont coordonnées par le chapitre III du titre III de la directive 2005/36/CE relative à la reconnaissance des qualifications professionnelles.

([3]) http://www.cambrella.eu/home.php?il=8&l=deu

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008454/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Naturopathy

Naturopathy is a medical system that works primarily by stimulating the body's natural self-healing mechanisms. Naturopathic treatments are gentle and aim primarily to activate, stimulate and promote these mechanisms rather than eliminate symptoms or attack pathogens directly.

The first permits have been issued to allow naturopathic practitioners to deliver primary care in five Canadian provinces (British Columbia, Manitoba, Nova Scotia, Ontario and Saskatchewan) and a dozen US states, as well as in Australia, Israel and a number of other countries. They are therefore qualified to make diagnoses, order tests (x-rays, blood and urine tests, etc.), prescribe treatments, provide care and refer patients to specialists.

In Quebec and in most French-speaking countries in Europe, naturopathy is not officially recognised. A number of naturopathic associations are, however, pursuing that aim. At the moment, naturopathic practitioners in those countries can call themselves such, but that does not necessarily mean they are fully trained therapists. What is more, their professional practice is not generally governed by strict rules. Whatever the value of their training and skills, these naturopathic practitioners are not permitted to make diagnoses or prescribe medical treatment. They may only act as health consultants to supplement care provided by properly licensed healthcare professionals.

1. What is the Commission's view on naturopathy?

2. Is it inclined to recognise this kind of medical system?

3. Has the Commission conducted any research and/or can it offer any guidance?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(3 September 2013)

Under the current legal framework, the establishment of a regulatory regime for health practitioners, including naturopathic practitioners, falls within the competence of individual Member States. It is for each Member State also to decide if there is sufficient evidence of clinical effectiveness to provide citizens with an alternative therapy through the public health system.

According to the data available in the Regulated Professions Database ([1]), naturopathy (natural health medicine) is regulated in only one EU Member State, Hungary, and also in Iceland and in Lichtenstein. Other EU Member States have not notified it as a regulated profession. A regulated profession is a professional activity, access to which, and the pursuit of which, is subject directly or indirectly to the possession of a professional qualification. It is up to the Member States to decide which professions they regulate ([2]).

The Commission has co-financed a research study on complementary and alternative medicine under the FP7 Framework Research programme ([3]). This project established a pan-European research network for complementary and alternative medicine and developed a roadmap for future research.

([1]) The Regulated Professions Database is accessible here: http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/qualifications/regprof/index.cfm?newlang=en.
([2]) Beyond the professions for which the minimum training conditions are coordinated by Chapter III of Title III of Directive 2005/36/EC on the recognition of professional qualifications.
([3]) http://www.cambrella.eu/home.php?il=8&l=deu.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008455/13
aan de Commissie
Derk Jan Eppink (ECR)
(11 juli 2013)

Betreft: Mogelijke beperkingen handel in palmolie

Als reactie op vraag E-011031-12 antwoordde de Commissie in E-011031/2012 dat werd bezorgdheid geuit bij de Franse regering over mogelijke schadelijke effecten die veroorzaakt konden worden door het plan van de Franse Senaat om een belasting in te voeren op het gebruik van palmolie. De onderhandelingen over het vrijhandelsverdrag tussen de Europese Unie en Maleisië kunnen, net zoals andere onderhandelingen over vrijhandelsverdragen, grote voordelen teweeg brengen voor Europese consumenten. Ik verwelkom dan ook de rol die de Commissie speelt om protectionistische acties, die deze voordelen zouden kunnen teniet doen, te weren.

1. Is de Commissie op de hoogte dat er vandaag gelijkaardige voorstellen aan de oppervlakte gekomen zijn in de Belgische Senaat, waarvan de belangrijkste er één is om het gebruik van palmolie streng te gaan beperken ([1])?

2. Heeft de Commissie al contact gehad met vertegenwoordigers van de Belgische regering, zoals ze dat gedaan heeft in Frankrijk? Meer bepaald, heeft de Commissie de intentie om de Belgische autoriteiten uit te leggen dat het aannemen van deze wet zou resulteren in het beschadigen van de handelsrelaties tussen de EU en Maleisië?

Antwoord van de heer De Gucht namens de Commissie
(26 augustus 2013)

De Commissie is op de hoogte van het debat in de Belgische Senaat over ontwerpwetgeving betreffende het gebruik van palmolie in levensmiddelen en volgt dit op de voet.

Indien nodig zal de Commissie haar bezorgdheid overbrengen aan de Belgische autoriteiten en wijzen op de grotere gevolgen die dergelijke binnenlandse maatregelen kunnen hebben voor de handelsbetrekkingen tussen de EU en de landen die palmolie produceren, bijvoorbeeld voor de onderhandelingen over de vrijhandelsovereenkomst tussen de EU en Maleisië en de noodzaak om discriminatie te voorkomen die in strijd is met de Overeenkomst inzake sanitaire en fytosanitaire maatregelen (SPS).

([1]) http://senaat.be/www/?MIval=/index_senate & LANG=nl.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008455/13
to the Commission
Derk Jan Eppink (ECR)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Possible restrictions on palm oil trade

In response to Question E-011031-12, in its answer E-011031/2012, the Commission conveyed its concerns to the French Government about the possible harmful effects that could be caused by the French Senate's plan to introduce a tax on the use of palm oil. Like other negotiations on free trade agreements (FTA), negotiations on an FTA between the EU and Malaysia could bring great benefits to European consumers. I, therefore, welcome the role that the Commission is playing in order to prevent protectionist measures that could cancel out these benefits.

1. Is the Commission aware of the fact that similar proposals have emerged today in the Belgian Senate, one of the key proposals being to severely restrict the use of palm oil? ([1])?

2. Is the Commission already in touch with representatives of the Belgian Government on this matter, as it was with the French? More specifically, does the Commission intend to explain to the Belgian authorities that adopting this law would result in damage to trade relations between the EU and Malaysia?

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

The Commission is aware of and following the debate in the Belgian senate on draft legislation on the use of palm oil in foodstuffs.

The Commission will, if need be, convey its concerns to the Belgian authorities and point to the wider impact that such domestic measures may have on trade relations between the EU and palm oil producing countries, including on the negotiations on the EU-Malaysia free trade agreement and on the need to avoid discriminatory treatments not in line with the Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Agreement.

([1]) http://senaat.be/www/?MIval=/index_senate&LANG=nl.

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-008456/13
до Комисията
Filiz Hakaeva Hyusmenova (ALDE)
(11 юли 2013 г.)

Относно: Субсидии за тютюн

В България при население от 7,3 милиона има 200 хиляди тютюнопроизводители. Тютюнът е изключително важен отрасъл, тъй като създава заетост и носи приходи към бюджета за страната. С оглед на климатичните условия в България той не може да бъде заменен с друга култура.

Затова сме обезпокоени, че тютюнът не е включен в културите, които ще получат директно финансиране през новия период 2014—2020 г. Българският тютюн също не се квалифицира за подпомагане с премии, базирани на качеството на самия тютюн. Това оставя българските тютюнопроизводители в безизходна ситуация, тъй като това е единственият отрасъл, с който те могат да се изхранват.

Би ли могла Комисия да предложи други възможности за подпомагане на българските тютюнопроизводители с европейски средства след 2014 г., извън националните доплащания от бюджета на страната?

Някои министри на земеделието в държавите членки като Полша, България, Италия, Гърция и Испания вече повдигнаха въпроса за продължаване на европейските субсидии за тютюнопроизводителите. Какво е мнението на Комисията за отваряне на дебата по тази тема?

Отговор, даден от г-н Чолош от името на Комисията
(22 август 2013 г.)

По отношение на тютюневия отрасъл производството на суров тютюн е напълно интегрирано в общите инструменти на селскостопанската политика.

Съгласно предложението за регламент относно преходни мерки през 2014 г., което се обсъжда понастоящем, България ще има възможност да преразгледа решението си за прилагане на специфично подпомагане по член 68 от Регламент (ЕО) № 73/2009 ([1]) за 2014 г. Това решение може да окаже влияние върху директните плащания (ДП), прилагани през следващия период.

Съгласно член 28в, параграф 1б от проекта на регламент относно ДП, приложим от 2015 г. в съответствие с постигнатото на 25.—26.6.2013 г. политическо споразумение, държавите членки (ДЧ), които въведат схемата за основно плащане най-късно от 1 януари 2018 г., могат, за периода, през който прилагат СЕПП, да използват до 20 % от годишния си финансов пакет, за да разграничат плащанията по СЕПП за хектар. За целите на това разграничаване ДЧ вземат предвид една или повече схеми за подпомагане, предоставени през 2014 година съгласно някои разпоредби, включително член 68, параграф 1, буква а), посочен по-горе.

Предложението за регламент за единната ООП ще предостави на земеделските производители по-големи възможности да засилят позицията си във веригата на доставките чрез създаването на организации на производители и междубраншови организации, които да бъдат официално признати от ДЧ.

С политиката за развитие на селските райони ще бъдат предвидени мерки, които ДЧ могат да прилагат с оглед на преструктурирането или диверсификацията на земеделските стопанства и с оглед подпомагането на методи за селскостопанско производство, които са благоприятни за околната среда и за смекчаването на последиците от изменението на климата и адаптирането към тях. Тези възможности могат да бъдат използвани от всички земеделски стопанства, отговарящи на условията за подпомагане, включително и от тютюневите стопанства. ДЧ избират мерките, с които да отговорят на специфичните им нужди, установени в SWOT анализа.

([1]) ОВ L 30, 31.1.2009 г.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008456/13
to the Commission
Filiz Hakaeva Hyusmenova (ALDE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Tobacco subsidies

In Bulgaria, which has a population of 7.3 million people, there are 200 000 tobacco growers. The tobacco sector is an extremely important one as it creates employment and helps finance the country's budget. The climate in Bulgaria means that tobacco cannot be replaced with any other crop.

This makes it a matter of concern that tobacco has not been included among the crops eligible for direct aid in the new financing period 2014-2020. Neither does Bulgarian tobacco qualify for aid in the form of quality-based premiums. This leaves Bulgarian tobacco growers in a hopeless situation as tobacco growing is their only possible means of making a living.

Can the Commission suggest any other possible sources of European aid for Bulgarian tobacco growers after 2014, outside the national payments from the country's budget?

Agriculture ministers in some Member States such as Poland, Bulgaria, Italy, Greece and Spain have already raised the question of continued EU subsidies for tobacco growers. What is the Commission's view on launching a debate on this issue?

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

Regarding the tobacco sector, the production of raw tobacco is fully integrated into the general agricultural policy instruments.

According to the proposal for a regulation on transitional measures in 2014 currently under discussion, Bulgaria will have the possibility to review its decision of implementing specific support under Article 68 of Regulation (EC) No 73/2009 ([1]) for the year 2014. Such decision may have an impact on the direct payments (DP) implemented in the following period.

According to Article 28c(1b) of the draft regulation on DP applicable from 2015, as politically agreed on 25-26/06/2013, Member States (MS) which introduce the basic payment scheme as from 1 January 2018 at the latest may use, for the period during which they implement the SAPS, up to 20% of their annual financial envelope to differentiate the SAPS/ha. For the purpose of this differentiation, MS shall take into account one or more support schemes granted pursuant to certain provisions including Article 68(1)(a) mentioned above in the year 2014.

The proposal for the Single CMO regulation will provide greater opportunities for farmers to strengthen their position in the supply chain through the formation of producer and Interbranch organisations to be officially recognised by MS.

The rural development policy will provide for measures which MS can apply in a view to restructure or diversify the agricultural holdings and to support farming practices favourable for the environment and climate change mitigation and adaptation. These possibilities may be used by all eligible farms, including tobacco farms. MS select the measures to address their specific needs identified in the SWOT analysis.

([1]) OJ L 30, 31.1.2009.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008457/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Santiago Fisas Ayxela (PPE) y Gabriel Mato Adrover (PPE)
(11 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Ruanda: el caso de Victoire Ingabire

El pasado mes de mayo, el Pleno del Parlamento Europeo aprobó una Resolución ([1]) sobre Victoire Ingabire, en la que expresaba su gran preocupación por la situación en la que se encuentra la opositora ruandesa, condenada en octubre de 2012 a ocho años de reclusión tras dieciséis años en el exilio y la prohibición de presentarse a las elecciones presidenciales de 2010.

El Parlamento recordó que el juicio inicial de Victoire no se ajustó a los criterios internacionales, y condenó todas las formas de represión, intimidación y encarcelamiento de activistas políticos, periodistas y defensores de los derechos humanos, instando a su vez al Gobierno ruandés a que cumpla el Derecho internacional y respete la Declaración Universal de los Derechos Humanos. Además, en la Resolución el Parlamento expresaba su preocupación por que, tras diecinueve años de la llegada al poder del FPR y tras dos de la reelección del presidente Kagame, Ruanda siga sin tener partidos opositores operativos.

— ¿Qué medidas ha tomado o piensa tomar la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante para llevar a cabo un seguimiento de la situación de Victoire Ingabire y otros miembros de la oposición ruandesa, para que esta Resolución no quede en el olvido?

— A la vista de que algunos testigos han confesado que sus testimonios anteriores eran falsos, y de otra testigo que ha dicho que las pruebas estaban amañadas, y teniendo en cuenta las continuas y nuevas irregularidades en la utilización de los testigos y de sus testimonios, así como las maniobras constantes de la Fiscalía para retrasar el proceso, ¿cómo piensa la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante asegurarse de que la vista de la apelación de Victoire sea rápida y justa?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(23 de septiembre de 2013)

Desde que se iniciara el proceso del Tribunal Superior de Kigali contra Victoire Ingabire, la Delegación de la UE, junto con los Estados miembros de la UE y otros miembros de la CI, ha seguido de cerca el caso. Hemos compartido regularmente con los Estados miembros de la UE presentes en Ruanda la evolución de los acontecimientos y nuestra valoración de los mismos. La UE también se ha reunido con el abogado defensor de Ingabire.

El diálogo político con el Gobierno ruandés tiene lugar regularmente. En dicho diálogo ponemos especial empeño en la búsqueda de compromisos para promover un sistema político más abierto y el respeto de los derechos humanos. Esperamos que las autoridades ruandesas permitan la administración de justicia a través de un sistema judicial independiente y transparente.

La UE ha observado algunas deficiencias en el juicio ante el Tribunal Superior, pero dado que está en curso un recurso ante el Tribunal Supremo, la Comisión no está en condiciones de valorar si el proceso judicial en su conjunto cumple o no las normas internacionales. Trabajaremos en estrecha colaboración con los Estados miembros de la UE y con otros países y estudiaremos detenidamente el veredicto del Tribunal Supremo.

Tras escuchar las observaciones finales de la defensa, el Tribunal Supremo concluyó oficialmente la vista del recurso el 31 de julio y está previsto que pronuncie su veredicto sobre el recurso de la Sra. Ingabire el 1 de noviembre. La UE sigue de cerca la evolución de este asunto y estudiará la adopción de otras medidas si fuera necesario.

([1]) Resolución P7_TA(2013)0233.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008457/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Santiago Fisas Ayxela (PPE) and Gabriel Mato Adrover (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Rwanda: the case of Victoire Ingabire

At the plenary session in May 2013, Parliament adopted a Resolution on Victoire Ingabire ([1]), in which it expressed its grave concern over the situation in which the Rwandan opposition leader finds herself, having been sentenced in October 2012 to eight years' imprisonment after she spent 16 years in exile and was barred from standing in the 2010 presidential elections.

Parliament observed that Victoire Ingabire's initial trial did not meet international standards and condemned all forms of repression, intimidation and detention of political activists, journalists and human rights activities, while urging the Rwandan Government to comply with international law and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. What is more, in its Resolution Parliament expressed its concern that 19 years after the RPF came to power, and two years after the re-election of President Kagame, Rwanda still has no active opposition political parties.

— What measures has the Vice-President/High Representative taken, or does she intend to take, to monitor the situation of Victoire Ingabire and other members of the Rwandan opposition, to ensure that this Resolution is not sidelined?

— Given that a number of witnesses have admitted that their previous testimonies were false, and that another witness has said that evidence was fabricated, and given the ongoing and fresh irregularities in the use of witnesses and their testimonies, as well as the Public Prosecutor's constant manoeuvring to delay the legal proceedings, how does the Vice-President / High Representative intend to ensure that Victoire Ingabire's appeal hearing takes place swiftly and fairly?

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

Since the beginning of the initial Kigali High Court case against Victoire Ingabire, the EU delegation, together with EU member states and other members of the IC have closely monitored the situation. Developments — and our assessment of them — have been shared regularly with the EU member states present in Rwanda. The EU has also met with Ingabire's defence lawyer.

Political dialogue with the Rwandan Government takes place on a regular basis. Particular emphasis is placed on seeking commitments to promote a more open political system and the respect of human rights. We expect the Rwandan authorities to allow the provision of Justice on the basis of an independent and transparent judicial system.

The EU has noted some deficiencies in the High Court trial, but since a Supreme Court appeal is ongoing it is not in a position to assess whether the overall judicial process does not meet international standards. We will liaise with EU member states and with others, and will give close attention to the Supreme Court verdict.

After the hearing of concluding remarks from the defence side, the Supreme Court officially ended the appeal hearing on the 31 July and is set to pronounce its verdict on the appeal by Ms Ingabire on 1st November. The EU is following the developments of the case and will consider further action if necessary.

([1]) Resolution P7_TA(2013)0233.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008458/13
a la Comisión
Esther Herranz García (PPE)
(11 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: Leche

Una gran superficie ha ofrecido recientemente en España leche gratuita al consumidor a cambio de compras superiores a 40 euros. Se trata de una práctica que perjudica seriamente al sector ganadero español, poniendo en riesgo su viabilidad.

¿Tiene la Comisión constancia de estas prácticas en otros Estados miembros? ¿Se puede emprender a nivel europeo alguna medida para evitar ese tipo de prácticas?

Respuesta del Sr. Cioloş en nombre de la Comisión
(2 de septiembre de 2013)

La Comisión quiere subrayar que la evaluación de las ventas por debajo del coste de los supermercados no está armonizada a escala de la UE.

En la actualidad no existen medidas que aborden esta práctica a escala europea. En 2001, la Comisión propuso introducir disposiciones armonizadas sobre las ventas por debajo del coste en el marco de la propuesta de Reglamento del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo relativo a las promociones de ventas en el mercado interior, pero esta propuesta fue retirada ([1]).

Con respecto a la posible aplicación de la normativa de competencia de la UE a tales prácticas, en virtud del artículo 102 del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea (TFUE), la venta por debajo del coste no está prohibida en sí, ni siquiera para las empresas dominantes, a menos que esta conducta pueda considerarse un abuso que lleva a una exclusión de los competidores contraria a la competencia. Las orientaciones de la Comisión sobre el tratamiento de las prácticas de exclusión abusiva en el marco de la normativa de competencia de la UE ([2]) aclaran que los precios inferiores a los costes se considerarán prácticas predatorias únicamente cuando entrañen o puedan entrañar la exclusión de competidores con igual grado de eficiencia, así como cuando puedan resultar lesivos para los consumidores. Además, el artículo 102 solamente puede aplicarse cuando la conducta en cuestión puede afectar al comercio entre los Estados miembros de la Unión Europea.

Las autoridades nacionales de competencia (ANC) también pueden investigar este tipo de situaciones en el marco de la legislación nacional si esta es más estricta que la de la UE o si el comportamiento de la empresa no afecta al comercio entre los Estados miembros. Además, aun cuando el asunto afectara al comercio entre los Estados miembros, las ANC pueden estar en mejores condiciones que la Comisión para tratarlo si el mercado afectado es local o nacional.

([1]) Véase http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2001:0546:FIN:ES:PDF

([2]) Véase la Comunicación de la Comisión *Orientaciones sobre las prioridades de control de la Comisión en su aplicación del artículo 82 del Tratado CE a la conducta excluyente abusiva de las empresas dominantes*, DO C 45 de 24.2.2009. Téngase en cuenta que las referencias al artículo 82 del Tratado CE deben entenderse hechas al actual artículo 102 del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea (en su nueva denominación introducida por el Tratado de Lisboa, que entró en vigor el 1 de diciembre de 2009).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008458/13
to the Commission
Esther Herranz García (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Milk

A large supermarket in Spain has recently offered free milk to customers spending in excess of EUR 40, a practice seriously jeopardising the viability of the Spanish dairy farming sector.

Is the Commission aware of the existence of such practices in other Member States?

Can steps be taken at European level to outlaw such them?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(2 September 2013)

The Commission would like to underline the fact that there is no harmonisation of the assessment of sales below costs by supermarkets at EU level.

Currently, there are no measures addressing this practice at European level. In 2001, the Commission proposed to introduce harmonised provisions on sales below costs within the framework of the proposal for a Parliament and Council Regulation concerning sales promotions in the internal market, but this proposal was set aside ([1]).

With respect to the potential application of EU competition rules to such practices, under Article 102 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) selling below cost is not prohibited per se even for dominant undertakings, unless this conduct can be configured as an exclusionary abuse, leading to anticompetitive foreclosure of competitors. The Commission Guidance on the treatment of exclusionary abuses under EU competition law ([2]) clarifies that below-cost pricing will be seen as predatory only when it leads to the actual or likely foreclosure of as-efficient competitors, and also leads to consumer harm. In addition, Art.102 can be applied only when the behaviour into question may affect trade between the Member States of the European Union.

National Competition Authorities (NCAs) may also investigate such situations under national law if such law is stricter than EC law or if the behaviour of the undertaking does not affect trade between Member States. In addition, even if the matter were to affect trade between Member States, the NCAs may be better placed than the Commission to deal with if the market concerned is local or national.

([1]) See http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2001:0546:FIN:EN:PDF

([2]) See 'Communication from the Commission — guidance on the Commission's enforcement priorities in applying Article 82 of the EC Treaty to abusive exclusionary conduct by dominant undertakings', OJ C 45, 24.2.2009. Please note that references to Art 82 EC should be understood as references to the current Article 102 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (as renamed by the Treaty of Lisbon, which entered into force on 1 December 2009).

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-008459/13
til Kommissionen
Ole Christensen (S&D)
(11. juli 2013)

Om: Spørgsmål til Kommissionen omkring chauffører fra tredjelande

I svar til mig den 13. maj 2013 om tredjelandsstatsborgeres immigration i EU bekræfter Kommissionen, at et væsentligt kriterium i adgangen til arbejdsmarkedet i EU er situationen på arbejdsmarkedet, herunder om der er lokal arbejdskraft til rådighed, der kan varetage beskæftigelsen frem for tredjelandsborgere.

Svaret giver anledning til videre spørgsmål. Tal fra Eurostat (2012) viser, at der er en generel arbejdsløshedsprocent på 10,5 % i EU med op til 14,9 % i Letland, 15,9 % i Portugal og 25 % arbejdsløse i Spanien. Dette indikerer, at der er tilstrækkelig lokal eller EU-arbejdskraft til at besætte ledige stillinger på de enkelte arbejdsmarkeder, og at der ikke burde være behov for arbejdskraft fra tredjelande.

Kan Kommissionen i lyset af ovenstående forklare, hvordan kriteriet om til rådighed stående arbejdskraft til fulde er overholdt, når tredjelandsstatsborgere gives adgang til det europæiske arbejdsmarked trods den nuværende høje arbejdsløshed i mange medlemsstater?

Kan Kommissionen endvidere forklare, hvordan den tager højde for, at lastbilchauffører er mobile arbejdstagere, hvilket indebærer, at der ofte er en forskel på den medlemsstat, hvortil der sker indrejse, og den medlemsstat, hvor arbejdet udføres?

Med arbejdskraftens frie bevægelighed har vi efterhånden fået et reelt indre marked også på arbejdsmarkedet, hvor arbejdstagere fra de fleste EU-lande kan stille sig til rådighed på tværs af EU's grænser. Kommissionen bedes derfor forklare, om der i vurderingen om indrejse mon ikke bør indgå et hensyn til ledigheden på arbejdsmarkedet i EU generelt og ikke bare arbejdsmarkedet i den medlemsstat, hvortil eventuel indrejse sker.

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Cecilia Malmström
(3. september 2013)

Høj arbejdsløshed og mangel på arbejdskraft udelukker ikke nødvendigvis hinanden, da den gennemsnitlige vækst og dermed den gennemsnitlige efterspørgsel på arbejdskraft skjuler store forskelle mellem sektorerne. I vejtransportsektoren har der i mange år været mangel på kvalificerede chauffører. I 2008 manglede der ca. 75 000 chauffører, og tallet må forventes at stige, da gennemsnitsalderen er høj, og der kommer få nye chauffører til. Da der ser ud til at mangle chauffører i hele EU, burde det forhold, at chauffører er mobile arbejdstagere, kun have begrænset betydning for politikken vedrørende chauffører fra tredjelande.

I hvidbogen om transport (KOM(2011)0144) tilskyndes arbejdsmarkedets parter til at nå til enighed om en aftale, der sikrer tilfredsstillende arbejdsvilkår for mobile arbejdstagere i vejtransportsektoren. Omkring to tredjedele af vejtransportvolumen i EU varetages dog på indenlandske ruter af lokale vognmænd, hvilket betyder, at mange mobile arbejdstagere i vejtransportsektoren ikke deltager i internationale aktiviteter. De eksisterende EU-regler om indvandring omfatter foranstaltninger, der fastlægger betingelser for indrejse og ophold, samt definition af tredjelandsstatsborgeres rettigheder. Lastbilchauffører er imidlertid ikke specifikt dækket.

Det er fortsat de enkelte medlemsstater, der giver arbejdstagere fra tredjelande adgang til deres område og arbejdsmarked under hensyntagen til princippet om EU-præference. De fleste medlemsstater anvender en arbejdsmarkedstest for at bekræfte, at der ikke findes en egnet kandidat på det nationale arbejdsmarked. Selvom nogle medlemsstater stadig anvender overgangsforanstaltninger til at kræve arbejdstilladelser for arbejdstagere fra Rumænien, Bulgarien og/eller Kroatien, skal arbejdstagere fra disse medlemsstater i henhold til de respektive tiltrædelsestraktater gives fortrinsstilling frem for tredjelandsstatsborgere med hensyn til adgang til arbejdsmarkedet.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008459/13
to the Commission
Ole Christensen (S&D)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Drivers from third countries

In its answer of 13 May 2013 to my question (E-002461/13) on immigration of third-country nationals into the EU, the Commission confirms that a key criterion for access to employment in the EU is the labour market situation, including whether there is local manpower available to carry out the work in preference to third-country nationals.

This answer gives rise to a further question. Eurostat figures (from 2012) show that the overall unemployment rate is 10.5% in the EU, with up to 14.9% in Latvia, 15.9% in Portugal and 25% unemployed in Spain. This suggests that there is sufficient local or EU manpower available to fill vacancies on the individual labour markets and that there should not be any need for manpower from third countries.

In the light of the above, can the Commission state how the criterion of available manpower is being fully complied with when third-country nationals are given access to the European labour market in spite of the current high levels of unemployment in many Member States?

Can the Commission also state how it is taking account of the fact that lorry drivers are mobile workers, which means that there is often a difference between the Member State of entry and the Member State where the work is carried out?

With the free movement of labour we have gradually achieved a genuine internal market in employment too, where workers from most EU Member States can make themselves available across EU borders. Can the Commission therefore please state whether, when considering entry applications, account should be taken of unemployment in the EU as a whole and not just in the Member State being entered?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(3 September 2013)

High unemployment and labour shortages can co-exist as average growth and, thus, average labour demand, hide significant differences between sectors. The road haulage sector has seen a shortage of qualified drivers for several years. In 2008 there was a shortage of some 75 000 drivers which is likely to increase due to the high average age and low levels on new entrants. As this shortage appears general throughout the EU, the fact that drivers are mobile workers should be of limited impact on policy regarding third-country drivers.

The White Paper on Transport (COM(2011) 144) recommends finding an agreement between the social partners to ensure adequate working conditions of mobile road transport workers. Around two thirds of road transport volumes in the EU are however carried on domestic routes by local hauliers, meaning that many mobile road haulage workers are not involved in international operations. The EU immigration *acquis* includes measures establishing the conditions of entry and residence and the definition of rights of third-country nationals; lorry drivers however are not covered specifically.

It remains for individual Member States to grant third-country national workers access to their territory and labour market, taking into account the principle of Union preference. Most Member States apply a labour market test to verify that no suitable candidate is available in the domestic labour market. Moreover, while some Member States still apply transitional measures to request a work permit for workers from Romania, Bulgaria and/or Croatia, the respective Accession Treaties require preference to be given to workers from these Member States over third-country nationals to access the labour market.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008460/13
an die Kommission
Josef Weidenholzer (S&D)
(11. Juli 2013)

Betrifft: Vorgehensweise des „Zurückdrängens“ durch Beamte der griechischen Küstenwache

Laut Angaben in dem von Amnesty International erstellten Bericht „Frontier Europe: Human rights abuses on Greece's border with Turkey“ ([1]) (Grenze Europa: Menschenrechtsverletzungen an der griechisch-türkischen Grenze), der am 9. Juli 2013 veröffentlicht wurde, wird die griechische Grenzpolizei beschuldigt, bei mindestens 39 Einsätzen des „Zurückdrängens“ Einzelne oder Gruppen von Menschen in Griechenland über die Grenze zurück in die Türkei geschickt zu haben.

In 16 Fällen haben die Einsätze des „Zurückdrängens“ auf See stattgefunden. Laut Angaben im Bericht haben griechische Beamte sogar den Motor eines Bootes mit 42 Flüchtlingen, darunter Kinder, abmontiert, und es auf offener See treiben lassen. Dieses Verhalten stellt einen Verstoß gegen Menschenrechte dar, und widerspricht sowohl europäischem als auch internationalem Recht, da es zu einer indirekten Zurückweisung führen kann ([2]).

Offenbar sind bei der griechischen Frontex-Mission 18 Berichte eingegangen, in denen Fälle von Menschenrechtsverletzungen aufgeführt werden, die mutmaßlich von griechischen Beamten begangen wurden. Die Berichte wurden den griechischen Behörden vorgelegt, die die Anschuldigungen zurückgewiesen haben.

1. Sind der Kommission diese Vorfälle bekannt? Wie stellen sich die Ereignisse aus Sicht der Kommission dar?

2. Gedenkt die Kommission diese Anschuldigungen entweder im Rahmen von Frontex oder auf sonstige Weise engagiert zu untersuchen?

3. Welche Maßnahmen wird die Kommission ergreifen, um die griechischen Behörden zu verwarnen und um sie dabei zu unterstützen, Verfahren einzuführen, die keine Vorgehensweisen implizieren, durch die europäisches Recht verletzt, die Menschenrechte untergraben und letztlich Menschenleben gefährdet werden?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(3. September 2013)

Der Kommission sind die Meldungen über Einsätze des „Zurückdrängens“ über die türkische Grenze durch die griechischen Behörden bekannt und sie ist darüber sehr beunruhigt. Die Kommission hat mit Amnesty International über die Ergebnisse des einschlägigen Berichts gesprochen und wird für angemessene Folgemaßnahmen der griechischen Behörden sorgen.

2009 hat die Kommission gegen Griechenland Vertragsverletzungsverfahren eingeleitet. Sie hatte damit unter anderem auf Besorgnisse über Vorfälle reagiert, bei denen Menschen, die möglicherweise internationalen Schutz benötigt hätten, der Zugang zum Land und zum Asylverfahren verweigert wurde. Falls erforderlich, wird die Kommission nicht zögern, weitere Verfahrensschritte einzuleiten, um die Wahrung von EU-Recht und Grundrechten sicherzustellen.

Im Rahmen von Frontex wurde ein System zur Meldung schwerwiegender Vorfälle eingeführt, das in allen gemeinsamen Aktionen angewandt wird und insbesondere die möglichen Verstöße gegen die Grundrechte abdeckt. Diese Meldungen werden zur Untersuchung an die griechischen Behörden weitergeleitet.

Die Grundrechtsbeauftragte von Frontex hat ebenfalls den Einsatzbereich der Gemeinsamen Operation „Poseidon“ in Griechenland besucht und ihre Ergebnisse dem Verwaltungsrat der Agentur vorgelegt. Frontex hat die Behörden Griechenlands aufgefordert, die festgestellten Mängel zu beheben.

Sollten schwere Verstöße gegen die Grundrechte bewiesen werden und anhalten, ist es gemäß Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1168/2011 (Frontex-Verordnung) möglich, den Frontex-Einsatz in dieser Region vollständig oder teilweise auszusetzen oder zu beenden.

Die Kommission unterstützt Griechenland außerdem mit Expertenwissen und Finanzmitteln, damit nationale Praktiken reformiert und mit dem Besitzstand in Einklang gebracht werden. Beispielsweise kofinanziert die Kommission Maßnahmen, um den in Grenzgebieten ankommenden Migranten Informationen und Dolmetscher des UNHCR und von Nichtregierungsorganisationen zur Verfügung zu stellen.

([1]) Online abrufbar unter: http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/EUR25/008/2013/en/d93b63ac-6c5d-4d0d-bd9f-ce2774c84ce7/eur250082013en.pdf

([2]) Siehe beispielsweise Artikel 33 Absatz 1 des Abkommens der Vereinten Nationen über die Rechtsstellung der Flüchtlinge, Artikel 3 der Europäischen Menschenrechtskonvention und die bestehenden europäischen Richtlinien und Verordnungen in Bezug auf Asylsuchende.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008460/13
to the Commission
Josef Weidenholzer (S&D)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Practice of 'push-back' by Greek border patrol officials

According to the Amnesty International report 'Frontier Europe: Human rights abuses on Greece's border with Turkey' ([1]), published on 9 July 2013, Greek border police are alleged to have sent individuals or groups in Greece back across the border into Turkey in at least 39 'push-back' operations.

In 16 of these operations the 'push-back' took place at sea. According to the report, Greek officials even dismounted the engine of a boat with 42 refugees, including children, leaving them drifting in the open sea. This behaviour violates human rights and is contrary to European as well as international law since it can lead to indirect refoulement ([2]).

Apparently the Greek Frontex mission has received 18 reports citing instances in which human rights are alleged to have been violated by Greek officials. The reports have been forwarded to the Greek authorities, who have denied the allegations.

1. Is the Commission aware of these incidents? What is the Commission's view of these events?

2. Does the Commission, whether in the framework of Frontex or otherwise, plan to investigate these allegations in an active manner?

3. Which actions will the Commission take in order to admonish the Greek authorities on this matter and to support them in establishing procedures that do not entail resorting to practices that violate European law, undermine human rights and, ultimately, endanger lives?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(3 September 2013)

The Commission is aware and very concerned about allegations of push back operations to Turkey by the Greek authorities. The Commission has met Amnesty International to discuss the findings of their report and will ensure an appropriate follow-up with the Greek authorities.

The Commission launched infringement proceedings against Greece in 2009, *inter alia* noting concerns about practices hampering access to the territory and to asylum procedures for persons who may have been in need of international protection. The Commission will not hesitate to take additional procedural steps, if needed, with a view to ensuring respect of EC law and fundamental rights.

Frontex has put in place a system of reporting on serious incidents applied in all joint operations. It covers notably the possible violation of fundamental rights. Those reports are forwarded to the Greek authorities for investigation.

The Fundamental Rights Officer of Frontex has also visited the operational area of Joint Operation Poseidon in Greece and reported her findings to the Agency's Management Board. Frontex has urged the Greek authorities to remedy shortcomings identified.

Should serious violations of fundamental rights be proven and persist, the suspension or termination — in part or in whole — of Frontex operations in those areas is a possibility, according to Regulation (EU) No 1168/2011 (Frontex Regulation).

The Commission also provides supports to Greece, in terms of expertise and financial assistance, with a view to reforming national practices in line with the *acquis*. For example, the Commission is co-financing measures aimed at providing information and interpretation by UNHCR and NGOs to migrants arriving in border areas.

([1]) Available online:
http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/EUR25/008/2013/en/d93b63ac-6c5d-4d0d-bd9f-ce2774c84ce7/eur250082013en.pdf

([2]) See, for example, Article 33(1) of the UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights, and existing European directives and regulations regarding asylum-seekers.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008461/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michael Cashman (S&D)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — LGBT issues in Nepal

Elections in Nepal for a new constitutional assembly have been called for 19 November 2013. Human Rights Watch has reported an increase in widespread harassment of LGBT people and activists in Nepal, and reports also seem to indicate that the government contributes to a climate of fear among LGBT people, leading to the interruption of important activities including HIV prevention work.

Is the issue of LGBT rights in Nepal addressed bilaterally by the EU?

Has the LGBT Toolkit been used so far? Are the EEAS and its delegation to Nepal planning to use the LGBTI Guidelines in this context?

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

The EU is concerned about harrasment of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) people in Nepal as elsewhere. It has supported action against discrimination of LGBT people in Nepal through a European Instrument for Democracy & Human Rights (EIDHR) project implemented by local non-governmental organisation (NGO) 'Blue Diamond Society.'

The EU Delegation has been inviting the Blue Diamond Society organisation, representing Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) issues, in all relevant consultations and meetings. LGBTI rights and threats against LGBTI defenders are also regularly discussed in the EU Working Group on Human Rights defenders chaired by the EU Delegation to Nepal, which also circulated to the local press the declaration by the HR/VP on the occasion of the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia (17 May 2013). The declaration was carried by one of the widely-read local newspapers ([1]).

The LGBT toolkit has not been used so far. Although the EU Delegation may consider using the LGBTI guidelines in future, the issue of LGBTI and LGBTI defenders has been largely addressed under the EU guidelines for the protection and promotion of Human rights defenders and its local implementation strategy in Nepal.

([1]) http://www.thehimalayantimes.com/fullNews.php?headline=LGBTI+people+call+for+equality+in+society&NewsID=376858.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008462/13
à la Commission
Mikael Gustafsson (GUE/NGL), Nicole Kiil-Nielsen (Verts/ALE) et Anna Hedh (S&D)
(11 juillet 2013)

Objet: Subventions accordées par la Commission: subventions de fonctionnement au titre du programme Daphne III (appel à propositions JUST/2013/FRC-DAP/OG)

Le programme Daphne III a pour objet de contribuer à la protection des enfants, des jeunes et des femmes contre toutes les formes de violence et de parvenir à un niveau élevé de protection de la santé, de bien-être et de cohésion sociale. L'objectif spécifique du programme est de contribuer à prévenir et à combattre toutes les formes de violence survenant dans la sphère publique ou privée, y compris l'exploitation sexuelle et la traite des êtres humains. Le programme Daphne a été très en vue étant donné qu'il s'agit d'un des principaux instruments de financement des organisations œuvrant à mettre un terme à la violence à l'égard des femmes dans l'Union européenne.

Les subventions de fonctionnement qu'il accorde sont d'autant plus importantes que, contrairement aux subventions destinées aux projets (ou aux actions), elles visent à cofinancer les dépenses de fonctionnement permettant à une organisation d'avoir une existence indépendante et de réaliser une série d'activités figurant dans son programme de travail.

Dans ce cadre, la décision de la Commission concernant l'octroi des subventions en 2013 nous laisse perplexes et nous amène à nous poser les questions suivantes:

— Pourquoi n'y a-t-il qu'une seule organisation de femmes à bénéficier d'une subvention de fonctionnement?

— Comment la Commission justifie-t-elle le fait que des subventions de fonctionnement du programme Daphne (destinées à lutter contre la violence à l'égard des femmes) soient octroyées à des réseaux qui encouragent la prostitution en tant que travail décent?

Par ailleurs, en ce qui concerne le domaine spécifique de la traite des êtres humaines, il convient de souligner que le coordinateur européen de la lutte contre la traite des êtres humains est chargé du suivi de la mise en œuvre de la nouvelle stratégie intégrée de l'Union européenne en vue de l'éradication de la traite des êtres humains pour la période 2012-2016 ([1]). Le mandat de ce coordinateur consiste notamment à coordonner et à assurer la cohérence stratégique au sein des divers services de la Commission, dont les actions de la DG Justice.

— Par quel mécanisme le coordinateur européen de la lutte contre la traite des êtres humains est-il consulté sur la question de la traite des femmes et des filles dans le cadre du programme Daphne, et notamment sur la question de la traite des êtres humains lors de l'octroi de subventions pour la lutte contre la violence à l'égard des femmes?

Réponse donnée par M[me] Reding au nom de la Commission
(5 septembre 2013)

En 2013, la Commission a attribué à cinq organisations une subvention de fonctionnement au titre du programme Daphné III: trois sont actives dans le domaine de la lutte contre la violence à l'égard des femmes (WAVE, Dissens, et La Strada) et deux dans le domaine de la lutte contre la violence à l'égard des enfants. Les fonds alloués à la lutte contre les violences faites aux femmes se montent à 593 350 euros (64 % du montant total attribué). La Commission a choisi de retenir ces organisations sur la base des critères publiés dans l'appel à propositions, en tenant compte notamment de leur contribution aux objectifs du programme.

Au-delà du champ d'application de la procédure d'évaluation des propositions, l'attribution d'un financement à une entité n'implique pas que tous les points du vue défendus par celle-ci reflètent la position ou l'avis de la Commission. La Commission ne tolère aucune forme d'exploitation sexuelle et est très préoccupée par l'augmentation de la traite des êtres humains, un phénomène dont on estime que 62 % des activités sont menées à des fins d'exploitation sexuelle.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/entity.action?breadCrumbReset=true&path=EU+Policy%2FNew+European+Strategy.

Le cadre financier 2007-2013 prévoit l'allocation de fonds pour la lutte contre la traite des êtres humains au titre de plusieurs instruments de financement, notamment le programme «Daphné III» et le programme «Prévenir et combattre la criminalité» (ISEC). Depuis la mise en place du coordinateur de l'UE pour la lutte contre la traite des êtres humains (ATC), le programme ISEC est le principal instrument de financement de la lutte contre la traite des êtres humains, accordant des subventions à l'action dans le cadre d'appels à propositions ciblés lancés annuellement. Promouvoir la cohérence des actions engagées pour lutter contre ce phénomène est au cœur du mandat du coordinateur de l'UE, y compris assurer une cohérence d'ensemble entre les différents programmes de financement et l'exploitation des résultats des financements.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-008462/13
till kommissionen
Mikael Gustafsson (GUE/NGL), Nicole Kiil-Nielsen (Verts/ALE) och Anna Hedh (S&D)
(11 juli 2013)

Angående: Bidrag som beviljas av kommissionen: bidrag till administrationskostnader enligt Daphne III-programmet (inbjudan att lämna projektförslag JUST/2013/FRC-DAP/OG)

Daphne III-programmet syftar till att bidra till att skydda barn, ungdomar och kvinnor mot alla former av våld och att uppnå en hög grad av hälsoskydd, välbefinnande och social sammanhållning. Dess särskilda syfte är att bidra till att förebygga och bekämpa alla former av våld som sker offentligt eller i den privata sfären, inklusive sexuellt utnyttjande och människohandel. Daphne-programmet har haft en hög profil som en av de viktigaste finansieringsmöjligheterna för kvinnoorganisationer i hela EU som arbetar med att förhindra våld mot kvinnor.

Bidragen till administrationskostnader är särskilt viktiga eftersom de, till skillnad från bidrag till projekt (bidrag till åtgärder), är avsedda att medfinansiera de administrativa kostnader som möjliggör för ett organ att föra en oberoende existens och genomföra många olika åtgärder från sitt arbetsprogram.

Mot bakgrund av detta är vi mycket förvånade över kommissionens beslut om beviljande av bidrag 2013, och vi önskar därför ställa följande frågor:

— Hur kommer det sig att endast en kvinnoorganisation erhåller bidrag till administrationskostnader?

— Hur motiverar kommissionen bidrag till administrationskostnader inom ramen för Daphne-programmet (för att bekämpa våld mot kvinnor) till nätverk som faktiskt förespråkar prostitution som ett arbete under anständiga villkor?

För övrigt vill vi, i fråga om människohandel, framhålla att EU:s samordnare för kampen mot människohandel ansvarar för att kontrollera genomförandet av EU:s nya integrerade strategi för utrotande av människohandel 2012-2016 ([1]). I mandatet för EU:s samordnare för kampen mot människohandel ingår att samordna verksamheten inom de olika enheterna vid kommissionen – inklusive GD Rättsliga frågor –, och säkerställa politisk samstämdhet dem emellan.

— På vilket sätt rådfrågas samordnaren för kampen mot människohandel om människohandel med kvinnor och flickor i enlighet med Daphne-programmet, i synnerhet om människohandel i fråga om beviljande av bidrag för att bekämpa våld mot kvinnor?

Svar från Viviane Reding på kommissionens vägnar
(5 september 2013)

Under 2013 har kommissionen beviljat administrationsbidrag från Daphne III-programmet till fem organisationer: tre som bekämpar våld mot kvinnor (Wave, Dissens och La Strada) och två som arbetar mot våld mot barn. Bidraget för att bekämpa våld mot kvinnor är på 593 350 euro (64 procent av det totala bidragsbeloppet). Kommissionen har valt ut dessa organisationer enligt kriterierna för projektansökningsomgången och har särskilt tittat på hur de kan bidra till programmets mål.

Det faktum att en organisation får bidrag betyder inte att samtliga synpunkter som organisationen stöder återspeglar kommissionens åsikt eller ståndpunkt. Kommissionen fördömer alla former av sexuellt utnyttjande och är mycket bekymrad över den ökande människohandeln, där 62 procent beräknas involvera någon form av sexuellt utnyttjande.

Under budgetperioden 2007-2013 stöder EU kampen mot människohandel genom flera finansieringsinstrument, bland annat Daphne III-programmet och programmet om förebyggande och bekämpande av brott (Isec). Sedan EU fick en särskild samordnare för kampen mot människohandel har Isecprogrammet blivit det främsta finansieringsinstrumentet för att bekämpa människohandel och ger bidrag till insatser efter årliga ansökningsomgångar. Att främja samstämmiga insatser mot människohandel är en central uppgift för EU-samordnaren, som också ska garantera en övergripande samstämmighet mellan olika finansieringsprogram och se till att resultaten kommer till nytta.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/entity.action?breadCrumbReset=true&path=EU+Policy%2FNew+European+Strategy.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008462/13
to the Commission
Mikael Gustafsson (GUE/NGL), Nicole Kiil-Nielsen (Verts/ALE) and Anna Hedh (S&D)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Grants awarded by the Commission: operating grants under the Daphne III programme (call for proposals JUST/2013/FRC-DAP/OG)

The Daphne III programme aims to contribute to the protection of children, young people and women against all forms of violence and attain a high level of health protection, well-being and social cohesion. Its specific objective is to contribute to the prevention of and the fight against all forms of violence occurring in the public or private domain, including sexual exploitation and trafficking in human beings. The Daphne programme has had a high profile as one of the most important funding opportunities for women's organisations across the EU working to end violence against women.

The operating grants are of particular importance since they, unlike grants for projects (action grants), are intended to co-finance the operating expenses that enable a body to have an independent existence and to implement a range of activities envisaged in its work programme.

Given this background, the decision of the Commission awards 2013 leaves us quite perplexed and leads us to ask the following questions:

— Why is there only one women's organisation receiving an operating grant?

— How does the Commission justify operating grants under the Daphne programme (to combat violence against women) to networks actually promoting prostitution as decent work?

Moreover, when it comes to the specific area of trafficking in human beings, we must highlight that the EU Anti-Trafficking Coordinator (EU ATC) is in charge of monitoring the implementation of the new and integrated 'EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings (2012-2016)' ([1]). It is part of the EU ATC's mandate to coordinate and ensure policy coherence within the various commission services — including with the actions of DG Justice.

— How is the EU ATC consulted on the trafficking of women and girls as per the Daphne programme, and in particular on the trafficking of human beings when it comes to awarding grants for combating violence against women?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(5 September 2013)

In 2013, the Commission awarded five organisations an operating grant under the Daphne III programme: three in the area of combating violence against women (WAVE; Dissens; and La Strada) and two in the area of combating violence against children. The funding allocated to combating violence against women is EUR 593.350 (64% of the total awarded amount). The Commission has selected these organisations based on the criteria published in the call for proposals, taking into account notably their contribution to the programme's objectives.

Beyond the scope of the evaluation of the proposals, awarding funding to an entity does not imply that all views supported by it reflect the position or opinion of the Commission. The Commission does not tolerate any form of sexual exploitation and is very concerned about the increasing trafficking in human beings out of which 62% is estimated to be for the purpose of sexual exploitation.

Under the 2007-2013 financial framework funding to combat trafficking in human beings is available from several funding instruments, including the Daphne III programme and the Prevention of and fight against crime programme (ISEC). Since the establishment of the EU ATC the ISECprogramme has been the leading funding instrument to combat trafficking in human beings by providing action grants under annual targeted calls for proposals. Promoting coherence in anti-trafficking actions is at the core of the EU ATC mandate, including ensuring overall consistency between different funding programmes and making use of the results of funding.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/entity.action?breadCrumbReset=true&path=EU+Policy%2FNew+European+Strategy

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008463/13
à la Commission
Sandrine Bélier (Verts/ALE)
(11 juillet 2013)

Objet: Sites roumains Natura 2000 et culture d'OGM

Le Parlement roumain a adopté, fin juin 2013, un projet de loi autorisant les cultures d'organismes génétiquement modifiés (OGM) dans des zones protégées, y compris sur les sites faisant partie du réseau européen Natura 2000. Or, près de 23 % du territoire de la Roumanie sont couverts par ce réseau, «témoin de l'importance accordée par les citoyens européens à la biodiversité», selon les propres termes de la Commission.

Le Conseil «Environnement» de l'Union européenne de décembre 2008 s'est prononcé sur la protection des territoires sensibles et/ou protégés vis-à-vis des cultures d'OGM. Les ministres de l'environnement ont conclu à la nécessaire prise en compte des écosystèmes et des zones géographiques particulières «présentant une haute valeur en matière de biodiversité et de pratiques agricoles spécifiques», et se sont accordés sur la possibilité de restreindre ou de conditionner la culture des OGM dans les zones Natura 2000.

Cela étant, je demande à la Commission de bien vouloir me fournir les informations suivantes:

1. A-t-elle connaissance de ce projet de loi adopté par le Parlement roumain?

2. Étant donné l'importance du réseau Natura 2000, ne juge-t-elle pas essentiel de protéger ces zones contre de possibles contaminations par des cultures d'OGM?

3. La Commission entend-elle proposer à cet effet de nouvelles mesures visant à interdire la mise en culture d'OGM dans les zones Natura 2000?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(30 août 2013)

La Commission a connaissance du projet de loi auquel l'Honorable Parlementaire fait référence.

Les organismes génétiquement modifiés (OGM) sont autorisés à l'issue d'une procédure rigoureuse d'évaluation des risques s'ils sont déclarés sans danger pour la santé humaine et animale et pour l'environnement. L'autorisation peut être assortie de mesures d'atténuation et de surveillance lorsque des risques potentiels ont été identifiés. Cultiver des OGM sur des sites faisant partie du réseau Natura 2000 ne fait l'objet d'aucune interdiction de principe dans la législation de l'UE. Les États membres ont l'obligation de garantir que les espèces et les habitats naturels pour lesquels ces sites ont été désignés soient maintenus ou rétablis dans un état de conservation favorable. La question de savoir si les OGM sont autorisés sur les sites Natura 2000 devrait donc être abordée en fonction de ces critères.

La Commission n'a pas l'intention de proposer de nouvelles mesures visant à interdire la mise en culture d'OGM dans les zones Natura 2000, le cadre juridique actuel prévoyant déjà les dispositions à prendre le cas échéant. Toutefois, la proposition de règlement de la Commission modifiant la directive 2001/18/CE sur les OGM, encore en cours d'examen par le législateur, permettra aux États membres de restreindre ou d'interdire la culture d'OGM sur leur territoire pour des raisons légitimes autres que celles liées aux risques pour la santé humaine ou animale et l'environnement. Les États membres sont autorisés à adopter des mesures de protection de l'environnement plus strictes s'ils le souhaitent, pour autant qu'elles soient compatibles avec les traités de l'UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008463/13
to the Commission
Sandrine Bélier (Verts/ALE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Romanian Natura 2000 sites and the cultivation of GMOs

In late June 2013, the Romanian Parliament adopted a bill authorising the cultivation of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in protected areas, including sites in the European Natura 2000 network. Almost 23% of Romania's total land area is protected by this network, which, in the Commission's own words, gives a clear indication of the value that Europeans place on biodiversity.

In December 2008, the EU Environment Council expressed its views on protecting sensitive and/or protected areas from GMO cultivation. The Environment Ministers underlined the need to take full account of the ecosystems and specific geographical areas 'of particular value in terms of biodiversity and particular agricultural practices' and agreed on allowing restrictions or conditions on GMO cultivation in Natura 2000 areas.

1. Is the Commission aware of this bill adopted by the Romanian Parliament?

2. Given the importance of the Natura 2000 network, does it not believe it essential to protect these areas against possible contamination by GMO cultivation?

3. Does it intend to protect these sites by proposing new measures aimed at preventing GMO cultivation in Natura 2000 areas?

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

The Commission is aware of the bill referred to by the Honourable Member.

Genetically modified organisms (GMOs) are authorised after a strict risk assessment procedure if they show to be safe for human and animal health and the environment. The authorisation may impose mitigation measures and monitoring if potential risks are identified. There is no principal prohibition under EC law to cultivate GMOs in Natura 2000 sites. Member States have the obligation to ensure that the species and habitats for which the sites have been designated are maintained at or restored to a favourable conservation status. The question as to whether GMOs can be allowed in Natura 2000 sites should therefore be assessed against these criteria.

The Commission does not intend to propose new measures preventing GMO cultivation in Natura 2000 areas. The existing legal framework already provides for measures to be taken if necessary. However, the Commission's proposal for a regulation amending the GMO Directive 2001/18/EC, still under discussion by the legislator, will allow Member States to restrict or prohibit the cultivation of GMOs in their territory on legitimate concerns other than those related to risks to human and animal health or the environment. Member States are allowed to adopt more stringent protective measures for the environment if they so wish as long as these are compatible with the EU treaties.

(Leagan Gaeilge)

Ceist i gcomhair freagra scríofa E-008464/13
chuig an gCoimisiún
Liam Aylward (ALDE)
(11 Iúil 2013)

Ábhar: Ag dul i ngleic leis an dífhostaícht i measc na n-óg

De réir figiúirí ó mhí an Mheithimh 2013 tá 26.4 milliún duine san AE dífhostaithe agus 5.5 milliún dóibh siúd faoi 25 bliana d'aois. Is sa Ghréig (58.2 %), sa Spáinn (56.5 %) agus sa Phortaingéil (42.1 %) atá an scéal is measa.

Molann an Straitéis Fáis Eorpach 2020 'geilleagar cliste' a chur i bhfeidhm chun dul i ngleic leis an dífhostaíocht. Is deacair do neart daoine san AE teacht ar na scileanna, cosúil le códú mar JavaScript, C++ agus Python, atá ag teastáil chuige sin, áfach. Dá mbeifí in ann feabhas a chur ar na scileanna sin d'fhéadfaí borradh a spreagadh in earnálacha bogearraí, cluichí agus idirlín Eorpaigh.

Cé acu bearta atá i bhfeidhm ag an gCoimisiún Eorpach chun cláir oiliúna um scileanna tábhachtacha cosúil le códú a spreagadh ar mhaithe le deiseanna fostaíochta san Eoraip a fheabhsú?

Tá 10.8 milliún duine fostaithe san AE ag comhlachtaí inneachar meáin agus tá cumas fáis de 5.7 % ann san earnáil sin. Céard atá déanta ag an gCoimisiún chun fás a spreagadh san earnáil digiteach seo, ina bhfuil roinnt mhaith daoine óga fostaithe, ionas go mbeifí in ann dul i ngleic le comhlachtaí Meiriceánacha agus Áiseacha?

Tá breis is 2 milliún folúntas san Eoraip nach bhfuiltear in ann a líonadh toisc go bhfuil bearna ann idir na scileanna a chuirtear ar fáil san Eoraip agus na scileanna atá ag teastáil sna poist sin. Céard atá á dhéanamh ag an gCoimisiún chun aghaidh a thabhairt ar an mbearna scileanna sin?

Freagra ón gCoimisinéir Andor thar ceann an Choimisiúin
(2 Meán Fómhair 2013)

Tá deacrachtaí earcaíochta aitheanta i réimse Theicneolaíocht na Faisnéise agus na Cumarsáide (TFC) san Eoraip (Tuarascáil Eorpach ar Fholúntais agus ar Earcaíocht 2012), rud a léiríonn go háirithe go bhfuil easpa nó mí-oiriúint scileanna ann (an Fhaireachlann Eorpach um Fholúntais). Chun aghaidh a thabhairt ar na bearnaí agus mí-oiriúintí scileanna, sheol an Coimisiún Lánléargas Scileanna an AE chun faisnéis maidir leis an margadh saothair a sholáthar ar mhaithe le tacú leis an Straitéis Eorpach Scileanna, straitéis atá bunaithe ar fhianaise, agus chun a áirithiú go mbeidh toradh ar infheistíochtaí i scileanna.

I Márta 2013 sheol an Coimisiún Ard-chomhghuaillíocht an AE um Poist Dhigiteacha, comhpháirtíocht il-gheallsealbhóirí chun aghaidh a thabhairt ar easnamh na gcéadta míle folúntas poist TFC gan líonadh. Thug roinnt mhaith eagraíochtaí gealltanais uathu agus déanfaidh an Coimisiún bearta a fhorbairt chun an bhearna scileanna TFC a dhúnadh (comhoiriúnú agus soghluaiseacht) agus chun soláthar scileanna TFC a mhéadú (oiliúint, deimhniúchán, foghlaim nuálach).

Tá dul chun cinn maith á dhéanamh le straitéis fhadtéarmach ríomhscileanna an AE. Tá cásanna fadbhreathnaitheachta maidir le soláthar agus éileamh (2015-2020), anailís ar thionchar an fhoinsithe dhomhanda agus creat Eorpach r-inniúlachtaí ar fáil freisin. Chun feasacht a ardú ar an éileamh atá ar phoist dhigiteacha do dhaoine a bhfuil ardscileanna acu, d'eagraigh an Coimisiún Seachtain na Ríomhscileanna i Márta 2012 agus eagróidh sé feachtas 'Ríomhscileanna le haghaidh Post' sa bhliain 2014.

Bhunaigh an Leas-Uachtarán Kroes an Fóram um Thodhchaí na Meán san AE in 2011 chun machnamh a dhéanamh ar thionchar na réabhlóide digití ar earnáil na meán agus an ábhair dhigitigh. I dtuarascáil 2012 an Fhóraim, tá moltaí chun an tionscal a chur faoi bhláth sa ré dhigiteach agus tá ábhar machnaimh agus gníomhaíochta inti do lucht déanta beartas agus don tionscal araon.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008464/13
to the Commission
Liam Aylward (ALDE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Combating unemployment among the young

According to June 2013 figures, of the 26.4 million people unemployed in the EU, 5.5 million are under 25 years. Greece (58.2%), Spain (56.5%) and Portugal (42.1%) are the worst affected.

The growth strategy 'Europe 2020' recommends the implementation of a 'smart economy' to combat unemployment. Many people in the EU have difficulty acquiring the requisite coding skills in JavaScript, C++ and Python. By improving these skills, growth could be stimulated in the European software, games and Internet sectors to improve employment opportunities in Europe.

In order to improve employment opportunities in Europe, what measures have the European Commission in place to encourage key skills training programmes such as coding?

There are 10.8 million people employed in the EU by media-content companies, a sector whose growth potential is 5.7%. What has the Commission done to encourage growth in this digital sector, which employs many young people, in order to compete with American and Asian companies?

There are more than 2 million vacancies in Europe that cannot be filled due to the disparity between the skills available in Europe and the skills required for these jobs. What is being done by the Commission to address this disparity?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(2 September 2013)

Recruitment difficulties in Europe have been identified in the ICT field (European Vacancy and Recruitment Report 2012), pointing notably towards skills shortages or mismatches (European Vacancy Monitor). To tackle skills gaps and mismatches, the Commission has lauched the EU Skills Panorama providing labour market intelligence to support the evidence based European Skills Strategy and ensure return on skills investments.

In March 2013 the Commission launched the EU Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs, a multi-stakeholder partnership to tackle the shortfall of several hundreds of thousands of unfilled ICT job vacancies. Numerous organisations made pledges and the Commission will develop measures to close the ICT skills gap (matching and mobility) and increasing the supply of ICT skills (training, certification, innovative learning).

The EU long-term e-skills strategy is making good progress. Foresight scenarios on supply and demand (2015-2020), analysis of the impact of global sourcing and a European e-competences framework are also available. To raise awareness on demand for highly skilled digital jobs the Commission organised an e-Skills Week in March 2012 and will set a campaign 'e-Skills for Jobs' for 2014.

Vice-President Kroes set up the EU Media Futures Forum in 2011 to reflect on the impact of the digital revolution on the media and content sector. Its 2012 report includes recommendations for the industry to thrive in the digital world and is a source of reflection and action for both policy-makers and the industry.

(Leagan Gaeilge)

Ceist i gcomhair freagra scríofa E-008465/13
chuig an gCoimisiún
Liam Aylward (ALDE)
(11 Iúil 2013)

Ábhar: Ag dul i ngleic le caimiléireacht bhia san AE

Bhuail scannal na feola capaill earnáil bhia na hEorpa i mbliana. De réir scrúduithe forleathana a rinneadh, bhí 4.6 % d'fheoil chapaill ar an meán le haimsiú i samplaí mairteola. Is faoi cheannteideal 'Caimiléireacht Bhia' a thagann scannal na feola capaill, ach is téarma é atá an-éiginnte agus an-doiléir i ndlí an AE.

Uaireanta measctar táirgí bia le hábhair tacair a bhíonn níos saoire, agus a bhíonn contúirteach uaireanta, nó babhtaí eile déantar d'aon ghnó lipéad bréagach a chur ar tháirgí tacair beagluachacha ag cur i gcéill gur só-earraí atá i gceist. Sampla de seo ná nuair a chuirtear polafosfáit le hearra chun an meáchan atá aige a mhéadú.

Tá ceisteanna ann anois i ndiaidh scannal na feola capaill faoi chaighdeán táirgí bia Eorpacha. Is í an dara tionscal is mó san AE an earnáil agrabhia agus is fiú EUR 750 billiún sa bhliain í. Déanann scannail cosúil le scéal na feola capaill dochar don íomha a bhíonn ag tíortha eile d'earraí ardchaighdeáin bia Eorpaigh. Céard atá déanta go dtí seo chun an cháil atá ag earraí Eorpacha thar lear a athchóiriú?

Chuige sin, céard atá déanta ag an gCoimisiún chun sainmhíniú cinnte ar chaimiléireacht bhia a bhaint amach a bheadh feidhmeach nuair nach mbíonn calaois clúdaithe ag an gcreat um shábháilteacht bhia, Rialachán (CE) Uimh. 178/2002?

Freagra ón gCoimisinéir Borg thar ceann an Choimisiúin
(10 Meán Fómhair 2013)

Go deimhin, ní ann do shainmhíniú comhchuibhithe ar 'chaimiléireacht bhia' (mar chatagóir shonrach de chion coiriúil) i reachtaíocht an Aontais. Tá reachtaíocht agus ionstraimí i bhfeidhm i ngach Ballstát, áfach, ionas gur féidir dul i ngleic le cásanna amhail an cás maidir leis an bhfeoil chapaill neamhdhearbhaithe a aimsíodh, dá dtagraíonn an Feisire Onórach, agus ar sárú é ar reachtaíocht an Aontais is infheidhme maidir le lipéadú ar bhianna.

Chun inniúlacht údaráis inniúla na mBallstát a threisiú chun comhlíonadh dhlí an AE is infheidhme ag na céimeanna éagsúla feadh an tslabhra agraibhia a dheimhniú, ghlac an Coimisiún togra an 6 Bealtaine 2013 chun na rialacha lena rialaítear rialuithe oifigiúla agus gníomhaíochtaí forfheidhmiúcháin eile sa réimse sin a leasú ([1]). Áirítear sa togra ceanglas ar na Ballstáit gníomhaíochtaí rialaithe sonracha a chur san áireamh ina bpleananna rialaithe ilbhliantúla a bhfuil sé mar aidhm leo 'sárú a d'fhéadfaí a dhéanamh d'aon ghnó ar na rialacha' is infheidhme maidir leis an slabhra agraibhia a shainaithint. San áireamh sa togra freisin tá foráil lena gceanglaítear, i gcás sáruithe d'aon ghnó den sórt sin, go socrófaí pionóis airgeadais a bheadh ag teacht leis an leas eacnamaíoch a lorgaíodh leis an sárú sin, chun cineál athchomhairleach an smachtbhanna a áirithiú.

([1]) COM(2013) 265 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008465/13
to the Commission
Liam Aylward (ALDE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Combating food fraud in the EU

The horse meat scandal greatly affected the European food sector this year. According to widespread inspections carried out, beef samples, on average, contained 4.6% horsemeat. The horsemeat scandal comes under the heading 'Food Fraud', which is a vey uncertain and obscure term in EC law.

In some instances, food products are mixed with synthetic cheaper materials, which may be dangerous, or on other occasions false labels are affixed to cheap synthetic products purporting to be luxury goods. An example of this is the adding of polyphosphate to a food product to increase its weight.

Following the horsemeat scandal, questions have been raised about the standard of European food products. The agri-food sector, which is worth 750 billion euro annually, is the second biggest industry in Europe. Scandals such as the horsemeat saga damage the perception of other countries regarding European food products being of high quality.

In that respect, what has the Commission done to provide a correct and functional definition of food fraud in the light of such fraud not being covered by the food safety framework, Regulation (EC) 178/2002?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(10 September 2013)

Indeed a harmonised definition of 'food fraud' (as a specific category of criminal offence) does not exist in Union legislation. However, all Member States have legislation and instruments in place that allow addressing situations such as that concerning the undeclared presence of horsemeat, to which the Honourable Member refers, and which constitutes a violation of Union legislation applicable to the labelling of foods.

In order to strengthen the capability of Member States' competent authorities to verify compliance with EC law applicable at the various stages of the agri-food chain, the Commission adopted on 6 May 2013 a proposal to amend the rules which govern official controls and other enforcement activities in that area ([1]). The proposal includes a requirement for Member States to include in their multiannual control plans specific control activities aimed at identifying 'possible intentional violation of the rules' that apply to the agri-food chain. The proposal also includes a provision requiring financial penalties provided for cases of such intentional violations to be set at amounts which offset the economic advantage sought through the violation, so as to ensure the dissuasive character of the sanction.

([1]) COM(2013) 265 final.

(Leagan Gaeilge)

Ceist i gcomhair freagra scríofa E-008466/13
chuig an gCoimisiún
Liam Aylward (ALDE)
(11 Iúil 2013)

Ábhar: Gealltóireacht ar líne agus cúrsaí spóirt

Tá earnáil na gealltóireachta ar líne ar an earnáil is mó fáis sa mhargadh cearrbhachais, agus breis is EUR 6.2 billiún sa bhliain á ghineadh aige. Tá níos mó ná 15 000 suíomh idirlín gealltóireachta ag feidhmiú san AE faoi láthair, agus 85 % dóibh siúd nach bhfuil rialú ar bith á dhéanamh orthu.

Tá sé ráite cheana ag an gCoimisiún Eorpach go dtacaíonn sé le maoin intleachtúil eagraíochtaí spóirt sa mhéid a bhaineann le geallta á gcur ar líne ar eachtraí spóirt. Céard is féidir a dhéanamh chun eagraíochtaí agus eagraithe spóirt a chosaint ó chomhlachtaí a bhíonn ag baint brabúis neamhúdaraithe ó eachtraí spóirt? Céard is féidir leis an gCoimisiún a dhéanamh chun daoine a chur ar an eolas faoin gceist seo?

Déanann eagraíochtaí spóirt san Eoraip an-chuid infheistíochta ó thaobh ama agus airgid de agus iad ag eagrú eachtraí spóirt. Is le heachtraí spóirt den chineál sin a bhaineann 32 % den ghealltóireacht ar líne ach is beag airgead ón ngealltóireacht ar líne a fhaigheann an spórt ar a gcuirtear na geallta. Céard is féidir a dhéanamh chun a chinntiú go mbaineann siad siúd ar bhunleibhéal an spóirt atá i gceist leas airgid éigin as an ngealltóireacht ar líne?

Freagra ón gCoimisinéir Barnier thar ceann an Choimisiúin
(27 Lúnasa 2013)

D'aithin an Coimisiún ina Theachtaireacht 'An Ghné Eorpach a fhorbairt sa Spórt' ([1]) go mbraitheann na páirtithe leasmhara sa spórt dúshláin maidir le sruthanna ioncaim leanúnacha a thagann ó ghníomhaíochtaí cearrbhachais i dtreo an spóirt. Ní hionann an cur chuige rialála i measc na mBallstát sna réimsí a bhaineann le cearta maoine intleachtúla agus gníomhaíochtaí cearrbhachais, go háirithe maidir leis na cearta maoine intleachtúla atá ag lucht eagraithe imeachtaí spóirt. Ina Theachtaireacht 'I dTreo Creata Chuimsithigh Eorpaigh um an gCearrbhachas ar Líne' ([2]), d'áitigh an Coimisiún ar na Ballstáit breathnú ar mhaoiniú inbhuanaithe le haghaidh beart maidir le hionracas sa spórt.

Chun tuilleadh fiosruithe a dhéanamh faoi chineál agus raon feidhme na gceart maoine atá ag lucht eagraithe comórtas spóirt, tá staidéar seachtrach seolta ag an gCoimisiún agus táthar ag súil leis na torthaí sa dara leath de 2013. Is é is cuspóir don staidéar anailís chuimsitheach a dhéanamh ar na saincheisteanna a bhaineann le cearta lucht eagraithe spóirt ó dhearcadh an AE de agus moltaí a cheapadh i dtaca leis an ngá le gníomhaíocht AE chun aghaidh a thabhairt ar aon fhadhbanna a aithnítear i ndáil leis sin.

([1]) COM(2011) 12 final.
([2]) COM(2012) 596 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008466/13
to the Commission
Liam Aylward (ALDE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Online betting and sports matters

Online betting is the fastest growing sector in the gambling market, with more than EUR 6.2 billion per year in turnover. There are more than 15 000 betting websites currently operating in the EU, and 85% of these operate without any control.

It has already been stated by the European Commission that it supports sports organisations' intellectual property as regards online betting on such organisations' sports events. What can be done to protect sports organisations and organisers from companies who are involved in making unauthorised profit from sporting events? What can the Commission do to make people aware of this issue?

Sports organisations in Europe invest a lot in terms of time and money in organising sports events. 32% of online betting is connected to sporting events but little of that money makes its way to the sporting body on which the bets are placed. What can be done to ensure that those who are involved at the bottom level of sport receive some financial benefit from online betting?

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

The Commission has recognised in its communication 'Developing the European Dimension in Sport' ([1]) that sport stakeholders perceive challenges with regard to continued income streams from gambling activities into sport. Regulatory approaches vary among Member States in areas relating to intellectual property rights and gambling activities, in particular regarding the extent of intellectual property rights for the organisers of sport events. In its communication 'Towards a Comprehensive European Framework for Online Gambling' ([2]), the Commission urged Member States to consider sustainable financing of sports integrity measures.

In order to further explore the nature and scope of property rights owned by organisers of sporting competitions, the Commission has launched an external study the results of which are expected in the second half of 2013. The aim of the study is to provide a comprehensive analysis of the issues related to sports organisers' rights from an EU perspective and to formulate suggestions as to whether EU action is needed to address any problems identified in this respect.

([1]) COM(2011) 12 final.
([2]) COM(2012) 596 final.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008467/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(11 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Possibili finanziamenti nel settore della comunicazione multicanale

Un gruppo che opera nel settore della comunicazione, della produzione multimediale e dei new media è impegnato a sviluppare contenuti e tecnologie innovativi applicati: a tutti i settori della comunicazione multicanale con particolare riguardo alla comunicazione e al marketing (attraverso l'introduzione di nuovi linguaggi e format televisivi, azioni di marketing strategico, «guerilla marketing» e «web marketing»); alla produzione di audiovisivi (tramite l'acquisizione di risorse e tecnologie per la realizzazione di supporti audiovisivi a elevato contenuto emozionale); alla produzione e postproduzione video; alla «information and communication technology» (specie per quel che riguarda elaborazioni brevettate di piattaforme informatiche per la gestione interattiva di data base complessi su interfaccia web); all'«on line event management» (finalizzata alla gestione di grandi eventi) e ai new media.

Considerando che, in generale, la Commissione europea intende creare un contesto normativo e imprenditoriale favorevole alla concorrenza e agli investimenti sui mercati della tecnologia digitale in Europa e che l'industria dei contenuti digitali è cruciale per la diversità culturale e per l'economia dell'Unione europea (il settore audiovisivo da solo impiega direttamente oltre 1 milione di persone nell'Unione europea), si chiede alla Commissione:

— Sono disponibili finanziamenti per la realizzazione delle attività su descritte?

— Quali saranno, nell'ambito della prossima programmazione 2014-2020, le fonti di finanziamento nel settore?

— Può fornire un quadro della situazione?

Risposta di Neelie Kroes a nome della Commissione
(20 agosto 2013)

Orizzonte 2020, il prossimo programma pluriennale per la ricerca e l'innovazione, per il periodo 2014-2020, sta per essere ultimato.

Il primo programma di lavoro di Orizzonte 2020, che definisce le opportunità e gli strumenti di finanziamento, nonché i primi inviti a presentare proposte dovrebbero essere pubblicati nel dicembre 2013. Il primo programma di lavoro, per il 2014 e il 2015, dovrebbe contenere gli inviti a presentare proposte in relazione a progetti di ricerca che sostengano la crescita delle PMI creative e innovative sul piano delle TIC, nonché gli inviti a presentare proposte concernenti le tecnologie per le industrie creative. L'ammontare esatto del finanziamento disponibile e le scadenze degli inviti a presentare proposte saranno noti non appena il programma sarà adottato.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008467/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Availability of funding for the multi-channel communication sector

A group operating in the communication, multimedia production and new media sector is currently developing innovative content and technologies for: all types of multi-channel communication, with a special focus on communication and media (through the introduction of new television approaches and formats, strategic marketing, guerrilla marketing and web marketing); audiovisual production (through the acquisition of the resources and technologies required for the production of exciting audiovisual products); video production and post-production; information and communication technology (in particular the development of patented IT platforms for the management of complex interactive databases via web interfaces); online event management; and new media.

Given that one of the Commission's general objectives is to create a legislative and business environment that fosters competition and investment in Europe's digital technology markets, and that the digital content industry is of key importance to cultural diversity and economic growth in the EU (the Union's audiovisual industry on its own provides more than 1 million direct jobs), can the Commission say:

— whether funding is available for activities of the kind referred to above?

— what funding will be available in this sector during the 2014-2020 programming period?

— what the general situation is in this area?

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

Horizon 2020, the next multi-annual Research & Innovation Framework Program, covering the period 2014-2020 is just about to be finalised.

The first work programme of Horizon 2020, defining funding opportunities and instruments and the first calls for proposals are to be expected to be published in December 2013. The first work programme, covering 2014 and 2015, is likely to contain calls for proposals on research projects that will support the growth of ICT-innovative, creative SMEs and calls concerning technologies for creative industries. The exact funding available as well as the calls' deadlines will be known as soon as the work programme is adopted.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008468/13
aan de Commissie
Lucas Hartong (NI)
(11 juli 2013)

Betreft: Strafpuntensysteem in de visserij

Deze week werd het strafpuntensysteem in de visserij besproken in de Nederlandse Tweede Kamer. Staand beleid lijkt op dit moment te zijn dat zowel de schipper zelf als zijn vissersvaartuig strafpunten krijgen opgelegd bij overtreding van de Europese regelgeving. Bij eventuele verkoop van een vissersvaartuig aan een nieuwe eigenaar kan verzwegen worden dat er strafpunten aan dat vaartuig zijn toegekend. Dat heeft als gevolg dat de nieuwe eigenaar opgescheept zit met een vaartuig dat mogelijk de eerste tijd niet mag uitvaren of zelfs helemaal geen vergunning meer blijkt te hebben. In dat kader de volgende vragen:

1. Kan de Commissie aangeven hoe een potentiële koper van een vissersvaartuig op dit moment en onder de huidige EU-regelgeving kan weten dat er strafpunten aan dat vaartuig zijn toegekend en hoeveel?

2. Is de Commissie bereid de mogelijkheid te onderzoeken om uitsluitend strafpunten toe te kennen aan de schipper/eigenaar van een vaartuig en niet aan het vaartuig zelf, zodat een potentiële koper van een vaartuig met een gerust hart aan zijn of haar werkzaamheden kan beginnen met het aangeschafte vaartuig? Zo nee, waarom niet?

3. In hoeverre bestaat er beleidsvrijheid voor de nationale lidstaten om een dergelijke nuancering in het visserijbeleid aan te brengen?

Antwoord van mevrouw Damanaki namens de Commissie
(13 september 2013)

De Commissie hecht veel belang aan het puntensysteem voor ernstige inbreuken dat een betere naleving van het gemeenschappelijk visserijbeleid moet garanderen.

Krachtens artikel 92 van de controleverordening ([1]) moeten de punten aan de houder van de visvergunning worden gegeven en worden overdragen op de toekomstige houder van de visvergunning voor het betrokken vaartuig. Eenmaal toegewezen blijven de punten dus verbonden aan het specifieke vaartuig waarmee de ernstige inbreuk is gepleegd. Dit mechanisme raakt dus aan de economische waarde van de vergunning en zal bijgevolg illegale visserijactiviteiten — die kennelijk vaak het resultaat zijn van een economische berekening — ontmoedigen.

Bij eigendomsoverdracht biedt artikel 128 van de verordening tot uitvoering van de controleverordening ([2]) potentiële kopers van vissersvaartuigen de garantie dat zij door de houders van de visvergunning in kennis zullen worden gesteld van het aantal punten dat nog steeds aan de betrokken vaartuigen zijn toegewezen.

Het puntensysteem is slechts van toepassing wanneer de bevoegde autoriteiten van de lidstaten tot de conclusie komen dat een inbreuk als ernstig dient te worden beschouwd. Deze beslissingsmarge biedt hun de mogelijkheid om rekening te houden met de specifieke omstandigheden van elk geval, met name de aard en de waarde van de schade, de economische situatie van de dader van de inbreuk en eventuele recidive.

De Commissie trekt hieruit de conclusie dat het bestaande puntensysteem voor ernstige inbreuken als bedoeld in de controleverordening, goed uitgebalanceerd is, potentiële inbreukplegers afschrikt en daardoor bijdraagt tot het creëren en ontwikkelen van een cultuur van naleving.

([1]) Verordening (EG) nr. 1224/2009 van de Raad van 20 november 2009 tot vaststelling van een communautaire controleregeling die de naleving van de regels van het gemeenschappelijk visserijbeleid moet garanderen, tot wijziging van Verordeningen (EG) nr. 847/96, (EG) nr. 2371/2002, (EG) nr. 811/2004, (EG) nr. 768/2005, (EG) nr. 2115/2005, (EG) nr. 2166/2005, (EG) nr. 388/2006, (EG) nr. 509/2007, (EG) nr. 676/2007, (EG) nr. 1098/2007, (EG) nr. 1300/2008, (EG) nr. 1342/2008 en tot intrekking van Verordeningen (EEG) nr. 2847/93, (EG) nr. 1627/94 en (EG) nr. 966/2006.

([2]) Uitvoeringsverordening (EU) nr. 404/2011 van de Commissie van 8 april 2011 houdende bepalingen voor de uitvoering van Verordening (EG) nr. 1224/2009 van de Raad tot vaststelling van een communautaire controleregeling die de naleving van de regels van het gemeenschappelijk visserijbeleid moet garanderen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008468/13
to the Commission
Lucas Hartong (NI)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: The penalty points system in the fisheries sector

This week, the penalty points system in the fisheries sector was the subject of debate in the Lower House of the Dutch Parliament. Current policy seems to be to apply penalty points to both the boat's captain him/herself and his/her vessel if they infringe European regulations. However, if a fishing vessel is sold to a new owner, it is possible to conceal the fact that any penalty points have been allocated to that vessel. As a result, the new owner could find him/herself in a situation where he/she is saddled with a vessel that is possibly not allowed to put to sea for an initial period or that, worse still, no longer seems to have a licence at all. I have the following questions in connection with this:

1. Can the Commission state how, at the present time and under current EU regulations, a potential buyer of a fishing vessel can find out whether penalty points have been applied to his/her vessel and if so, how many?

2. Is the Commission prepared to explore the possibility of applying penalty points to the captain/owner of a vessel alone, and not to the vessel itself, so that a potential buyer of the vessel can begin his/her activities on the acquired vessel with peace of mind? If not, why not?

3. How much discretion do the Member States have in terms of making such distinctions in their fisheries policies?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(13 September 2013)

The Commission attaches great importance to the points system for serious infringements in order to ensure a better compliance with the rules of the common fisheries policy.

Pursuant to Article 92 of the Control Regulation ([1]), the points are to be assigned to the holder of the fishing licence and to be transferred to any future licence holder for the vessel concerned. This means that after the initial assignation, points remain linked to the specific vessel with which the serious infringements have been committed. Since it is demonstrated that illegal fishing activities are often the result of an economic calculation, this mechanism discourages illegal activities by affecting the economic value of the licence.

In case of transfer of ownership, Article 128 of the Control Regulation detailed rules ([2]) offers the guarantee to a potential buyer of a fishing vessel that he/she will be informed by the holder of a fishing licence of the number of points which are still assigned to the vessel.

The point system only applies when the competent authorities of the Member States come to the conclusion that an infringement is to be regarded as serious. This discretion allows them to take into account the circumstances of the individual case, in particular the nature of the damage, its value, the economic situation of the offender and the extent, and potential repetition, of the infringement.

The Commission therefore considers that in its current set-up, the point system for serious infringements resulting from the Control Regulation is well balanced and discourages potential offenders from committing wrongdoings, thereby contributing to creating and developing a culture of compliance.

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009 of 20 November 2009 establishing a Community control system for ensuring compliance with the rules of the common fisheries policy, amending Regulations (EC) No 847/96, (EC) No 2371/2002, (EC) No 811/2004, (EC) No 768/2005, (EC) No 2115/2005, (EC) No 2166/2005, (EC) No 388/2006, (EC) No 509/2007, (EC) No 676/2007, (EC) No 1098/2007, (EC) No 1300/2008, (EC) No 1342/2008 and repealing Regulations (EEC) No 2847/93, (EC) No 1627/94 and (EC) No 1966/2006.

([2]) Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 404/2011 of 8 April 2011 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009 establishing a Community control system for ensuring compliance with the rules of the common fisheries policy.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-008469/13
do Komisji
Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(11 lipca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Rosyjski dziennikarz zamordowany w Dagestanie

Dzisiaj w Dagestanie, na przedmieściach Machaczkały, został zastrzelony dziennikarz tygodnika „Nowoje Dieło", korespondent gazety „Kawkazskij Uzieł" Ahmednabi Ahmednabjew.

Ahmednabi Ahmednabjew był kierownikiem działu politycznego gazety „Nowoje Dieło". Był znany z krytyki lokalnych władz; jako dziennikarz informował o masowych przypadkach łamania praw człowieka w regionie oraz o samowoli funkcjonariuszy organów siłowych. Od kilku miesięcy otrzymywał groźby, a morderstwo było efektem trzeciej próby zamachu na jego życie.

Z raportu międzynarodowego Komitetu Obrony Dziennikarzy wynika, że Rosja wciąż znajduje się w pierwszej dziesiątce krajów, w których zagrożone jest zdrowie i życie dziennikarzy. Każdego roku w tym kraju dochodzi do kilkudziesięciu ataków na przedstawicieli mediów. Według obrońców praw człowieka mają one bezpośredni związek z zawodową działalnością ofiar. Ze statystyk wynika, że najniebezpieczniej jest na Północnym Kaukazie, gdzie za rzetelne opisywanie rzeczywistości dziennikarze płacą często najwyższą cenę.

W związku z tym, zwracam się z zapytaniem, czy Komisja posiada informacje na temat skali napaści i ataków na dziennikarzy na terenie Kaukazu Północnego i czy zamierza podjąć interwencję w sprawie zabójstwa Ahmednabiego Ahmednabjewa?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(26 sierpnia 2013 r.)

UE uważnie śledzi rozwój sytuacji w Rosji, w tym w rejonie Północnego Kaukazu, i jest stale zaniepokojona z powodu regularnych przypadków przemocy, w szczególności w Dagestanie. Obawy UE dotyczące ostatnich wydarzeń w obszarze praw człowieka i rządów prawa wyrażono na wszystkich szczeblach: podczas ostatniego szczytu UE-Rosja, który odbył się w dniach 3-4 czerwca 2013 r. w Jekaterynburgu, i podczas konsultacji w sprawie praw człowieka w dniu 17 maja 2013 r.

Krytycznie nastawieni rosyjscy dziennikarze w dalszym ciągu często znajdują się pod presją, otrzymują pogróżki i padają ofiarami przemocy.

W oświadczeniu przedstawionym na forum Stałej Rady OBWE w dniu 11 lipca 2013 r. w Wiedniu Unia Europejska zdecydowanie potępiła zabójstwo dziennikarza Ahmednabiego Ahmednabjewa w należącej do Federacji Rosyjskiej Republice Dagestanu w dniu 9 lipca 2013 r. Zabójstwo to brutalnie przypomina, że pozostało jeszcze bardzo wiele do zrobienia, aby zapewnić dziennikarzom bezpieczeństwo. UE wezwała właściwe władze do szybkiego i dokładnego zbadania sprawy i do postawienia winnych przed wymiarem sprawiedliwości.

UE stale wzywa Rosję do podjęcia pilnych środków w celu zapewnienia ochrony obrońcom praw człowieka i dziennikarzom, a także do zagwarantowania niezależnego i skutecznego śledztwa w przypadku każdego ataku. UE wciąż też prosi o informacje dotyczące poszczególnych spraw.

UE nieustannie wzywa Rosję do pełnego przestrzegania swoich międzynarodowych zobowiązań oraz do zapewnienia pełnego poszanowania wolności słowa i wolności zgromadzeń.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008469/13
to the Commission
Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Russian journalist murdered in Dagestan

A journalist at the newspaper *Novoye Delo*, who was also a contributor to the online news source Caucasian Knot, was shot dead on the outskirts of Makhachkala in Dagestan today.

Akhmednabi Akhmednabiyev, who was the political editor of *Novoye Delo*, was well-known for his criticism of the local authorities, drawing attention in his reports to mass violations of human rights in the region and the lawless behaviour of members of the security forces. He had been receiving threats for several months, and this was the third attempt on his life.

According to a report published by the international Committee to Protect Journalists, Russia remains one of the 10 countries in which journalists are at greatest risk of life and limb. There are dozens of attacks on members of the media every year in the country. According to human rights defenders, those attacks are directly linked to the victims' work. Statistics show that the most dangerous area is the North Caucasus, where journalists regularly pay with their lives for speaking the truth.

Does the Commission have any information on the number of attacks there have been on journalists in the North Caucasus, and does it intend to take any action in response to the murder of Mr Akhmednabiyev?

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

The EU closely monitors the developments in Russia, including in the North Caucasus and remains concerned about the regular incidence of violence, in particular in Dagestan. The EU's strong concerns regarding recent developments in the area of human rights and the rule of law have been reiterated at all levels of its relationship: during the recent EU-Russia Summit on 3-4 June 2013 in Yekaterinburg and during human rights consultations on 17 May 2013.

Critical Russian journalists continue to often find themselves under pressure, receive threats and become victims of violence.

In a statement at the OSCE Permanent Council on 11 July 2013 in Vienna, the European Union strongly condemned the killing of journalist Akhmednabi Akhmednabiyev in the Russian Federation's republic of Dagestan on 9 July 2013. The killing is a horrid reminder that much more needs to be done to ensure the safety of journalists. The EU urged the relevant authorities to swiftly and thoroughly investigate the case and to bring those responsible to justice.

The EU keeps recalling Russia to take urgent measures to ensure the protection of human rights defenders and journalists and to guarantee an independent and effective investigation into all attacks. The EU continues to enquire about individual cases.

The EU continuously calls on Russia to fully comply with its international commitments and to ensure full respect for the freedom of expression and freedom of assembly.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-008470/13
do Komisji
Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska (PPE)
(11 lipca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Przemysłowe wykorzystanie metanolu i etanolu w Unii Europejskiej, a ochrona zdrowia obywateli

Co pewien czas występują w Europie przypadki kupowania metanolu przeznaczonego do wykorzystania przemysłowego, który następnie w nielegalny sposób jest rozcieńczany i sprzedawany jako spirytus.

Atrakcyjny dla przestępców trudniących się nielegalną produkcją alkoholu jest również skażony alkohol etylowy przeznaczony na cele przemysłowe, a tym samym zwolniony z podatku akcyzowego.

W związku z powyższym zwracam się z następującymi pytaniami do Komisji:

1. Czy Komisja posiada dane na temat skali produkcji i przemysłowego wykorzystania metanolu w Unii Europejskiej?

2. Czy metanol, który może powodować bezpośrednie zagrożenie dla zdrowia i życia podlega kontroli wewnątrz wspólnotowej ze względu na jego wykorzystanie w przemyśle?

3. Czy Komisja planuje prace nad uzupełnieniem Załącznika XVIII „Ograniczenie dotyczące produkcji, wprowadzania do obrotu i stosowania niektórych niebezpiecznych substancji, mieszanin i wyrobów" Rozporządzenia (WE) nr 1907/2006 Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady z dnia 18 grudnia 2006 r. w sprawie rejestracji, oceny, udzielania zezwoleń i stosowanych ograniczeń w zakresie chemikaliów (REACH)?

4. Czy Komisja posiada pełne dane na temat przemysłowego wykorzystania skażonego alkoholu etylowego w Unii Europejskiej?

5. Czy Komisja planuje przeprowadzić kampanię informacyjną dla obywateli, gdyż poziom spożycia nielegalnego alkoholu jest zróżnicowany w poszczególnych państwach członkowskich, a Światowa Organizacja Zdrowia WHO szacuje, że z szarej strefy pochodzi ok. 30 % całkowitej globalnej konsumpcji alkoholu?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Janeza Potočnika w imieniu Komisji
(10 września 2013 r.)

Komisja nie posiada danych na temat łącznej ilości metanolu produkowanego i wykorzystywanego do celów przemysłowych w UE.

Jeżeli chodzi o kontrolę, wdrażanie prawa UE i przepisów krajowych należy do kompetencji państw członkowskich. Jednakże, m.in. po to, by ograniczyć możliwości nadużyć, Komisja i państwa członkowskie dokonały przeglądu istniejących metod skażania alkoholu używanych w produkcji alkoholu całkowicie skażonego, wyeliminowały wiele z nich i wprowadziły wspólną, „europejską" metodę skażania alkoholu do produkcji alkoholu całkowicie skażonego. Obecnie trwają prace dotyczące alkoholu częściowo skażonego.

Według wiedzy Komisji jedno z państw członkowskich zamierza przedłożyć dokumentację w sprawie ograniczeń dotyczących metanolu. Po zakończeniu prac nad tą dokumentacją zostanie ona skierowana do ECHA ([1]) i rozpocznie się procedura dotycząca ograniczenia ([2]). Jeżeli procedura ta wykaże, że produkcja metanolu, jego wykorzystywanie lub wprowadzanie do obrotu stwarza zagrożenie dla zdrowia ludzi lub dla środowiska, oraz że należy zająć się problemem tego zagrożenia na poziomie UE, nastąpi odpowiednia zmiana załącznika XVII do REACH.

Skala przemysłowego wykorzystania alkoholu etylowego to ok. 7 mln hektolitrów czystego alkoholu rocznie (w załączeniu bardziej szczegółowe dane) Dane te nie obejmują jednak alkoholu etylowego przywożonego w postaci mieszanin.

([1]) Europejska Agencja Chemikaliów.
([2]) Art. 69-73 REACH.

W 2006 r. Komisja przyjęła strategię UE w zakresie wspierania państw członkowskich w ograniczaniu szkodliwych skutków spożywania alkoholu ([3]). Jednym z pięciu priorytetów tej strategii jest „informowanie, szkolenie i podnoszenie świadomości na temat wpływu szkodliwego i niebezpiecznego spożywania alkoholu, oraz odpowiedniej kultury spożywania alkoholu". Aktualnie nie mamy jednak w planach publicznej kampanii informacyjnej na temat poruszony przez Panią Posłankę.

Poziom niezarejestrowanego spożycia alkoholu w UE wynosi obecnie ok. 13% całkowitego spożycia alkoholu ([4]).

([3]) Komunikat z dnia 24 października 2006 r. – Strategia UE w zakresie wspierania państw członkowskich w ograniczaniu szkodliwych skutków spożywania alkoholu (COM(2006) 625 final). http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/pl/com/2006/com2006_0625pl01.pdf

([4]) http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/160680/e96457.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008470/13
to the Commission
Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Industrial use of methanol and ethanol in the EU and public health

There are regular reports of methanol intended for industrial use being bought, watered down and sold illegally as spirits.

Denaturated ethyl alcohol intended for industrial use, and thus not subject to excise duty, is also popular among criminal gangs engaged in the illegal production of alcohol.

1. Does the Commission have any figures on the overall volume of methanol that is produced and used for industrial purposes in the EU?

2. Are any checks carried out within the EU on methanol, which is a direct threat to people's health and can even prove fatal, to make sure that it is being used for industrial purposes?

3. Does the Commission intend to make any additions to Annex XVII (Restrictions on the manufacture, placing on the market and use of certain dangerous substances and preparations and certain dangerous articles) to Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH)?

4. Does it have comprehensive figures on the industrial use of denaturated ethyl alcohol in the EU?

5. Does it intend to conduct a public information campaign to raise awareness of this issue, given that, although consumption of illegally produced alcohol varies from Member State to Member State, the World Health Organisation estimates that close to 30% of all alcohol consumed around the world is produced illegally?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(10 September 2013)

The Commission does not have the data for the overall volume of methanol produced and used for industrial purposes in the EU.

Concerning the checks, the implementation of EU and national legislation is the responsibility of the Member States (MS). However, in order to, *inter alia*, reduce fraud opportunity the Commission and MS have revised and removed many of the existing denaturing methods for completely denatured alcohol (CDA) and implemented a common 'Euro' denaturing method for CDA. Work is now underway in the field of partly denatured alcohol.

The Commission has been informed that a Member State is intending to submit a dossier for restriction on methanol. Once the dossier is ready, it will be submitted to ECHA ([1]) and the REACH restriction process ([2]) will start. Should the restriction process demonstrate that there is a risk to human health or environment arising from the manufacture, use or placing on the market of methanol, which needs to be addressed on an EU-wide basis, Annex XVII to REACH will be amended accordingly.

The use of ethyl alcohol for industrial usage is approximately 7 Mio Hectolitres of pure alcohol (HPA) per year (see the attached annex for more details). However, this does not include ethyl alcohol imported as mixtures.

In 2006 the Commission adopted the EU strategy to support MS in reducing alcohol related harm ([3]). One of the five priorities of this Strategy is to 'inform, educate and raise awareness on the impact of harmful and hazardous alcohol consumption and on appropriate consumption patterns'. There is however no plan for the time being to conduct a public information campaign on the issue raised by the Honourable Member.

([1]) European Chemicals Agency.
([2]) Articles 69 to 73 of REACH.
([3]) 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

The amount of unrecorded consumption of alcohol in the EU is currently about 13% of all alcohol consumed. ([4])

([4]) http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/160680/e96457.pdf

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-008471/13
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(11 iulie 2013)

Subiect: Imprumutul acordat CEC Bank România de către Banca Europeană de Investiții

Banca Europeană de Investiții a acordat CEC Bank România un împrumut pe termen lung de 45 de milioane de euro. Obiectivul este acela de a finanța proiecte ale IMM-urilor și instituții publice care operează în sectoarele industriei, serviciilor, turismului și infrastructurilor.

Această decizie este esențială în vederea relansării creșterii economice și creării de locuri de muncă în România, prin sprijinul de finanțare pe termen lung oferit proiectelor implementate de către IMM-uri.

Mai mult, un alt obiectiv declarat al acestui împrumut va fi sporirea ratei de absorbție a fondurilor europene, care, în ceea ce privește România, în pofida creșterii corespunzătoare anului curent, rămâne totuși scăzută.

Având în vedere situația economică actuală și preocuparea instituțiilor Uniunii față de fenomenul șomajului în rândul tinerilor, exprimată prin intermediul diferitelor instrumente și în cadrul numeroaselor întruniri la nivel înalt, luând, în același timp, în considerare dificultățile cu care tinerii se confruntă în lansarea unei afaceri, dorim să adresăm Comisiei următoarele întrebări:

Ținând cont de aceste premise, care sunt intențiile Comisiei în legătură cu criteriile și condițiile pe care IMM-urile trebuie să le îndeplinească în vederea accesării fondurilor?

Are Comisia propuneri referitoare la eventualele condiții de acordare prioritară a acestor credite și care sunt măsurile de care aceasta dispune pentru a facilita accesul tinerilor implicați într-un proiect de afacere, în cazul în care aceștia se află în dificultate financiară?

Răspuns dat de dl Rehn în numele Comisiei
(5 septembrie 2013)

Împrumutul pe care BEI l-a acordat CEC Bank își propune să mărească disponibilitatea finanțării pe termen lung a IMM-urilor. Acest împrumut va contribui la îmbunătățirea accesului la finanțare pentru IMM-urile din România și va sprijini creșterea prin promovarea restructurării, consolidării și diversificării economice. De asemenea, va susține competitivitatea, printr-o mai mare disponibilitate a creditelor pe termen lung destinate, în special, IMM-urilor.

BEI a inițiat discuții cu băncile partenere, inclusiv CEC Bank, cu privire la o contribuție specială destinată ocupării forței de muncă în rândul tinerilor, în baza liniilor de credit actuale și viitoare ale BEI. Această contribuție ar veni în sprijinul noilor inițiative ale BEI în domeniul respectiv. BEI va continua să analizeze, împreună cu CEC Bank, dar și cu alte bănci, modalitățile prin care se poate contribui la creșterea ocupării forței de muncă în rândul tinerilor.

Într-un context mai larg și în coordonare cu Comisia, BEI ia în calcul și alte inițiative menite să sprijine dezvoltarea competențelor și crearea de locuri de muncă. Acest demers se alătură inițiativelor propuse la nivel european și național și răspunde apelului prin care Consiliul European din 27-28 iunie a invitat BEI să contribuie la acțiunile de combatere a șomajului în rândul tinerilor. Scopul este orientarea creditelor BEI către acele domenii care au un impact deosebit de puternic asupra ocupării forței de muncă tinere, prin: (i) îmbunătățirea accesului la finanțare al IMM-urilor/întreprinderilor cu capitalizare medie (mid-caps) în vederea păstrării și creării de locuri de muncă pentru tineri (ii) ameliorarea formării, în special a competențelor profesionale și a formării la locul de muncă pentru a ameliora perspectivele de angajare ale tinerilor.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008471/13
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: European Investment Bank loan to CEC Bank in Romania

The European Investment Bank has granted CEC Bank in Romania a long-term loan of EUR 45 million. The loan is intended to finance projects by SMEs and public bodies operating in the fields of manufacturing, services, tourism and infrastructure.

This decision is key to the relaunching of economic growth in Romania and creating jobs there, through the long-term financial support it offers for projects run by SMEs.

Moreover, another stated aim of the loan is to increase the absorption rate of EU funding, which in Romania's case, and despite the corresponding increase this year, remains low.

In view of the current economic situation and the concern of the EU institutions over youth unemployment, expressed through a range of instruments and at many high-level meetings, and taking into account also the difficulties young people face when starting a business, can the Commission state

what it intends to do, in the light of the above, as regards the criteria and conditions that SMEs must meet in order to access this financing?

Does it have any proposals to make concerning prospective conditions for the priority granting of these credits, and what means does it have to facilitate such access for young people involved in a business project when they experiencing financial difficulties?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(5 September 2013)

The EIB loan to CEC Bank aims at providing better availability of long-term finance to SMEs. The loan will help improving access to financing for the Romanian SMEs, and support growth by fostering economic restructuring, consolidation and diversification. It will also foster long-term competitiveness through the increased availability of long-term loans, particularly to SMEs.

The EIB has initiated discussions with its partner banks, including CEC Bank, about a particular contribution to youth employment under the current and future EIB credit lines. This would adhere to the new initiatives of the EIB in the area of youth employment. The EIB will continue to discuss with CEC Bank (as with other banks) on how to contribute to increase youth employment.

More broadly, in this context and in coordination with the Commission, the EIB is considering new initiatives for supporting skills and jobs. This is closely aligned with the initiatives at EU and Member State level and responds to the call from the 27/28 June European Council to the EIB to contribute to the fight against youth unemployment. The aim is to further strengthen the EIB lending in those areas that have a particularly high impact on youth employment, by: (i) providing SMEs/Mid-Caps with better access to finance for the retention and creation of youth employment and (ii) better training, for job-related skills and on-the job-training to improve the employability of young people.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-008473/13
komissiolle
Hannu Takkula (ALDE)
(11. heinäkuuta 2013)

Aihe: Julkisten kirjastojen riittävää huomiota vaille jäänyt potentiaali

Julkisten kirjastojen rooli keskeisenä kulttuuri-instituutiona vaikuttaa vakiintuneelta miltei kaikkialla EU:n alueella. Kirjastot ovat ajan mukana merkittävästi muuttaneet toimintatapojaan ja uudistaneet palveluitaan. Kirjastoista on tullut monipuolisia palvelukeskuksia, joissa digitaaliset informaatio- ja viestintäteknologian tarjoamat mahdollisuudet ovat tulleet kaikkien väestöryhmien saataville. Esimerkkeinä mainittakoon että hiljattain suoritetun laajan kyselyn mukaan vuonna 2012 arviolta 250 000 eurooppalaista löysi uuden työpaikan käyttämällä kirjastojen ilmaisia internet-palveluita. Sama selvitys osoittaa myös, että nimenomaan romanit, vammaiset, ikääntyvät ja työttömät ovat ryhmiä, joille ainoastaan kirjastot ovat voineet tarjota mahdollisuuden käyttää internet-palveluita.

— Onko komissio tietoinen julkisten kirjastojen merkittävästä roolista EU-kansalaisten tasavertaisuuden mahdollistajana ja edistäjänä?

— Millä tavalla komissio aikoo varmistaa, että laadukkaat kirjastopalvelut pysyvät myös tulevaisuudessa kaikkien EU-kansalaisten saatavilla?

— Aikooko komissio ohjata tukea julkisten kirjastojen kehittämiseen ja niiden tarjoamien palveluiden jatkuvaan ajanmukaistamiseen sekä niiden laadun varmistamiseen?

— Mitä muita keinoja komissio aikoo käyttää, että julkisiin kirjastoihin liittyvä valtava potentiaali tulisi nykyistä tehokkaammin hyödynnetyksi?

Androulla Vassilioun komission puolesta antama vastaus
(19. elokuuta 2013)

Komissio tunnustaa julkisten kirjastojen roolin keskeisenä kulttuuri-instituutiona ja EU-kansalaisten tasavertaisuuden mahdollistajana ja edistäjänä. Tietoyhteiskunnan ulkopuolella oleville ryhmille ja etenkin työnhakijoille mahdollisuus käyttää ilmaiseksi julkisia tietokoneita ja internet-palveluita esimerkiksi kirjastossa on ilman muuta tärkeää.

Vaikka julkisten kirjastojen tukeminen ja korkealaatuisten palvelujen takaaminen kuuluvat ensisijaisesti kansalliseen tai paikalliseen toimivaltaan, julkiset kirjastot voivat hakea EU:n Kulttuuri-ohjelman mukaista rahoitusta. Ohjelmasta on tuettu hankkeita kuten ”ABC – The art of the book”, jonka tarkoituksena on parantaa niiden lasten lukutottumuksia, jotka lukevat vähän tai eivät lainkaan. Toinen hanke, ”Et Lettera – writing pictures, drawing words”, kokoaa yhteen taidekouluja, museoita ja kirjastoja eri kaupungeista kaikkialta EU:sta tavoitteenaan kannustaa lukemista ja painetun kulttuuriperinnön arvostusta sekä korostaa taiteellista kirjoittamista ja kalligrafiaa kansalaisten keskuudessa.

Nykyaikaistaakseen ja tehostaakseen kirjastoresurssien käyttöä komissio on tukenut kirjastojen, kustantajien, kirjailijoiden ja yhteisvalvontajärjestöjen välistä sopimusta yhteistyöpöytäkirjasta. Se sisältää sellaisten teosten, jotka eivät ole kaupallisesti saatavilla, digitointiin ja saataville asettamiseen liittyvien oikeuksien lisensioinnin perusperiaatteet. Näin ollen eurooppalaiset kirjastot ja kulttuurilaitokset voivat laittaa kokoelmistaan saataville verkkoon kirjat ja lehdet, joiden painos on loppunut.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008473/13
to the Commission
Hannu Takkula (ALDE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Neglected potential of public libraries

The role of public libraries as a key cultural institution seems to have been established virtually everywhere in the EU. Over the years, libraries have considerably altered their methods of operation and renewed their services. They have become centres providing a whole range of services, where the opportunities presented by digital information and communication technology have been brought within the reach of all sections of the population. For example, according to a large survey conducted recently, an estimated 250 000 people in Europe found new jobs in 2012 by using free Internet services at libraries. The same survey also showed that, particularly for Roma people, people with disabilities, older people and the unemployed, libraries provided the only opportunity to use Internet services.

— Is the Commission aware of the important role played by libraries in facilitating and promoting equality among people in the EU?

— How will the Commission ensure that high-quality library services remain accessible to all EU citizens in future?

— Will the Commission support the development of public libraries, the ongoing modernisation of the services they provide and efforts to maintain their quality?

— What other means will the Commission use to enable the enormous potential of public libraries to be exploited more effectively than at present?

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

The Commission recognises the role of public libraries as key cultural institutions, facilitating and promoting equality in the EU. Access to free public computers and Internet — in libraries or elsewhere — is clearly important for digitally excluded groups, particularly for job-seekers.

While supporting public libraries and ensuring high-quality services is primarily a matter of national or local competence, publicly run libraries are eligible to apply for funding under the EU Culture programme. This has supported reading projects such as 'ABC — The art of the book' which aims to stimulate reading habits in children who read little or not at all. Another project, 'Et Lettera — writing pictures, drawing words' will gather art schools, museums and libraries from various cities across the EU to encourage reading and appreciation of the printing heritage and highlight artistic writing and calligraphy among the public.

With regard to the modernisation and more effective use of library resources, the Commission has fostered the agreement among libraries, publishers, authors and collecting societies on a memorandum of understanding which contains key principles for licensing the rights to digitise and make available out-of-commerce works. European libraries and cultural institutions can thus make available online the books and journals in their collections which are out of print.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008474/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Consumo de álcool e drogas I

Considerando que:

— O consumo de álcool e drogas, incluindo as chamadas «smartdrugs» e outras substâncias psicoativas, como antidepressivos e ansiolíticos, continua a aumentar em Portugal.

É importante compreender esta evolução noutros países da União Europeia.

A Comissão possui dados que permitam analisar a evolução desta tendência em Espanha?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008475/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Consumo de álcool e drogas II

Considerando que:

— O consumo de álcool e drogas, incluindo as chamadas «smartdrugs» e outras substâncias psicoativas, como antidepressivos e ansiolíticos, continua a aumentar em Portugal.

É importante compreender esta evolução noutros países da União Europeia.

A Comissão possui dados que permitam analisar a evolução desta tendência em França?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008476/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Consumo de álcool e drogas III

Considerando que:

— O consumo de álcool e drogas, incluindo as chamadas «smartdrugs» e outras substâncias psicoativas, como antidepressivos e ansiolíticos, continua a aumentar em Portugal.

É importante compreender esta evolução noutros países da União Europeia.

A Comissão possui dados que permitam analisar a evolução desta tendência na Bélgica?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008477/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Consumo de álcool e drogas IV

Considerando que:

— O consumo de álcool e drogas, incluindo as chamadas «smartdrugs» e outras substâncias psicoativas, como antidepressivos e ansiolíticos, continua a aumentar em Portugal.

É importante compreender esta evolução noutros países da União Europeia.

A Comissão possui dados que permitam analisar a evolução desta tendência na Itália?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008478/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Consumo de álcool e drogas V

Considerando que:

— O consumo de álcool e drogas, incluindo as chamadas «smartdrugs» e outras substâncias psicoativas, como antidepressivos e ansiolíticos, continua a aumentar em Portugal.

É importante compreender esta evolução noutros países da União Europeia.

A Comissão possui dados que permitam analisar a evolução desta tendência na Grécia?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008479/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Consumo de álcool e drogas VI

Considerando que:

— O consumo de álcool e drogas, incluindo as chamadas «smartdrugs» e outras substâncias psicoativas, como antidepressivos e ansiolíticos, continua a aumentar em Portugal.

É importante compreender esta evolução noutros países da União Europeia.

A Comissão possui dados que permitam analisar a evolução desta tendência na Croácia?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008480/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Consumo de álcool e drogas VII

Considerando que:

— O consumo de álcool e drogas, incluindo as chamadas «smartdrugs» e outras substâncias psicoativas, como antidepressivos e ansiolíticos, continua a aumentar em Portugal.

É importante compreender esta evolução noutros países da União Europeia.

A Comissão possui dados que permitam analisar a evolução desta tendência na Irlanda?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008481/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Consumo de álcool e drogas VIII

Considerando que:

— O consumo de álcool e drogas, incluindo as chamadas «smartdrugs» e outras substâncias psicoativas, como antidepressivos e ansiolíticos, continua a aumentar em Portugal.

É importante compreender esta evolução noutros países da União Europeia.

A Comissão possui dados que permitam analisar a evolução desta tendência na Alemanha?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008482/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Consumo de álcool e drogas IX

Considerando que:

— O consumo de álcool e drogas, incluindo as chamadas «smartdrugs» e outras substâncias psicoativas, como antidepressivos e ansiolíticos, continua a aumentar em Portugal.

É importante compreender esta evolução noutros países da União Europeia.

A Comissão possui dados que permitam analisar a evolução desta tendência na Bulgária?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008483/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Consumo de álcool e drogas X

Considerando que:

— O consumo de álcool e drogas, incluindo as chamadas «smartdrugs» e outras substâncias psicoativas, como antidepressivos e ansiolíticos, continua a aumentar em Portugal.

É importante compreender esta evolução noutros países da União Europeia.

A Comissão possui dados que permitam analisar a evolução desta tendência na Roménia?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008484/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Consumo de álcool e drogas XI

Considerando que:

— O consumo de álcool e drogas, incluindo as chamadas «smartdrugs» e outras substâncias psicoativas, como antidepressivos e ansiolíticos, continua a aumentar em Portugal.

É importante compreender esta evolução noutros países da União Europeia.

A Comissão possui dados que permitam analisar a evolução desta tendência no Reino Unido?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008485/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Consumo de álcool e drogas XII

Considerando que:

— O consumo de álcool e drogas, incluindo as chamadas «smartdrugs» e outras substâncias psicoativas, como antidepressivos e ansiolíticos, continua a aumentar em Portugal,

É importante compreender esta evolução noutros países da União Europeia.

A Comissão possui dados que permitam analisar a evolução desta tendência na Finlândia?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008486/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Consumo de álcool e drogas XIII

Considerando que:

— O consumo de álcool e drogas, incluindo as chamadas «smartdrugs» e outras substâncias psicoativas, como antidepressivos e ansiolíticos, continua a aumentar em Portugal,

É importante compreender esta evolução noutros países da União Europeia.

A Comissão possui dados que permitam analisar a evolução desta tendência na Estónia?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008487/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Consumo de álcool e drogas XIV

Considerando que:

— O consumo de álcool e drogas, incluindo as chamadas «smartdrugs» e outras substâncias psicoativas, como antidepressivos e ansiolíticos, continua a aumentar em Portugal.

É importante compreender esta evolução noutros países da União Europeia.

A Comissão possui dados que permitam analisar a evolução desta tendência na Letónia?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008488/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Consumo de álcool e drogas XV

Considerando que:

— O consumo de álcool e drogas, incluindo as chamadas «smartdrugs» e outras substâncias psicoativas, como antidepressivos e ansiolíticos, continua a aumentar em Portugal.

É importante compreender esta evolução noutros países da União Europeia.

A Comissão possui dados que permitam analisar a evolução desta tendência na Lituânia?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008489/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Consumo de álcool e drogas XVI

Considerando que:

— O consumo de álcool e drogas, incluindo as chamadas «smartdrugs» e outras substâncias psicoativas, como antidepressivos e ansiolíticos, continua a aumentar em Portugal.

É importante compreender esta evolução noutros países da União Europeia.

A Comissão possui dados que permitam analisar a evolução desta tendência em Malta?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008490/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Consumo de álcool e drogas XVII

Considerando que:

— O consumo de álcool e drogas, incluindo as chamadas «smartdrugs» e outras substâncias psicoativas, como antidepressivos e ansiolíticos, continua a aumentar em Portugal.

É importante compreender esta evolução noutros países da União Europeia.

A Comissão possui dados que permitam analisar a evolução desta tendência em Chipre?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008491/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Consumo de álcool e drogas XVIII

Considerando que:

— O consumo de álcool e drogas, incluindo as chamadas «smartdrugs» e outras substâncias psicoativas, como antidepressivos e ansiolíticos, continua a aumentar em Portugal.

É importante compreender esta evolução noutros países da União Europeia.

A Comissão possui dados que permitam analisar a evolução desta tendência na Hungria?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008492/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Consumo de álcool e drogas XIX

Considerando que:

— O consumo de álcool e drogas, incluindo as chamadas «smartdrugs» e outras substâncias psicoativas, como antidepressivos e ansiolíticos, continua a aumentar em Portugal.

É importante compreender esta evolução noutros países da União Europeia.

A Comissão possui dados que permitam analisar a evolução desta tendência na Suécia?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008493/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Consumo de álcool e drogas XX

Considerando que:

— O consumo de álcool e drogas, incluindo as chamadas «smartdrugs» e outras substâncias psicoativas, como antidepressivos e ansiolíticos, continua a aumentar em Portugal.

É importante compreender esta evolução noutros países da União Europeia.

A Comissão possui dados que permitam analisar a evolução desta tendência na Polónia?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008494/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Consumo de álcool e drogas XXI

Considerando que:

— O consumo de álcool e drogas, incluindo as chamadas «smartdrugs» e outras substâncias psicoativas, como antidepressivos e ansiolíticos, continua a aumentar em Portugal.

É importante compreender esta evolução noutros países da União Europeia.

A Comissão possui dados que permitam analisar a evolução desta tendência na República Checa?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008495/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Consumo de álcool e drogas XXII

Considerando que:

— O consumo de álcool e drogas, incluindo as chamadas «smartdrugs» e outras substâncias psicoativas, como antidepressivos e ansiolíticos, continua a aumentar em Portugal.

É importante compreender esta evolução noutros países da União Europeia.

A Comissão possui dados que permitam analisar a evolução desta tendência no Luxemburgo?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008496/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Consumo de álcool e drogas XXIII

Considerando que:

— O consumo de álcool e drogas, incluindo as chamadas «smartdrugs» e outras substâncias psicoativas, como antidepressivos e ansiolíticos, continua a aumentar em Portugal.

É importante compreender esta evolução noutros países da União Europeia.

A Comissão possui dados que permitam analisar a evolução desta tendência nos Países Baixos?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008497/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Consumo de álcool e drogas XXIV

Considerando que:

— O consumo de álcool e drogas, incluindo as chamadas «smartdrugs» e outras substâncias psicoativas, como antidepressivos e ansiolíticos, continua a aumentar em Portugal.

É importante compreender esta evolução noutros países da União Europeia.

A Comissão possui dados que permitam analisar a evolução desta tendência na Dinamarca?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008498/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Consumo de álcool e drogas XXV

Considerando que:

— O consumo de álcool e drogas, incluindo as chamadas «smartdrugs» e outras substâncias psicoativas, como antidepressivos e ansiolíticos, continua a aumentar em Portugal.

É importante compreender esta evolução noutros países da União Europeia.

A Comissão possui dados que permitam analisar a evolução desta tendência na Áustria?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008499/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Consumo de álcool e drogas XXVI

Considerando que:

— O consumo de álcool e drogas, incluindo as chamadas «smartdrugs» e outras substâncias psicoativas, como antidepressivos e ansiolíticos, continua a aumentar em Portugal.

É importante compreender esta evolução noutros países da União Europeia.

A Comissão possui dados que permitam analisar a evolução desta tendência na Eslovénia?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008500/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Consumo de álcool e drogas XXVII

Considerando que:

— O consumo de álcool e drogas, incluindo as chamadas «smartdrugs» e outras substâncias psicoativas, como antidepressivos e ansiolíticos, continua a aumentar em Portugal.

É importante compreender esta evolução noutros países da União Europeia.

A Comissão possui dados que permitam analisar a evolução desta tendência na Eslováquia?

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

No atinente ao consumo de álcool, o Indicador de Saúde da União Europeia (ECHI) em matéria de «Consumo total registado de álcool» é definido como álcool puro consumido, em litros per capita, na faixa etária dos maiores de 15 anos e consta da *wiki* HEIDI (A Saúde na Europa, uma interface de informação e dados) ([1]), que consiste numa ferramenta visual interativa que apresenta informações pertinentes e comparáveis sobre a saúde a nível europeu. A ferramenta de dados HEIDI permite aos visitantes analisar tendências, dados por país e por ano e permite uma análise exata de informações visuais.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/alcohol/indicators/index_en.htm

Outra fonte de informação fiável é o relatório Álcool na União Europeia (2012) ([2]), elaborado pela Organização Mundial de Saúde (OMS), o qual inclui perfis de países que podem ser utilizados para efeitos de monitorização e comparação.

No que se refere ao consumo de drogas, o Observatório Europeu da Droga e da Toxicodependência (OEDT) publica anualmente o seu Relatório Europeu sobre Droga ([3]) dedicado às tendências e à evolução da situação da droga na Europa. Estão disponíveis dados mais pormenorizados no Boletim Estatístico ([4]) anual e nos resumos nacionais ([5]), onde se comparam os dados dos anos anteriores.

De salientar que a Agência Europeia dos Medicamentos (EMA) e o OEDT fomentam a cooperação relativamente ao intercâmbio de informações relativas ao abuso de medicamentos, incluindo informações sobre drogas ilícitas, em conformidade com os respetivos mandatos e os requisitos da legislação em matéria de farmacovigilância (artigo 28.°C do Regulamento (CE) n.° 726/2004) ([6]).

([2]) http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/160680/e96457.pdf
([3]) http://www.emcda.europa.eu/publications/edr/trends-developments/2013
([4]) http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/stats13
([5]) Para a Espanha: http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/country-overview/es
([6]) JO L 136 de 30.4.2004, p. 1, com a redação que lhe foi dada pelo Regulamento (UE) n.° 1235/2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008474/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Alcohol and drug use I

The consumption of alcohol and drugs, including smart drugs and other psychoactive substances, such as antidepressants and anxiolytics, is becoming increasingly common in Portugal.

It is important to have an understanding of this trend in the other EU Member States.

Does the Commission have any figures for analysing how this trend has developed in Spain?

Question for written answer E-008475/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Alcohol and drug use II

The consumption of alcohol and drugs, including smart drugs and other psychoactive substances, such as antidepressants and anxiolytics, is becoming increasingly common in Portugal.

It is important to have an understanding of this trend in the other EU Member States.

Does the Commission have any figures for analysing how this trend has developed in France?

Question for written answer E-008476/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Alcohol and drug use III

The consumption of alcohol and drugs, including smart drugs and other psychoactive substances, such as antidepressants and anxiolytics, is becoming increasingly common in Portugal.

It is important to have an understanding of this trend in the other EU Member States.

Does the Commission have any figures for analysing how this trend has developed in Belgium?

Question for written answer E-008477/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Alcohol and drug use IV

The consumption of alcohol and drugs, including smart drugs and other psychoactive substances, such as antidepressants and anxiolytics, is becoming increasingly common in Portugal.

It is important to have an understanding of this trend in the other EU Member States.

Does the Commission have any figures for analysing how this trend has developed in Italy?

Question for written answer E-008478/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Alcohol and drug use V

The consumption of alcohol and drugs, including smart drugs and other psychoactive substances, such as antidepressants and anxiolytics, is becoming increasingly common in Portugal.

It is important to have an understanding of this trend in the other EU Member States.

Does the Commission have any figures for analysing how this trend has developed in Greece?

Question for written answer E-008479/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Alcohol and drug use VI

The consumption of alcohol and drugs, including smart drugs and other psychoactive substances, such as antidepressants and anxiolytics, is becoming increasingly common in Portugal.

It is important to have an understanding of this trend in the other EU Member States.

Does the Commission have any figures for analysing how this trend has developed in Croatia?

Question for written answer E-008480/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Alcohol and drug use VII

The consumption of alcohol and drugs, including smart drugs and other psychoactive substances, such as antidepressants and anxiolytics, is becoming increasingly common in Portugal.

It is important to have an understanding of this trend in the other EU Member States.

Does the Commission have any figures for analysing how this trend has developed in Ireland?

Question for written answer E-008481/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Alcohol and drug use VIII

The consumption of alcohol and drugs, including smart drugs and other psychoactive substances, such as antidepressants and anxiolytics, is becoming increasingly common in Portugal.

It is important to have an understanding of this trend in the other EU Member States.

Does the Commission have any figures for analysing how this trend has developed in Germany?

Question for written answer E-008482/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Alcohol and drug use IX

The consumption of alcohol and drugs, including smart drugs and other psychoactive substances, such as antidepressants and anxiolytics, is becoming increasingly common in Portugal.

It is important to have an understanding of this trend in the other EU Member States.

Does the Commission have any figures for analysing how this trend has developed in Bulgaria?

Question for written answer E-008483/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Alcohol and drug use X

The consumption of alcohol and drugs, including smart drugs and other psychoactive substances, such as antidepressants and anxiolytics, is becoming increasingly common in Portugal.

It is important to have an understanding of this trend in the other EU Member States.

Does the Commission have any figures for analysing how this trend has developed in Romania?

Question for written answer E-008484/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Alcohol and drug use XI

The consumption of alcohol and drugs, including smart drugs and other psychoactive substances, such as antidepressants and anxiolytics, is becoming increasingly common in Portugal.

It is important to have an understanding of this trend in the other EU Member States.

Does the Commission have any figures for analysing how this trend has developed in the United Kingdom?

Question for written answer E-008485/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Alcohol and drug use XII

The consumption of alcohol and drugs, including smart drugs and other psychoactive substances, such as antidepressants and anxiolytics, is becoming increasingly common in Portugal.

It is important to have an understanding of this trend in the other EU Member States.

Does the Commission have any figures for analysing how this trend has developed in Finland?

Question for written answer E-008486/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Alcohol and drug use XIII

The consumption of alcohol and drugs, including smart drugs and other psychoactive substances, such as antidepressants and anxiolytics, is becoming increasingly common in Portugal.

It is important to have an understanding of this trend in the other EU Member States.

Does the Commission have any figures for analysing how this trend has developed in Estonia?

Question for written answer E-008487/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Alcohol and drug use XIV

The consumption of alcohol and drugs, including smart drugs and other psychoactive substances, such as antidepressants and anxiolytics, is becoming increasingly common in Portugal.

It is important to have an understanding of this trend in the other EU Member States.

Does the Commission have any figures for analysing how this trend has developed in Latvia?

Question for written answer E-008488/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Alcohol and drug use XV

The consumption of alcohol and drugs, including smart drugs and other psychoactive substances, such as antidepressants and anxiolytics, is becoming increasingly common in Portugal.

It is important to have an understanding of this trend in the other EU Member States.

Does the Commission have any figures for analysing how this trend has developed in Lithuania?

Question for written answer E-008489/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Alcohol and drug use XVI

The consumption of alcohol and drugs, including smart drugs and other psychoactive substances, such as antidepressants and anxiolytics, is becoming increasingly common in Portugal.

It is important to have an understanding of this trend in the other EU Member States.

Does the Commission have any figures for analysing how this trend has developed in Malta?

Question for written answer E-008490/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Alcohol and drug use XVII

The consumption of alcohol and drugs, including smart drugs and other psychoactive substances, such as antidepressants and anxiolytics, is becoming increasingly common in Portugal.

It is important to have an understanding of this trend in the other EU Member States.

Does the Commission have any figures for analysing how this trend has developed in Cyprus?

Question for written answer E-008491/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Alcohol and drug use XVIII

The consumption of alcohol and drugs, including smart drugs and other psychoactive substances, such as antidepressants and anxiolytics, is becoming increasingly common in Portugal.

It is important to have an understanding of this trend in the other EU Member States.

Does the Commission have any figures for analysing how this trend has developed in Hungary?

Question for written answer E-008492/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Alcohol and drug use XIX

The consumption of alcohol and drugs, including smart drugs and other psychoactive substances, such as antidepressants and anxiolytics, is becoming increasingly common in Portugal.

It is important to have an understanding of this trend in the other EU Member States.

Does the Commission have any figures for analysing how this trend has developed in Sweden?

Question for written answer E-008493/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Alcohol and drug use XX

The consumption of alcohol and drugs, including smart drugs and other psychoactive substances, such as antidepressants and anxiolytics, is becoming increasingly common in Portugal.

It is important to have an understanding of this trend in the other EU Member States.

Does the Commission have any figures for analysing how this trend has developed in Poland?

Question for written answer E-008494/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Alcohol and drug use XXI

The consumption of alcohol and drugs, including smart drugs and other psychoactive substances, such as antidepressants and anxiolytics, is becoming increasingly common in Portugal.

It is important to have an understanding of this trend in the other EU Member States.

Does the Commission have any figures for analysing how this trend has developed in the Czech Republic?

Question for written answer E-008495/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Alcohol and drug use XXII

The consumption of alcohol and drugs, including smart drugs and other psychoactive substances, such as antidepressants and anxiolytics, is becoming increasingly common in Portugal.

It is important to have an understanding of this trend in the other EU Member States.

Does the Commission have any figures for analysing how this trend has developed in Luxembourg?

Question for written answer E-008496/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Alcohol and drug use XXIII

The consumption of alcohol and drugs, including smart drugs and other psychoactive substances, such as antidepressants and anxiolytics, is becoming increasingly common in Portugal.

It is important to have an understanding of this trend in the other EU Member States.

Does the Commission have any figures for analysing how this trend has developed in the Netherlands?

Question for written answer E-008497/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Alcohol and drug use XXIV

The consumption of alcohol and drugs, including smart drugs and other psychoactive substances, such as antidepressants and anxiolytics, is becoming increasingly common in Portugal.

It is important to have an understanding of this trend in the other EU Member States.

Does the Commission have any figures for analysing how this trend has developed in Denmark?

Question for written answer E-008498/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Alcohol and drug use XXV

The consumption of alcohol and drugs, including smart drugs and other psychoactive substances, such as antidepressants and anxiolytics, is becoming increasingly common in Portugal.

It is important to have an understanding of this trend in the other EU Member States.

Does the Commission have any figures for analysing how this trend has developed in Austria?

Question for written answer E-008499/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Alcohol and drug use XXVI

The consumption of alcohol and drugs, including smart drugs and other psychoactive substances, such as antidepressants and anxiolytics, is becoming increasingly common in Portugal.

It is important to have an understanding of this trend in the other EU Member States.

Does the Commission have any figures for analysing how this trend has developed in Slovenia?

Question for written answer E-008500/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Alcohol and drug use XXVII

The consumption of alcohol and drugs, including smart drugs and other psychoactive substances, such as antidepressants and anxiolytics, is becoming increasingly common in Portugal.

It is important to have an understanding of this trend in the other EU Member States.

Does the Commission have any figures for analysing how this trend has developed in Slovakia?

Joint answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(30 August 2013)

In what concerns alcohol consumption, the European Core Health Indicator (ECHI) on 'Total recorded alcohol consumption' is defined as pure alcohol consumed, in litres per capita, among 15 years old and over is shown in the HEIDI (Health in Europe Information and Data Interface) data tool ([1]), which is an interactive visual tool that presents relevant and comparable information on health at European level. HEIDI data tool allows visitors to analyse trends, data per country and per year and allows an accurate analysis of visual information.

Other reliable source of information is the Alcohol in the European Union report (2012) ([2]), developed by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and it includes country profiles which can be used for monitoring and comparison purposes.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/alcohol/indicators/index_en.htm
([2]) http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/160680/e96457.pdf

As regards the use of drugs, the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) publishes yearly its European Drug Report ([3]) on trends and developments of the drug situation in Europe. More detailed data are available in the yearly Statistical Bulletin ([4]) and country overviews ([5]) where data from previous years are compared.

It should be noted that the European Medicines Agency (EMA) and the EMCDDA foster a cooperation in relation to exchange of information on the abuse of medicinal products including information related to illicit drugs in accordance with their respective mandates and the requirements of the Pharmacovigilance legislation (Article 28c of Regulation (EU) No 726/2004) ([6]).

([3]) http://www.emcda.europa.eu/publications/edr/trends-developments/2013.
([4]) http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/stats13.
([5]) For Spain http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/country-overview/es.
([6]) OJ L 136, 30.4.2004, p. 1 as amended by Regulation (EU) No 1235/2010.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008501/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego jovem na União Europeia — Portugal

Considerando que o desemprego jovem se revela a faceta perversa das políticas de austeridade, numa realidade que preocupa todos os países da União Europeia.

Pergunto à Comissão qual a variação verificada no desemprego jovem no primeiro trimestre de 2013 relativa ao período homólogo de 2012 em Portugal?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008502/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego jovem na União Europeia — Espanha

Considerando que o desemprego jovem se revela a faceta perversa das políticas de austeridade, numa realidade que preocupa todos os países da União Europeia.

Pergunto à Comissão qual a variação verificada no desemprego jovem no primeiro trimestre de 2013 relativa ao período homólogo de 2012 em Espanha?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008503/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego jovem na União Europeia — França

Considerando que o desemprego jovem se revela a faceta perversa das políticas de austeridade, numa realidade que preocupa todos os países da União Europeia.

Pergunto à Comissão qual a variação verificada no desemprego jovem no primeiro trimestre de 2013 relativa ao período homólogo de 2012 em França?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008504/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego jovem na União Europeia — Bélgica

Considerando que o desemprego jovem se revela a faceta perversa das políticas de austeridade, numa realidade que preocupa todos os países da União Europeia.

Pergunto à Comissão qual a variação verificada no desemprego jovem no primeiro trimestre de 2013 relativa ao período homólogo de 2012 na Bélgica?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008505/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego jovem na União Europeia — Itália

Considerando que o desemprego jovem se revela a faceta perversa das políticas de austeridade, numa realidade que preocupa todos os países da União Europeia.

Pergunto à Comissão qual a variação verificada no desemprego jovem no primeiro trimestre de 2013 relativa ao período homólogo de 2012 na Itália?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008506/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego jovem na União Europeia — Bulgária

Considerando que o desemprego jovem se revela a faceta perversa das políticas de austeridade, numa realidade que preocupa todos os países da União Europeia.

Pergunto à Comissão qual a variação verificada no desemprego jovem no primeiro trimestre de 2013 relativa ao período homólogo de 2012 na Bulgária?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008507/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego jovem na União Europeia — Roménia

Considerando que o desemprego jovem se revela a faceta perversa das políticas de austeridade, numa realidade que preocupa todos os países da União Europeia.

Pergunto à Comissão qual a variação verificada no desemprego jovem no primeiro trimestre de 2013 relativa ao período homólogo de 2012 na Roménia?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008508/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego jovem na União Europeia — Alemanha

Considerando que o desemprego jovem se revela a faceta perversa das políticas de austeridade, numa realidade que preocupa todos os países da União Europeia.

Pergunto à Comissão qual a variação verificada no desemprego jovem no primeiro trimestre de 2013 relativa ao período homólogo de 2012 na Alemanha?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008509/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego jovem na União Europeia — Grécia

Considerando que o desemprego jovem se revela a faceta perversa das políticas de austeridade, numa realidade que preocupa todos os países da União Europeia.

Pergunto à Comissão qual a variação verificada no desemprego jovem no primeiro trimestre de 2013 relativa ao período homólogo de 2012 na Grécia?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008510/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego jovem na União Europeia — Reino Unido

Considerando que o desemprego jovem se revela a faceta perversa das políticas de austeridade, numa realidade que preocupa todos os países da União Europeia.

Pergunto à Comissão qual a variação verificada no desemprego jovem no primeiro trimestre de 2013 relativa ao período homólogo de 2012 no Reino Unido?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008511/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego jovem na União Europeia — Dinamarca

Considerando que o desemprego jovem se revela a faceta perversa das políticas de austeridade, numa realidade que preocupa todos os países da União Europeia.

Pergunto à Comissão qual a variação verificada no desemprego jovem no primeiro trimestre de 2013 relativa ao período homólogo de 2012 na Dinamarca?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008512/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego jovem na União Europeia — Malta

Considerando que o desemprego jovem se revela a faceta perversa das políticas de austeridade, numa realidade que preocupa todos os países da União Europeia.

Pergunto à Comissão qual a variação verificada no desemprego jovem no primeiro trimestre de 2013 relativa ao período homólogo de 2012 em Malta?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008513/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego jovem na União Europeia — Suécia

Considerando que o desemprego jovem se revela a faceta perversa das políticas de austeridade, numa realidade que preocupa todos os países da União Europeia.

Pergunto à Comissão qual a variação verificada no desemprego jovem no primeiro trimestre de 2013 relativa ao período homólogo de 2012 na Suécia?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008514/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego jovem na União Europeia — Hungria

Considerando que o desemprego jovem se revela a faceta perversa das políticas de austeridade, numa realidade que preocupa todos os países da União Europeia.

Pergunto à Comissão qual a variação verificada no desemprego jovem no primeiro trimestre de 2013 relativa ao período homólogo de 2012 na Hungria?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008515/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego jovem na União Europeia — Países Baixos

Considerando que o desemprego jovem se revela a faceta perversa das políticas de austeridade, numa realidade que preocupa todos os países da União Europeia.

Pergunto à Comissão qual a variação verificada no desemprego jovem no primeiro trimestre de 2013 relativa ao período homólogo de 2012 nos Países Baixos?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008516/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego jovem na União Europeia — Chipre

Considerando que o desemprego jovem se revela a faceta perversa das políticas de austeridade, numa realidade que preocupa todos os países da União Europeia.

Pergunto à Comissão qual a variação verificada no desemprego jovem no primeiro trimestre de 2013 relativa ao período homólogo de 2012 no Chipre?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008517/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego jovem na União Europeia — Letónia

Considerando que o desemprego jovem se revela a faceta perversa das políticas de austeridade, numa realidade que preocupa todos os países da União Europeia.

Pergunto à Comissão qual a variação verificada no desemprego jovem no primeiro trimestre de 2013 relativa ao período homólogo de 2012 na Letónia?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008518/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego jovem na União Europeia — Estónia

Considerando que o desemprego jovem se revela a faceta perversa das políticas de austeridade, numa realidade que preocupa todos os países da União Europeia.

Pergunto à Comissão qual a variação verificada no desemprego jovem no primeiro trimestre de 2013 relativa ao período homólogo de 2012 na Estónia?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008519/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego jovem na União Europeia — Lituânia

Considerando que o desemprego jovem se revela a faceta perversa das políticas de austeridade, numa realidade que preocupa todos os países da União Europeia.

Pergunto à Comissão qual a variação verificada no desemprego jovem no primeiro trimestre de 2013 relativa ao período homólogo de 2012 na Lituânia?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008520/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego jovem na União Europeia — Finlândia

Considerando que o desemprego jovem se revela a faceta perversa das políticas de austeridade, numa realidade que preocupa todos os países da União Europeia.

Pergunto à Comissão qual a variação verificada no desemprego jovem no primeiro trimestre de 2013 relativa ao período homólogo de 2012 na Finlândia?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008521/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego jovem na União Europeia — Eslováquia

Considerando que o desemprego jovem se revela a faceta perversa das políticas de austeridade, numa realidade que preocupa todos os países da União Europeia.

Pergunto à Comissão qual a variação verificada no desemprego jovem no primeiro trimestre de 2013 relativa ao período homólogo de 2012 na Eslováquia?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008522/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego jovem na União Europeia — Eslovénia

Considerando que o desemprego jovem se revela a faceta perversa das políticas de austeridade, numa realidade que preocupa todos os países da União Europeia.

Pergunto à Comissão qual a variação verificada no desemprego jovem no primeiro trimestre de 2013 relativa ao período homólogo de 2012 na Eslovénia?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008523/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego jovem na União Europeia — Irlanda

Considerando que o desemprego jovem se revela a faceta perversa das políticas de austeridade, numa realidade que preocupa todos os países da União Europeia.

Pergunto à Comissão qual a variação verificada no desemprego jovem no primeiro trimestre de 2013 relativa ao período homólogo de 2012 na Irlanda?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008524/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego jovem na União Europeia — Áustria

Considerando que o desemprego jovem se revela a faceta perversa das políticas de austeridade, numa realidade que preocupa todos os países da União Europeia.

Pergunto à Comissão qual a variação verificada no desemprego jovem no primeiro trimestre de 2013 relativa ao período homólogo de 2012 na Áustria?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008525/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego jovem na União Europeia — Luxemburgo

Considerando que o desemprego jovem se revela a faceta perversa das políticas de austeridade, numa realidade que preocupa todos os países da União Europeia.

Pergunto à Comissão qual a variação verificada no desemprego jovem no primeiro trimestre de 2013 relativa ao período homólogo de 2012 no Luxemburgo?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008526/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego jovem na União Europeia — Polónia

Considerando que o desemprego jovem se revela a faceta perversa das políticas de austeridade, numa realidade que preocupa todos os países da União Europeia.

Pergunto à Comissão qual a variação verificada no desemprego jovem no primeiro trimestre de 2013 relativa ao período homólogo de 2012 na Polónia?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008527/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Desemprego jovem na União Europeia — República Checa

Considerando que o desemprego jovem se revela a faceta perversa das políticas de austeridade, numa realidade que preocupa todos os países da União Europeia.

Pergunto à Comissão qual a variação verificada no desemprego jovem no primeiro trimestre de 2013 relativa ao período homólogo de 2012 na República Checa?

Resposta conjunta dada por Algirdas Šemeta em nome da Comissão
(27 de agosto de 2013)

O Eurostat tem estimativas harmonizadas sobre o desemprego juvenil, elaboradas com base no Inquérito às Forças de Trabalho da UE. Os dois principais indicadores utilizados para este efeito são a taxa de desemprego juvenil e o rácio de desemprego juvenil. A taxa de desemprego juvenil mede a proporção de pessoas desempregadas entre os 15 e os 24 anos em percentagem da força de trabalho da mesma idade. Dada a elevada proporção de jovens, nomeadamente estudantes, que não estão incluídos na força de trabalho, o Eurostat publica igualmente o rácio de desemprego juvenil, que indica a percentagem de pessoas desempregadas entre os 15 e os 24 anos em percentagem da população total da mesma idade. Ambos os indicadores se encontram registados no quadro em anexo para o primeiro trimestre de 2012 e 2013, juntamente com o número de jovens desempregados. Encontram-se disponíveis outras informações nas novas páginas dedicadas a este assunto no sítio do Eurostat na Internet ([1]).

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Youth_unemployment

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008501/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Youth unemployment in the European Union — Portugal

Youth unemployment has proven to be the downside of austerity policies, and is a cause for concern in all EU countries.

What change has there been in youth unemployment in Portugal in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008502/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Youth unemployment in the European Union — Spain

Youth unemployment has proven to be the downside of austerity policies, and is a cause for concern in all EU countries.

What change has there been in youth unemployment in Spain in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008503/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Youth unemployment in the European Union — France

Youth unemployment has proven to be the downside of austerity policies, and is a cause for concern in all EU countries.

What change has there been in youth unemployment in France in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008504/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Youth unemployment in the European Union — Belgium

Youth unemployment has proven to be the downside of austerity policies, and is a cause for concern in all EU countries.

What change has there been in youth unemployment in Belgium in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008505/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Youth unemployment in the European Union — Italy

Youth unemployment has proven to be the downside of austerity policies, and is a cause for concern in all EU countries.

What change has there been in youth unemployment in Italy in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008506/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Youth unemployment in the European Union — Bulgaria

Youth unemployment has proven to be the downside of austerity policies, and is a cause for concern in all EU countries.

What change has there been in youth unemployment in Bulgaria in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008507/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Youth unemployment in the European Union — Romania

Youth unemployment has proven to be the downside of austerity policies, and is a cause for concern in all EU countries.

What change has there been in youth unemployment in Romania in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008508/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Youth unemployment in the European Union — Germany

Youth unemployment has proven to be the downside of austerity policies, and is a cause for concern in all EU countries.

What change has there been in youth unemployment in Germany in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008509/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Youth unemployment in the European Union — Greece

Youth unemployment has proven to be the downside of austerity policies, and is a cause for concern in all EU countries.

What change has there been in youth unemployment in Greece in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008510/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Youth unemployment in the European Union — United Kingdom

Youth unemployment has proven to be the downside of austerity policies, and is a cause for concern in all EU countries.

What change has there been in youth unemployment in the United Kingdom in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008511/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Youth unemployment in the European Union — Denmark

Youth unemployment has proven to be the downside of austerity policies, and is a cause for concern in all EU countries.

What change has there been in youth unemployment in Denmark in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008512/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Youth unemployment in the European Union — Malta

Youth unemployment has proven to be the downside of austerity policies, and is a cause for concern in all EU countries.

What change has there been in youth unemployment in Malta in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008513/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Youth unemployment in the European Union — Sweden

Youth unemployment has proven to be the downside of austerity policies, and is a cause for concern in all EU countries.

What change has there been in youth unemployment in Sweden in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008514/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Youth unemployment in the European Union — Hungary

Youth unemployment has proven to be the downside of austerity policies, and is a cause for concern in all EU countries.

What change has there been in youth unemployment in Hungary in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008515/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Youth unemployment in the European Union — Netherlands

Youth unemployment has proven to be the downside of austerity policies, and is a cause for concern in all EU countries.

What change has there been in youth unemployment in the Netherlands in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008516/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Youth unemployment in the European Union — Cyprus

Youth unemployment has proven to be the downside of austerity policies, and is a cause for concern in all EU countries.

What change has there been in youth unemployment in Cyprus in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008517/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Youth unemployment in the European Union — Latvia

Youth unemployment has proven to be the downside of austerity policies, and is a cause for concern in all EU countries.

What change has there been in youth unemployment in Latvia in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008518/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Youth unemployment in the European Union — Estonia

Youth unemployment has proven to be the downside of austerity policies, and is a cause for concern in all EU countries.

What change has there been in youth unemployment in Estonia in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008519/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Youth unemployment in the European Union — Lithuania

Youth unemployment has proven to be the downside of austerity policies, and is a cause for concern in all EU countries.

What change has there been in youth unemployment in Lithuania in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008520/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Youth unemployment in the European Union — Finland

Youth unemployment has proven to be the downside of austerity policies, and is a cause for concern in all EU countries.

What change has there been in youth unemployment in Finland in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008521/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Youth unemployment in the European Union — Slovakia

Youth unemployment has proven to be the downside of austerity policies, and is a cause for concern in all EU countries.

What change has there been in youth unemployment in Slovakia in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008522/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Youth unemployment in the European Union — Slovenia

Youth unemployment has proven to be the downside of austerity policies, and is a cause for concern in all EU countries.

What change has there been in youth unemployment in Slovenia in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008523/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Youth unemployment in the European Union — Ireland

Youth unemployment has proven to be the downside of austerity policies, and is a cause for concern in all EU countries.

What change has there been in youth unemployment in Ireland in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008524/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Youth unemployment in the European Union — Austria

Youth unemployment has proven to be the downside of austerity policies, and is a cause for concern in all EU countries.

What change has there been in youth unemployment in Austria in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008525/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Youth unemployment in the European Union — Luxembourg

Youth unemployment has proven to be the downside of austerity policies, and is a cause for concern in all EU countries.

What change has there been in youth unemployment in Luxembourg in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008526/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Youth unemployment in the European Union — Poland

Youth unemployment has proven to be the downside of austerity policies, and is a cause for concern in all EU countries.

What change has there been in youth unemployment in Poland in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Question for written answer E-008527/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Youth unemployment in the European Union — Czech Republic

Youth unemployment has proven to be the downside of austerity policies, and is a cause for concern in all EU countries.

What change has there been in youth unemployment in the Czech Republic in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the same period in 2012?

Joint answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(27 August 2013)

Eurostat has harmonised estimates of youth unemployment based on the EU Labour Force Survey. The two main indicators used in this regard are the youth unemployment rate and the youth unemployment ratio. The youth unemployment rate measures the proportion of unemployed persons aged 15 to 24 as a percentage of the labour force of the same age. Given the high proportion of young people, in particular students that are not in the labour force, Eurostat also publishes the youth unemployment ratio which gives the proportion of unemployed persons aged 15 to 24 as a percentage of the entire population of the same age. Both indicators are reported in the table attached for the first quarter of 2012 and 2013, alongside the number of youth unemployed. Further information is available in the new dedicated pages of Eurostat website ([1]).

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Youth_unemployment.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-008528/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(12 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Mancanza di aiuti economici da parte del governo italiano per lo smaltimento dell'amianto sulle coperture dei fabbricati industriali

Molti titolari di fabbricati industriali presenti sul territorio italiano lamentano l'impossibilità di ottenere, ad oggi, sgravi fiscali per la sostituzione obbligatoria delle coperture in amianto. Allo stato attuale, questa mancanza di incentivi economici si traduce in pagamenti onerosi a carico degli stessi proprietari.

Considerando che, per quanto attiene allo smaltimento dell'amianto, la normativa europea è ora rappresentata anzitutto dalla risoluzione P7_TA-PROV(2013)0093 del 14 marzo 2013 con cui il Parlamento europeo «invita l'UE a collaborare con le parti sociali e altri soggetti interessati a livello europeo, nazionale e regionale per elaborare e condividere piani d'azione per la gestione e la rimozione dell'amianto», osservando inoltre che tali piani dovrebbero includere «programmi di finanziamento per la rimozione dell'amianto»;

evidenziando poi l'allegato A della DGR 265, del 15 marzo 2011, della Regione Veneto, nella quale è stato inserito un elenco dei contenuti del piano di lavoro per la rimozione dell'amianto, in particolare laddove si identificano, quali attività necessarie ai fini dello smaltimento, la sovracopertura, l'incapsulamento e la rimozione dei manufatti contenenti amianto, e si specifica l'obbligo di controllo e supervisione da parte del committente (con tutti i costi che tali attività comportano);

osservando infine che i fabbricati industriali in Italia sono oggetto di tassazione, anzitutto tramite applicazione dell'imposta municipale unica (IMU), e che spesso i proprietari sono imprenditori già oberati dalle spese per il mantenimento di locali, conformemente anche ad altre normative di sicurezza europee;

si chiede alla Commissione:

— se intenda stabilire nuovi finanziamenti al fine di agevolare la sostituzione delle coperture contenenti amianto presenti sui fabbricati industriali italiani;

— se sia in grado di fornire dati precisi riguardo all'utilizzo dei fondi europei messi a disposizione in precedenza.

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(14 agosto 2013)

Il Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale (FESR) può finanziare progetti per il recupero dell'ambiente fisico, inclusi i siti e i terreni contaminati, e la riconversione dei siti industriali in abbandono.

Il quadro di riferimento nazionale italiano per il periodo 2007-2013 prevede, per l'asse prioritario n. 3 «Ambiente», la definizione di piani d'intervento destinati in particolare ai siti contaminati dall'amianto e il finanziamento di progetti necessari per garantire lo sviluppo sostenibile. Le modalità attuative sono soggette al principio «chi inquina paga».

Per quanto riguarda l'Italia, numerosi programmi finanziati dal FESR hanno incentivato operazioni volte a sostituire le coperture delle strutture pubbliche e private interessate. Informazioni dettagliate sui progetti finanziati sono disponibili sul sito www.opencoesione.it.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-008528/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Lack of financial assistance from the Italian Government for the removal of asbestos roofing from industrial buildings

Many owners of industrial buildings in Italy are complaining that, at present, they are not being offered any tax breaks to offset the substantial cost of replacing asbestos roofing, despite this having been made compulsory.

The latest thinking at EU level on asbestos removal is set out in Parliament's resolution of 14 March 2013 (P7_TA-PROV(2013)0093), in which Parliament 'encourages the EU to work with the social partners and other stakeholders at European, national and regional levels to develop and share action plans for asbestos removal and management' and states that these plans should include 'programmes to fund asbestos removal'.

Annex A to Veneto Regional Executive Decision (DGR) 265 of 15 March 2011 contains a list of asbestos removal operations, including overcladding, encapsulation and removal of asbestos-containing materials, and stipulates that the works must be supervised and inspected by the client (thus adding still further to the overall cost).

What it more, industrial buildings in Italy are subject to taxation, including the single municipal tax (IMU), and the owners of such buildings are also obliged to bear the cost of keeping them in a suitable state of repair, in accordance with EU safety standards.

— Will the Commission see to it that fresh funding is made available to help owners of industrial buildings in Italy to cover the cost of replacing asbestos-containing roofing?

— Can it provide detailed figures on how the EU funding made available to date has been used?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Hahn au nom de la Commission
(14 août 2013)

Le Fonds européen de développement régional (FEDER) peut financer des projets visant la réhabilitation de l'environnement physique, y compris des sites et des terrains contaminés et des friches.

Le cadre de référence national italien 2007-2013 prévoit, pour l'axe prioritaire 3 «Environnement», la rédaction de plans d'intervention, notamment pour les sites contaminés par l'amiante, et le financement de projets nécessaires pour assurer le développement durable. Les modalités de mise en œuvre sont assujetties au principe «pollueur-payeur».

En ce qui concerne l'Italie, plusieurs programmes financés au titre du FEDER ont encouragé des opérations visant à remplacer les couvertures des structures publiques et privées affectées. Des informations détaillées sur les projets financés sont disponibles sur le site Web www.opencoesione.it.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008529/13
a la Comisión
Emilio Menéndez del Valle (S&D) y Andrés Perelló Rodríguez (S&D)
(12 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: Infraestructuras de Servicios Digitales (DSI)

En la redacción inicial propuesta por la Comisión al Consejo, en el instrumento CEF, se preveía que las Infraestructuras de Servicios Digitales (DSI) estuvieran financiadas al 100 % desde el CEF.

En la actualidad el acuerdo disponible de MFF (–63 600 millones de euros) reduce el montante de CEF en 10 700 millones de euros, de los que 9 200 millones de euros, el 90 % del total de la variación de CEF, se consiguen mediante reducción directa del CEF digital.

En la propuesta inicial los DSI estaban dotados con 1 900 millones de euros, en tanto que en la actual el máximo posible es de 1 000 millones de euros.

¿Cómo afecta esta disminución a la financiación inicialmente prevista de los DSI?

¿Va a afectar a todos los DSI por igual o se pretende un mecanismo de discriminación positiva/negativa?

En este caso ¿en qué consistirá dicho mecanismo?

¿Hay previsto algún procedimiento por el cual a los DSI que tenían prevista en la propuesta inicial una financiación del 100 % con cargo al CEF se les mantenga activos a través de financiaciones parciales?

De ser así, ¿hay previsto algún tipo de evolución de los porcentajes a financiar? En su caso, ¿cuáles serán? ¿Desde qué puntos de partida y con qué regla de evolución a aplicar?

En el caso de no estar previsto, ¿se pueden implementar?

En caso de respuesta negativa al punto anterior, ¿por qué no se pueden implementar? ¿Cuál es la lista de DSI que no van a contar con financiación ni total ni parcial?

¿Cuáles son las razones para dejar dichos DSI sin ningún tipo de financiación?

Respuesta de la Sra. Kroes en nombre de la Comisión
(20 de agosto de 2013)

A causa de los importantes recortes aplicados al «MCE Digital», la Comisión tuvo que modificar su propuesta en consecuencia ([1]) y asignar la mayor parte de los recursos disponibles a las infraestructuras de servicios digitales (ISD).

Debido a esos recortes introducidos en el acuerdo sobre el MFP, no ha sido posible mantener los fondos previstos inicialmente, y la Comisión, por tanto, ha establecido, en el artículo 6 de su propuesta modificada, unos criterios específicos para identificar las ISD más importantes.

La prioridad se concederá, en primer lugar, a los componentes elementales o infraestructuras de DSI reutilizables, así como a las ISD al servicio de disposiciones específicas de la legislación de la UE y basadas en componentes elementales existentes. Una vez asignados los fondos a esas ISD prioritarias, las demás ISD enumeradas en el anexo del Reglamento propuesto que cumplan los criterios de subvencionabilidad de su artículo 6 competirán en igualdad de condiciones por los fondos restantes.

Todas las ISD deben buscar fondos de otras fuentes de financiación, por ejemplo contribuciones de la industria y los Estados miembros, o mediante la imposición de cánones por uso.

Se hará hincapié en las funciones principales de las plataformas centrales de servicios financiadas totalmente mediante contratos públicos. Por consiguiente, se prevé una financiación considerablemente menor para los servicios genéricos que reciben subvenciones concedidas mediante convocatorias de propuestas. El porcentaje de financiación para esas subvenciones constituye otra solución para enfrentarse a un presupuesto reducido.

([1]) Propuesta de Reglamento del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo relativo a unas orientaciones para las redes transeuropeas de telecomunicaciones y por el que se deroga la Decisión nº 1336/97/CE [COM(2013) 0329 final].

Se han suprimido dos ISD del anexo: 1) las conexiones troncales de banda ancha para la ISD de las administraciones públicas, ya que es bastante probable que puedan encontrarse soluciones alternativas al margen del MCE digital, habida cuenta de las redes existentes que ya reciben financiación de la UE, y 2) la ISD de servicios energéticos inteligentes, por estar estrechamente vinculada a toda la iniciativa de banda ancha de la propuesta original.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008529/13
to the Commission
Emilio Menéndez del Valle (S&D) and Andrés Perelló Rodríguez (S&D)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Digital service infrastructures (DSI)

The initial draft document submitted by the Commission to the Council stated that digital service infrastructures (DSI) were to be funded at a rate of 100% from the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF).

However, the recent agreement on the MFF (which provides for cuts of EUR 63 600 million) reduces the budget for the CEF by EUR 10 700 million, of which EUR 9 200 million (some 90%) comes from direct cuts to CEF Digital.

The original draft provided for a budget of EUR 1 900 million for DSI, whereas under the MFF agreement no more than EUR 1 000 million may be allocated.

How will these cuts affect the funding initially earmarked for DSI?

Will they affect all DSI equally, or will a system of positive/negative discrimination be used?

If so, how will such a system work?

Is there any procedure whereby DSI projects that were to be wholly funded from the CEF in the initial draft will be kept alive by partial funding?

If so, are there plans to change the rate of financing applied to projects? If so, what are they? From what point and according to what rules will such changes be made?

If there are no such plans, will it be possible to implement DSI projects?

If not, why not? Please list the DSI projects that will receive neither full nor partial funding.

Why will these projects not be financed?

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

Due to the considerable cuts in the CEF Digital decided in the MFF agreement, the Commission had to amend its proposal accordingly ([1]), allocating most of the available resources to Digital Service Infrastructures (DSIs).

Since the cuts in the MFF agreement do not allow the funding initially foreseen to be maintained, the Commission has introduced specific criteria for identifying critical DSIs in Article 6 of its amended proposal.

Priority will be given first and foremost to reusable building block DSIs, but also to those DSIs supporting specific provisions of EU legislation and using building block DSIs. Once funding has been allocated to these priority DSIs, other DSIs listed in the annex to the proposed Regulation which meet the eligibility criteria set out in Article 6 thereof will compete on equal terms with each other for the remaining funding.

All DSIs should seek alternative funding from other sources, e.g. through contributions from industry and Member States, or through usage fees.

The focus will be on the main functions of the core services platforms fully funded through public procurement. Consequently, considerably less funding is foreseen for generic services supported through grants awarded following calls for proposals. The funding rate for these grants offers another means to deal with the reduced budget.

Two DSIs have been removed from the annex: 1) The broadband backbone for public administrations DSI as it is quite likely that alternative solutions outside the CEF will be found, considering existing networks already supported by the EU and 2) the smart energy services DSI as this was closely linked to the full broadband initiative of the original proposal.

([1]) Amended proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on guidelines for trans-European telecommunications networks and repealing Decision No 1336/97/EC, COM(2013) 0329 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008530/13
to the Commission
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: European Institute of Gender Equality calendar on 'Women Inspiring Europe'

In its most recent annual report, the European Institute of Gender Equality (EIGE) proudly announces as a 'highlight' of 2012 that 9 000 copies of the calendar 'Women Inspiring Europe' were distributed to 'stakeholders' across the European Union. Can the Commission please provide me with the costs of producing this calendar and the costs of distributing it, including outlays for postage and packaging? What is the total communications budget for the EIGE? How was a calendar selected as the most effective method of communication? Please provide as well a list of the so-called stakeholders to whom the calendar was distributed.

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(2 September 2013)

In line with Regulation 1922/2006, the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) is independent from the Commission and has the sole responsibility for answering this question.

The Commission, however, asked the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) to provide a response to the question raised by the Honourable Member.

According to the Institute, the 'Women Inspiring Europe' Calendar is only one part of a multi-media communication project, in line with the objectives of EIGE's Establishing Regulation ([1]), of EIGE's Mid-term Work Programme 2010-2012 ([2]), as approved by its Management Board, in its Focal area 4, Heading 2.4.3. 'Breaking stereotypes'.

EIGE has indicated that, according to a recent evaluation, the calendar is effectively raising awareness on gender equality. The majority of respondents (82%) pointed out that the calendar is of an interest to them and 76% recommended its continuation.

According to the Institute, the cost of producing this calendar was EUR 90.713,70 and the cost of distributing it EUR 17.478. The total budget for awareness-raising and communication in the 2012 Annual Work Programme was EUR 380.000.

The list of EIGE's stakeholders to whom the calendar was distributed is provided as annex to this reply.

([1]) Regulation 1922/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 December 2006 on establishing a European Institute for Gender Equality.
([2]) http://eige.europa.eu/content/document/mid-term-work-programme-2010-2012.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008531/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(12 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Fotografo veneto arrestato in Turchia durante la manifestazioni al Gezi Park di Istanbul

In questi giorni è stata diffusa la notizia dell'arresto e della successiva liberazione di un fotografo veronese 24enne, Mattia Cacciatori, da parte delle autorità di polizia turche.

Considerando che Cacciatori è stato arrestato per il solo fatto di aver documentato, con la sua macchina fotografica, gli scontri tra manifestanti e polizia al Gezi Park, nel centro di Istanbul, e che della sua sorte nulla si sarebbe saputo se non fosse riuscito a inviare a un amico, di nascosto, un messaggio nel quale spiegava di essere stato fermato e condotto presso la stazione di polizia di Aksaray;

evidenziando inoltre che da settimane il governo turco permette arresti sistematici dei manifestanti, oltre che gravi danni alla loro salute — facendo uso, ad esempio, di lacrimogeni urticanti — violando in tal modo apertamente i diritti e le libertà fondamentali riconosciute anche dalla Convenzione europea dei diritti dell'uomo, in particolare dall'articolo 9 sulla libertà di pensiero, dall'articolo 10 sulla libertà di espressione, dall'articolo 11 sulla libertà di riunione e associazione e, infine, dall'articolo 6 sull'equo processo;

si chiede alla Commissione:

— se sia a conoscenza della vicenda;

— quali strumenti di dialogo intenda adottare coinvolgendo la Turchia, paese candidato ufficialmente all'adesione all'UE.

Risposta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(5 settembre 2013)

La Commissione è a conoscenza della questione citata dall'onorevole deputato.

Nel quadro dei negoziati di adesione della Turchia, l'Unione europea, anche mediante la sua delegazione ad Ankara, segue i procedimenti giudiziari per valutare se sono conformi agli standard dell'UE. La Commissione riferisce periodicamente in proposito, anche nelle relazioni annuali sui progressi compiuti.

La Commissione ha seguito con attenzione gli eventi riguardanti Gezi Park e ha ripetutamente condannato l'uso eccessivo della forza per porre fine a proteste pacifiche. La democrazia richiede il dialogo con tutte le parti della società, anche quelle che non sono rappresentate dalla maggioranza parlamentare. Occorrono indagini rapide e trasparenti sulle violenze compiute dalla polizia per assicurare i responsabili alla giustizia.

I paesi che intendono negoziare l'adesione all'UE devono garantire i diritti umani, compresa la libertà di espressione, di riunione e di associazione, nel rispetto degli articoli 10 e 11 della Convenzione europea sui diritti umani e della giurisprudenza della Corte europea dei diritti umani.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008531/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Photographer from the Veneto region arrested in Turkey during protests at Gezi Park in Istanbul

According to recent news reports, a 24-year-old photographer from the Veneto region, Mattia Cacciatori, has been arrested and subsequently released by the Turkish police.

Mr Cacciatori was arrested purely for taking photographs documenting clashes between protesters and police in Gezi Park, in central Istanbul, and no one would have known what had happened to him had he not managed secretly to send a friend a message explaining that he had been arrested and taken to Aksaray police station.

For weeks the Turkish Government has turned a blind eye to the systematic arrest of protesters, as well as to the harm being done to their health — with the use of tear gas, for example — in clear breach of the fundamental rights and freedoms enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights, and in particular Article 9 on the freedom of thought, Article 10 on the freedom of expression, Article 11 on the freedom of assembly and association, and, finally, Article 6 on fair trials.

— Is the Commission aware of this incident?

— What dialogue will it enter into with Turkey, which is officially a candidate country for accession to the EU?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(5 September 2013)

The Commission is aware of the issue mentioned by the Honourable Member.

In the framework of Turkey's accession negotiations, the European Union (including through its delegation in Ankara) monitors judicial proceedings, in order to assess their compliance with EU standards. The Commission regularly reports on such cases, including in its annual Progress Reports.

The Commission has followed events concerning Gezi Park closely and has repeatedly condemned the excessive use of force to silence peaceful protests. Democracy requires the inclusion into debate and compromise of all segments of society, including those not represented by the parliamentary majority. A swift and transparent investigation into police violence needs to be followed through and those responsible need to be brought to account.

Any country negotiating its EU accession needs to guarantee human rights, including freedom of expression, and freedom of assembly and association, in line with Article 10 and 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and the jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008532/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(12 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Contesa nippo-cinese sull'arcipelago Diaoyu/Senkaku

Nel settembre 2011, l'acquisto da parte del governo nipponico di tre delle cinque isole chiamate dai cinesi «Diaoyu» e dai giapponesi «Senkaku», in precedenza di proprietà di un privato, ha riacceso lo scontro tra i due paesi in merito alla sovranità sull'arcipelago e sulle risorse ivi presenti, in particolare la ricchezza ittica e i giacimenti sottomarini di gas naturale.

Considerando che il rapporto sulla difesa giapponese, approvato in questi giorni, accusa la Cina di aver compiuto ripetute incursioni nelle acque territoriali giapponesi violando anche lo spazio aereo;

sottolineando inoltre come lo stesso rapporto consideri la presa di posizione cinese come preludio a «conseguenze gravi»;

sottolineando infine la portata della convenzione delle Nazioni Unite sul diritto del mare (conosciuta anche come convenzione di Montego Bay, 1982), ratificata sia dalla Cina che dal Giappone, e in particolare l'articolo 49 sul «Regime giuridico delle acque arcipelagiche, del relativo fondo marino e del suo sottosuolo e dello spazio aereo soprastante»;

può il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante Ashton indicare quale posizione intenda assumere l'Unione europea in merito alla vicenda?

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

L'AR/VP è al corrente della questione e ha esposto la posizione dell'UE sia negli incontri bilaterali con le controparti cinesi e giapponesi che nelle sedi regionali pertinenti, in particolare durante le recenti riunioni dei ministri degli Esteri del Forum regionale dell'Associazione delle nazioni del Sud-Est asiatico.

L'UE non prende posizione sulle rivendicazioni di sovranità del Giappone o della Cina, ma esorta tutte le parti interessate a cercare soluzioni pacifiche e collaborative a questi problemi in conformità della Carta delle Nazioni Unite e del diritto internazionale, in particolare la convenzione ONU sul diritto del mare. Tutte le parti in causa devono chiarire gli elementi su cui si basano le loro rivendicazioni ed evitare di adottare misure unilaterali.

L'UE è estremamente preoccupata per l'alta concentrazione di imbarcazioni e aerei nella zona circostante le isole Diaoyu/Senkaku: qualsiasi incidente in mare e nello spazio aereo potrebbe provocare una pericolosa escalation delle tensioni, con ripercussioni negative sugli interessi economici e di sicurezza dell'Unione.

Nell'ambito del suo approccio globale in materia di prevenzione dei conflitti, gestione delle crisi e stabilizzazione, l'UE è pronta a sostenere una soluzione pacifica della questione e a contribuire, su richiesta, alle misure volte a rafforzare la fiducia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008532/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Dispute between Japan and China over the Diaoyu/Senkaku archipelago

In September 2012, the Japanese Government purchased three of the five islands known as 'Diaoyu' in China, and 'Senkaku' in Japan, which were previously owned by a private owner. The purchase reignited the dispute between the two countries regarding sovereignty over the archipelago and over its resources, particularly its abundant fish resources and its undersea natural gas reserves.

The recently adopted report on Japanese defence accuses China of having conducted repeated incursions into Japan's territorial waters, as well as breaching Japanese air space.

According to the same report, China's stance will lead to 'serious consequences'.

Finally, Article 49 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (also known as the Montego Bay Convention of 1982), ratified by both China and Japan, concerns the 'Legal status of archipelagic waters, of the air space over archipelagic waters and of their bed and subsoil.'

Can the Vice-President/High Representative say what position the European Union will take on the matter?

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

The HR/VP is well aware of the matter and has set out the EU position in bilateral meetings with her Chinese and Japanese counterparts and at relevant regional fora, in particular at recent Association of Southeast Asian Nations Regional Forum foreign ministers meetings.

The EU does not take a position on the sovereignty claims of Japan or China. However, the EU urges all parties concerned to seek peaceful and cooperative solutions to these problems in accordance with the United Nations Charter, international law, in particular the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. All sides need to clarify the basis for their claims and to refrain from unilateral measures.

The EU is deeply concerned by the high concentration of vessels and planes around the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands; any accidental incident at sea or in the air could lead to a dangerous escalation of tensions which would also impact negatively on the economic and security interests of the Union.

In pursuing its comprehensive approach to conflict prevention, crisis management and stabilisation, the EU stands ready to support peaceful means to resolve the issue and to contribute to confidence building measures if so requested.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008533/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(12 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Legge anticonversione nello Stato indiano del Madhya Pradesh

È notizia recente che il governo dello Stato indiano del Madhya Pradesh sta discutendo in Parlamento un emendamento alla legge anticonversione per obbligare i sacerdoti a fornire alle autorità religiose, con almeno 30 giorni di anticipo rispetto alla cerimonia, i dettagli sull'identità di chi si converte al cristianesimo. Chi non volesse ottemperare alla nuova disposizione incorrerebbe in una sanzione amministrativa fino a 1000 rupie, con il rischio di essere condannato a 3 anni di reclusione per proselitismo.

Considerando che l'emendamento concerne la quinta sezione della legge sulla libertà di religione dello Stato del Madhya Pradesh (*Madhya Pradesh Freedom of Religion Act*) e che esso è stato originariamente introdotto nella normativa anticonversione nel 2006, senza previa discussione in parlamento e come obbligo nei confronti del solo convertito, non anche del sacerdote;

osservando inoltre come il presidente del Consiglio globale dei cristiani indiani (GCIC) sottolinei, a sua volta, un possibile aumento delle persecuzioni contro i cristiani, in particolar modo negli stati del Rajasthan, dell'Orissa e del Gujarat;

evidenziando infine la portata dell'articolo 18 della Dichiarazione universale dei diritti dell'uomo, per il quale «Ogni individuo ha diritto alla libertà di pensiero, di coscienza e di religione; tale diritto include la libertà di cambiare di religione o credo, e la libertà di manifestare, isolatamente o in comune, e sia in pubblico che in privato, la propria religione o il proprio credo nell'insegnamento, nelle pratiche, nel culto e nell'osservanza dei riti»;

può la Commissione riferire:

— se è a conoscenza di altri casi simili di leggi «anticonversione» che colpiscono la comunità cristiana nel mondo;

— quali azioni intende intraprendere per limitare la diffusione della cristianofobia nei paesi in cui la fede causa discriminazioni tra i cittadini?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Ashton a nome della Commissione
(21 agosto 2013)

In India, paese in cui la religione riveste una grande importanza nella vita quotidiana, la pratica religiosa è frequente e pubblica. La Costituzione indiana riflette il riconoscimento della diversità religiosa del paese elencando una serie di diritti fondamentali garantiti in sede giurisdizionale.

L'AR/VP è a conoscenza delle leggi anticonversione vigenti in diversi Stati indiani, talora definite «leggi sulla libertà di religione». Nella sua relazione del 2009, il relatore speciale delle Nazioni Unite sulla libertà di religione e di credo ha espresso preoccupazione per il fatto che tali leggi possano essere utilizzate a scapito delle minoranze, in particolare i cristiani e i musulmani. L'AR/VP è impegnata a contrastare qualsiasi forma di discriminazione nei loro confronti collaborando costantemente con organismi come la Commissione nazionale per le minoranze, nonché con i rappresentanti di tali minoranze. Il dialogo sui diritti umani tra UE e India rappresenta anche l'ambito in cui la questione viene discussa regolarmente con le autorità indiane. L'impegno dell'UE si ispirerà d'ora in poi ai nuovi orientamenti in materia di libertà di religione e di credo adottati dal Consiglio nel giugno 2013, orientamenti che sottolineano in particolar modo come il diritto di cambiare religione o credo sia parte integrante di tale libertà.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008533/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Anti-conversion law in the Indian state of Madhya Pradesh

According to recent news reports, the government of the Indian state of Madhya Pradesh is debating in parliament an amendment to the anti-conversion law to force priests to notify the religious authorities of the identity of anyone wishing to convert to Christianity, at least 30 days before the ceremony. Those unwilling to comply with the new measure would be fined up to INR 1 000 and risk being sentenced to three years' imprisonment for proselytism.

The amendment concerns the fifth section of the Madhya Pradesh Freedom of Religion Act and was originally introduced into the anti-conversion law in 2006, without having been discussed in parliament; it imposed an obligation only on the convert, not on the priest as well.

The President of the Global Council of Indian Christians (GCIC) has expressed concern about possibly increased persecution of Christians, particularly in the states of Rajasthan, Orissa and Gujarat.

Finally, according to Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 'Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.'

— Is the Commission aware of any other similar cases of 'anti-conversion' laws affecting Christians around the world?

— What will it do to limit the spread of anti-Christian sentiment in countries where the Christian faith leads to discrimination among citizens?

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

India is a country where religion has a particularly strong importance in daily life and where religious practice is frequent and public. The Constitution of India reflects recognition of India's religious diversity by spelling out a series of judicially enforceable fundamental rights.

The HR/VP is aware of anti-conversion laws in a number of Indian states sometimes called 'freedom of Religion Acts'. In her report in 2009, the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief for her part expressed concern that such laws are being used to the detriment of minorities, notably Christians and Muslims. The HR/VP has regularly engaged on this issue with bodies such as the National Commission for Minorities as well as representatives from these minorities to address any form of discrimination of which they might be the victim. The EU-India Human Rights Dialogue also provides a regular framework to discuss the issue with Indian authorities, The EU engagement will now be steered by the new EU guidelines on freedom of religion or belief that the Council adopted in June 2013. These guidelines devote special attention to the right to change one's religion or belief as an integral component of the freedom of religion or belief.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008534/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(12 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Diffusione del microcredito in Bangladesh

La Christian Co-operative Credit Union Ltd. (Cccu) rappresenta la prima società cristiana di microcredito in Bangladesh e, lo scorso 3 luglio, ha celebrato nella capitale Dacca il 58° anniversario della sua fondazione.

Sottolineando come siano state finora 50 000 le persone rivoltesi all'istituto per ottenere un finanziamento e migliorare le proprie condizioni di vita senza cadere nella rete dell'usura;

considerando inoltre che sono migliaia le società di microcredito presenti sul territorio bangladese e indiano e che, nel corso degli anni, esse hanno aiutato milioni di cittadini ad avere accesso a cure mediche costose, agli studi universitari, all'avvio di attività commerciali in proprio e all'acquisto della prima casa;

evidenziando infine come, in Europa, lo strumento del microcredito appaia ancora poco diffuso e come spesso le iniziative di questo genere incontrino l'ostacolo degli interessi economici dei maggiori enti creditizi, che applicano interessi legali comunque superiori a quelli previsti da questa particolare formula di finanziamento;

si chiede alla Commissione quali azioni intenda intraprendere per diffondere e migliorare l'accesso al microcredito anche entro i confini dell'UE.

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(6 settembre 2013)

La Commissione ritiene che lo squilibrio tra il basso livello di erogazione di microcrediti e l'elevata domanda in Europa sia per lo più dovuto ai rischi relativamente alti legati al prestito a giovani imprese o start-up e alla spesa amministrativa e ai costi di transazione per prestito comparativamente elevati che in Europa, a differenza dei paesi in via di sviluppo, non possono essere completamente scaricati sui clienti.

Nel 2010 la Commissione ha istituito lo strumento europeo Progress di microfinanza ([1]), che intende accrescere l'accesso alla microfinanza e la disponibilità della stessa per le persone che desiderino avviare o sviluppare ulteriormente la loro impresa e che hanno difficoltà a ottenere un prestito bancario tradizionale. Lo strumento Progress di microfinanza mette a disposizione 205 milioni di euro (100 milioni dei quali provengono dalla BEI ([2])) per garanzie e strumenti finanziati all'indirizzo degli erogatori di microcrediti che servono il gruppo di destinatari in questione. La relazione annuale 2012 ([3]) riporta ulteriori informazioni sullo stato di implementazione. Anche nell'ambito del programma quadro per la competitività e l'innovazione ([4]), una finestra di garanzia del microcredito ha erogato finora microprestiti a più di 50.000 micro-imprese.

Per il 2014-2020 il programma per l'occupazione e l'innovazione sociale assicurerà l'estensione del sostegno alla microfinanza al di là del 2013, inserendo inoltre un elemento di *capacity building* per i fornitori di microfinanza. Il ricorso ai Fondi strutturali e di investimento europei a sostegno degli strumenti finanziari, compresi quelli di microfinanza, sarà inoltre possibile sulla base di una valutazione ex-ante che comprovi carenze del mercato o situazioni di investimento sub-ottimali.

([1]) Decisione n. 283/2010/UE che istituisce uno strumento europeo Progress di microfinanza.
([2]) Banca europea per gli investimenti.
([3]) COM(2013)562.
([4]) CIP.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008534/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Provision of microcredit in Bangladesh

The Christian Cooperative Credit Union Ltd (CCCUL) is the principal Christian source of microcredit in Bangladesh. On 3 July this year, it celebrated the 58th anniversary of its foundation in the capital, Dacca.

To date, 50 000 people have sought funding from the CCCUL to improve their living conditions while avoiding falling into the clutches of usurers.

Thousands of microcredit societies exist in Bangladesh and India, which over the years have helped millions of citizens to gain access to expensive medical care or a university education or enabled them to start up their own business or to acquire their first home.

In Europe, microcredit still does not seem to be widespread. Initiatives of this kind often face the obstacle that they run counter to the economic interests of larger credit providers, which however charge statutory interest rates higher than those attached to this particular type of financing.

What action will the Commission take to widen and improve access to microcredit within the EU as well?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(6 September 2013)

The Commission believes that the mismatch between the low level of microcredit supply and the high demand in Europe is mostly due to the relatively high risks involved in lending to young companies or start-ups and comparatively high administration expenditure and transaction costs per loan, which in Europe, unlike in developing countries, cannot be fully charged to the customer.

In 2010, the Commission set up the European Progress Microfinance Facility ([1]), which aims to increase access to, and the availability of, microfinance for people who would like to start or further develop their business and who have difficulties accessing a traditional bank loan. Progress Microfinance makes available EUR 205 million (of which EUR 100 million from the EIB ([2])) for guarantees and funded instruments to microcredit providers that serve the target groups mentioned. The annual report 2012 ([3]) gives further information on the state of implementation. Also under the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme ([4]), a microcredit guarantee window has provided so far microloans to more than 50.000 micro-enterprises.

For 2014-2020, the Programme for Employment and Social Innovation will extend microfinance support beyond 2013, including an element for capacity building of microfinance providers. Use of European Structural and Investment Funds to support financial instruments, including micro-finance, will also be possible on the basis of an *ex-ante* assessment establishing evidence of market failures or sub-optimal investment situations.

([1]) Progress Microfinance Decision No 283/2010/EU.
([2]) European Investment Bank.
([3]) COM(2013)562.
([4]) CIP.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008535/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(12 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Espulsione di un docente universitario cinese dall'ateneo di Pechino

È notizia di questi giorni che il corpo docente dell'Università di Pechino dovrà votare l'espulsione del collega Xia Yeliang, a causa delle sue tesi economiche in aperto contrasto con il «sogno cinese» propugnato dal Presidente Xi Jinping.

Considerando come fosse dall'epoca maoista che in Cina non si vedeva istruire un processo contro le idee espresse all'interno delle università nazionali e che, secondo quanto riportato dal South China Morning Post, la decisione assunta contro il docente arriverebbe dopo una serie di intimidazioni già indirizzategli in precedenza;

sottolineando inoltre che, già nel 2009, il Professor Yeliang aveva indirizzato al Dipartimento di Propaganda del Partito Comunista una lettera contro la censura e che, nel 2011, è stato costretto agli arresti domiciliari per impedirgli di raccontare ai suoi connazionali le rivolte caratterizzanti la Primavera Araba;

osservando infine come il governo abbia disattivato gli account di Xia Yeliang su vari social network, contravvenendo apertamente al principio della libertà di pensiero e di espressione di cui all'articolo 19 della Dichiarazione universale dei diritti dell'uomo, che recita: «Ogni individuo ha diritto alla libertà di opinione e di espressione incluso il diritto di non essere molestato per la propria opinione e quello di cercare, ricevere e diffondere informazioni e idee attraverso ogni mezzo e senza riguardo a frontiere.»;

Si chiede alla Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante:

— se sia a conoscenza della situazione;

— se intenda promuovere la causa di Xia Yeliang a livello internazionale.

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Ashton a nome della Commissione
(1º ottobre 2013)

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente è perfettamente consapevole della situazione in cui si trova attualmente il prof. David Xia (Xia Yeliang), professore di economia all'università di Pechino e uno dei redattori e primi firmatari della Charta 08. Difensore della democrazia costituzionale, dello Stato di diritto e della libertà individuale in Cina, il prof. Xia è —, come molti altri attivisti della società civile — soggetto a molestie e intimidazioni perché esercita il suo diritto alla libertà di espressione. Egli stesso ha confermato che il collegio docente voterà la sua espulsione dall'Università di Pechino in settembre.

In una dichiarazione rilasciata il 28 agosto, l'AR/VP ha esortato le autorità cinesi a rispettare il diritto alla libertà di espressione, sancito dalla Dichiarazione universale dei diritti dell'uomo e dal Patto internazionale delle Nazioni Unite relativo ai diritti civili e politici, nonché dalla Costituzione della Repubblica popolare cinese.

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente continuerà a seguire la situazione e a esprimere le sue preoccupazioni presso le autorità cinesi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008535/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Expulsion of a Chinese lecturer from Peking University

According to recent news reports, the teaching staff at Peking University are to vote on the expulsion of their colleague Xia Yeliang because of his economic theories, which are completely at odds with the 'Chinese dream' espoused by President Xi Jinping.

China has not brought proceedings against ideas expressed inside national universities since the rule of Chairman Mao and, according to the *South China Morning Post*, the decision taken against the lecturer came after he suffered repeated intimidation.

In 2009, Professor Yeliang sent the Communist Party's Department of Propaganda a letter against censorship and he was put under house arrest in 2011 to stop him telling his fellow citizens about the Arab Spring uprisings.

Finally, the Chinese Government has deactivated Xia Yeliang's various social network accounts, in clear breach of the principle of freedom of thought and expression enshrined in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which lays down: 'Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.'

— Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the situation?

— Will it champion Xia Yeliang's cause internationally?

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

The HR/VP is well aware of the situation currently faced by Professor David Xia (Xia Yeliang), who is a professor of economics at Beijing University and one of the original drafters and signatories of Charter 08. As an advocate of constitutional democracy, the rule of law, and individual freedom in China, he is — like many other civil society activists — being harassed and intimidated for exercising freedom of expression. He has himself confirmed that a vote will be held to expel him from Beijing University in September.

In a statement released on 28 August, the HR/VP called on the Chinese authorities to respect the right to freedom of expression as set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, as well as in the Constitution of the People's Republic of China.

The HR/VP will continue to monitor the situation and raise its concerns with the Chinese authorities.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008536/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(12 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Operato del Centro di assistenza per i disabili nella città di Yangon, in Myanmar

Nel 2006, con l'aiuto finanziario e materiale dell'associazione New Humanity e del Dipartimento birmano per gli affari sociali, è stato creato il Centro di assistenza per i disabili della città di Yangon, che opera nell'ambito del sostegno ai bambini orfani o colpiti da grave disabilità. Ad oggi esso ospita 63 persone, tra cui anche ragazzi in età adolescenziale.

Considerando che in Myanmar solo il 60 % della popolazione può permettersi l'accesso alle cure mediche e che, al contrario, il centro assistenziale in questione consente anche la riabilitazione fisioterapica, con risultati prima impensabili su un bambino di 10 anni colpito da paralisi cerebrale;

considerando inoltre l'articolo 25 della Dichiarazione universale dei diritti dell'uomo, in particolare il paragrafo 1, prima parte, che recita: «Ogni individuo ha diritto ad un tenore di vita sufficiente a garantire la salute e il benessere proprio e della sua famiglia, con particolare riguardo (…) alle cure mediche e ai servizi sociali necessari (…).»;

sottolineando infine che l'associazione New Humanity, che ha reso possibile il sorgere del centro, è presente anche in Cambogia e promuove, più in generale, l'accesso all'educazione, lo sviluppo agricolo e l'inclusione delle persone colpite da handicap;

si chiede alla Commissione:

— se sia a conoscenza di altre realtà simili attive nei Paesi in via di sviluppo a sostegno del progresso sociale e sanitario della popolazione;

— se intenda attuare misure di cooperazione in tal senso, con gli Stati interessati.

Risposta di Andris Piebalgs a nome della Commissione
(9 settembre 2013)

La comunicazione «Le radici della democrazia e dello sviluppo sostenibile: l'impegno dell'Europa verso la società civile nell'ambito delle relazioni esterne» ([1]) riconosce l'importante ruolo delle organizzazioni della società civile (OSC) che affiancano le autorità pubbliche nella prestazione di servizi sociali a livello locale e nazionale. La capacità delle OSC di individuare i bisogni, affrontare problemi trascurati, tenere presenti i diritti umani e raggiungere le fasce di popolazione socialmente escluse assume un rilievo particolare.

Il sostegno dell'UE per potenziare le capacità locali di rispondere alle esigenze delle persone con disabilità si manifesta in particolare tramite progetti attuati dalle OSC locali e internazionali attraverso il programma «Attori non statali».

In Myanmar/Birmania, per esempio, l'UE sostiene il Ministero della previdenza sociale attraverso vari progetti specifici, tra cui uno a favore dei bambini disabili (0,6 milioni di euro). In Cambogia, invece, l'UE finanzia le iniziative in corso di Handicap International (0,4 milioni di euro) volte a ridurre il rischio di povertà tra le persone con disabilità, nonché un progetto attuato da HelpAge International sulle iniziative di sviluppo della comunità portate avanti dagli anziani (0,4 milioni di euro). A livello mondiale, la Commissione sostiene attualmente più di 100 progetti e programmi della società civile che si occupano di sanità (e in oltre 20 casi in modo specifico di disabilità). Tali aiuti sono complementari alle iniziative dei governi partner, che la Commissione europea sostiene in più di 30 paesi in via di sviluppo.

([1]) COM(2012)492 def.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008536/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: The work of the Yangon disabled resource centre in Myanmar/Burma

The Yangon disabled resource centre was founded in 2006, with financial and material support from the New Humanity association and from the Department of Social Affairs of Myanmar/Burma. The centre provides support to orphaned children or those with severe disabilities. The centre can currently accommodate 63 people, including adolescents.

Only 60% of the population of Myanmar/Burma can afford medical treatment but the resource centre in question also provides physiotherapy rehabilitation, leading to previously unthinkable results in a 10-year-old boy with cerebral palsy.

Article 25(1) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights lays down: 'Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including […] medical care and necessary social services […].'

The New Humanity association, which made it possible to set up the centre, is also active in Cambodia and promotes, more generally, access to education, agricultural development and the integration of disabled people.

— Is the Commission aware of any other similar organisations operating in developing countries, which help to improve the population's social and health situation?

— Does it plan to cooperate with the countries concerned in this regard?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(9 September 2013)

The communication 'The roots of democracy and sustainable development: Europe's engagement with civil society in external relations' ([1]) acknowledges the important role of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in complementing local and national government provision of social services. Their capacity to identify needs, address neglected issues and human rights concerns, and reach out to populations that are socially excluded is particularly significant.

The EU support to enhance local capacity to address the needs of people with disabilities is namely provided through projects implemented by international and local CSOs through the 'non-state actors' programme.

In Myanmar, the EU has been supporting the Ministry of Social Welfare through several specific projects, including one focusing on disabled children (EUR 0.6 million). In Cambodia, for example, the EU is supporting ongoing initiatives of Handicap International (EUR 0.4 million), aimed at reducing the vulnerability to poverty among people with disabilities, as well as a project implemented by HelpAge International on community development initiatives led by older people (EUR 0.4 million). Globally, the Commission is currently supporting more than 100 civil society projects and programmes that deal with health worldwide (of these, over 20 deal with disability specifically); this support is complementary to the partner governments' own efforts, that are as well supported by the European Commission in more than 30 developing countries.

([1]) COM(2012) 492 final.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008537/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(12 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Repressioni sulla comunità tibetana in occasione del 78° compleanno del Dalai Lama

Lo scorso 6 luglio, giorno dei festeggiamenti della comunità buddista in occasione del 78° compleanno del Dalai Lama, si è diffusa la notizia che alcuni agenti di polizia cinesi hanno ferito, a colpi di arma da fuoco, alcuni monaci tibetani riunitisi in preghiera. Tra questi, il più grave è Tashi Sonam, monaco di Nyatso, colpito alla testa e ora in gravi condizioni all'ospedale di Chengdu.

I militari, che rispondono delle loro azioni al Ministero della Difesa (non a quello dell'Interno) sono giunti sul luogo di preghiera senza alcun avvertimento e hanno dapprima lanciato lacrimogeni sulla folla, composta per lo più da monaci, e poi aperto il fuoco.

Ad oggi, sono 119 i tibetani immolatisi in segno di protesta contro la dominazione cinese, anche se il Dalai Lama ha chiesto espressamente di porre fine a questa forma di opposizione al regime, mentre da almeno trent'anni, il popolo tibetano chieda al governo di Pechino più autonomia culturale e libertà religiosa, riconosciute quali diritti fondamentali anche dalla Convenzione europea dei diritti dell'uomo agli articoli 9 e 10.

Può l'Alto Rappresentante esprimersi in merito alla vicenda e dire quali misure intende adottare l'UE al fine di promuovere il diritto alla libertà religiosa dei tibetani?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(1º ottobre 2013)

L'Unione europea ha sollevato pubblicamente la questione del Tibet in numerose occasioni. Per esempio, il 12 giugno 2012 l'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Ashton ha parlato della situazione tibetana di fronte al Parlamento europeo, il 14 dicembre 2012 ha rilasciato una dichiarazione a nome dell'UE27 sulle autoimmolazioni in Tibet e, da ultimo, il 13 marzo 2013, si è espressa sulla questione nel corso del dibattito sull'adozione della relazione del Parlamento europeo sui rapporti tra l'Unione europea e la Cina. Il Tibet viene anche menzionato sistematicamente nelle dichiarazioni dell'Unione europea presso il Consiglio per i diritti umani delle Nazioni Unite e, da ultimo, è stato citato durante la sessantesima riunione dell'Assemblea generale delle Nazioni Unite.

Durante l'ultimo dialogo UE-Cina sui diritti umani, che si è svolto a Guiyang (provincia del Guizhou) il 25 giugno 2013, la situazione in Tibet è stata fra gli argomenti al centro delle discussioni. L'UE ha esortato la Cina a rivedere la propria politica e a riprendere il dialogo con i rappresentanti del Dalai Lama. Sono stati sollevati anche casi individuali. Il SEAE continuerà a seguire la situazione e a fare presenti al governo cinese le proprie preoccupazioni in merito alla situazione in Tibet.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008537/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Oppression of the Tibetan community on the Dalai Lama's 78th birthday

According to news reports, on 6 July 2013, the day on which the Buddhist community celebrated the Dalai Lama's 78th birthday, several Chinese police officers shot and wounded a number of Tibetan monks who were praying together. The most seriously injured was Tashi Sonam, a monk from the Nyatso monastery, who was shot in the head and remains in a critical condition in hospital in Chengdu.

Police, whose actions are the responsibility of the Ministry of Defence (not the Ministry of the Interior), arrived at the prayer site unannounced and immediately fired tear gas into the crowd, which consisted mainly of monks, and then opened fire.

To date, 119 Tibetans have immolated themselves in protest at Chinese rule, although the Dalai Lama has expressly called for an end to this form of opposition to the regime, while the Tibetan people have been asking the Chinese Government for at least 30 years for more cultural autonomy and religious freedom, which are recognised as fundamental rights in Articles 9 and 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

Can the Vice-President/High Representative comment on the incident and say what steps the EU will take to promote Tibetans' right to religious freedom?

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

The EU has publicly raised the situation in Tibet on many occasions. For example, on 12 June 2012, HR/VP Ashton addressed the Tibetan situation before the European Parliament; on 14 December 2012, she made a statement on behalf of the EU-27 on Tibetan self-immolations; and on 13 March 2013 she raised Tibet during the debate on the adoption of the European Parliament's report on EU-China relations. Tibet is also highlighted regularly in EU statements at the UN Human Rights Council, most recently during the 60th session of the UN General Assembly.

During the most recent EU-China Human Rights Dialogue, which took place in Guiyang (Guizhou province) on 25 June 2013, the situation in Tibet was one of the issues substantially discussed. The EU urged China to revise its policy and resume dialogue with the representatives of the Dalai Lama. Individual cases were also raised. The EEAS will continue to monitor the situation and raise its concerns over the situation in Tibet with the Chinese Government.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008538/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(12 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Pubblicazione delle sentenze della Suprema Corte cinese

È notizia recente che la Suprema Corte di Pechino ha deciso di pubblicare in Internet le proprie sentenze, comprese quelle attinenti alla verifica delle condanne a morte stabilite dalle corti di grado inferiore, ma con l'eccezione — ancora non chiarita riguardo al suo significato — delle decisioni «che riguardano il paese e l'economia».

Considerando anzitutto che esistono ancora vincoli alla pubblicazione delle pronunce giudiziali della Corte, le quali debbono necessariamente ottenere l'approvazione del Partito Comunista cinese;

osservando, inoltre, come la pubblicazione delle decisioni riguardi solo quelle emesse dalla Suprema Corte, in quanto la norma non impone lo stesso obbligo anche ai tribunali di grado inferiore, dove spesso manca il principio di trasparenza dell'attività giudiziale;

sottolineando come ciò possa pregiudicare anche i cittadini comunitari che, recatisi in Cina, siano coinvolti in procedimenti civili e penali radicati nelle corti cinesi, perché impossibilitati spesso a conoscere le motivazioni delle sentenze emesse da tali corti;

evidenziando infine il primo paragrafo dell'articolo 6 della Convenzione europea dei diritti dell'uomo, nella parte in cui prevede espressamente che la sentenza debba essere resa pubblicamente;

si chiede alla Commissione quali misure intenda promuovere, nell'interesse dei suoi cittadini, affinché la Cina armonizzi e migliori la propria legislazione in tema di pubblicazione delle pronunce giudiziali.

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

L'Unione europea sostiene e difende da sempre la trasparenza nell'amministrazione della giustizia, che costituisce un mezzo per rafforzare lo stato di diritto. L'Unione vedrebbe pertanto con favore la decisione della Corte suprema cinese e degli altri tribunali di grado inferiore di pubblicare prontamente le loro sentenze.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008538/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Publication of the Chinese Supreme Court's judgments

According to recent news, the Beijing Supreme Court has decided to publish its judgments online, including those substantiating death sentences handed down by courts of lower instance, but with the exception of decisions 'concerning the country and the economy', the meaning of which remains unclear.

Above all, there are still restrictions on the publication of the Court's judgments, which have to be approved by the Chinese Communist Party.

Moreover, only decisions handed down by the Supreme Court will be published, since the law does not impose the same obligation on courts of lower instance, where the principle of transparency is often lacking in legal proceedings.

This may also harm EU citizens in China who are involved in civil and criminal proceedings in Chinese courts, because it is often impossible for them to understand the grounds on which judgments are issued by those courts.

Lastly, Article 6(1) of the European Convention of Human Rights expressly lays down that judgments shall be pronounced publicly.

What does the Commission plan to do, in the interest of EU citizens, to encourage China to harmonise and improve its legislation on the publication of court judgments?

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

The EU consistently supports and advocates transparency in the administration of justice as a means to enhance the rule of law and would therefore welcome any decision by China's Supreme Court and other courts and tribunals to publish their judgments promptly.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008539/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(12 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Vescovo di Shangai da un anno agli arresti domiciliari

Monsignor Taddeo Ma Daqin, vescovo di Shangai, è costretto agli arresti domiciliari fin dal giorno della sua ordinazione avvenuta il 7 luglio 2012.

Dopo un periodo di domiciliazione coattiva nel seminario di Sheshan, di monsignor Ma Daquin si sono perse le tracce e alcune fonti lo indicano ora prigioniero a Shangai, presso l'istituto del socialismo, mentre altre lo vorrebbero a Pechino.

Da alcuni mesi il governo di Pechino gli ha revocato il titolo ecclesiastico di vescovo coadiutore per violazione dei regolamenti religiosi cinesi.

Inoltre va tenuto presente il contenuto della dichiarazione delle Nazioni Unite sull'eliminazione di tutte le forme di intolleranza e di discriminazione fondate sulla religione o il credo del 1981 e le relazioni del relatore speciale delle Nazioni Unite sulla libertà di religione o di credo, soprattutto quelle del 29 dicembre 2009, del 16 febbraio 2010 e del 29 luglio 2010;

Infine occorre ricordare la portata della risoluzione P7_TA(2011)0021 del 20 gennaio 2011 sulla situazione dei cristiani nel contesto della libertà religiosa, in particolare nella parte in cui «condanna fermamente ogni atto di violenza contro cristiani e altre comunità religiose, come pure tutti i tipi di discriminazione e intolleranza basati sulla religione e la fede contro chi pratica una religione, gli apostati e i non credenti; sottolinea ancora una volta che il diritto alla libertà di pensiero, di coscienza e di religione è un diritto umano fondamentale».

Può la Commissione precisare:

— se sia a conoscenza della vicenda;

— se intende stabilire un dialogo con la Cina al fine di determinare la liberazione di monsignor Ma Daqin?

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

La Commissione è al corrente che Monsignor Ma Daqin, vescovo di Shanghai, è agli arresti domiciliari dal giorno in cui è stato ordinato.

L'UE sostiene la libertà di religione e di credo in tutto il mondo. Il 24 giugno 2013 il Consiglio ha adottato nuovi orientamenti in materia di promozione e protezione della libertà di religione, nei quali si riconosce il diritto alla libertà di pensiero, coscienza e religione quali diritti fondamentali di ogni essere umano.

La libertà di religione e credo, compreso il rispetto della fede cristiana, è stata oggetto di discussione durante l'ultimo dialogo sui diritti umani fra l'UE e la Cina a Guiyang (provincia di Guizhou) il 25 giugno 2013 e in una riunione con l'amministrazione statale degli affari religiosi a Pechino il 26 giugno 2013. L'UE continuerà a monitorare la situazione e a sollevare la questione della libertà di religione con le autorità cinesi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008539/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Bishop of Shanghai under house arrest for a year

The Bishop of Shanghai, Monsignor Thaddeus Ma Daqin, has been under house arrest since the day of his ordination on 7 July 2012.

Since being forced to live in the Sheshan seminary for a time, there has been no trace of Monsignor Ma Daqin and, according to some sources, he is now being held prisoner at the Shanghai Institute of Socialism, while, according to others, he is in Beijing.

Several months ago, the Chinese Government stripped him of the ecclesiastical title of auxiliary bishop for having breached Chinese religious regulations.

Moreover, the content of the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief of 1981 and reports by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief, particularly those of 29 December 2009, 16 February 2010 and 29 July 2010, should be borne in mind.

Lastly, it is worth remembering here resolution P7_TA(2011)0021 of 20 January 2011 on the situation of Christians in the context of freedom of religion, and particularly the part that 'strongly condemns all acts of violence against Christians and other religious communities as well as all kinds of discrimination and intolerance based on religion and belief against religious people, apostates and non-believers;' and 'stresses once again that the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion is a fundamental human right.'

— Is the Commission aware of this situation?

— Will it enter into a dialogue with China to secure the release of Monsignor Ma Daqin?

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

The Commision is aware that Monsignor Ma Daqin, Bishop of Shanghai has been under house arrest since the day of his ordination.

The EU supports freedom of religion and belief throughout the world. On 24 June 2013 the Council adopted new guidelines on the promotion and protection of freedom of religion, recognising the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion as a fundamental right of every human being.

Freedom of religion and belief, including respect for the Christian faith, was discussed at the last EU-China Human Rights Dialogue, in Guiyang (Guizhou province) on 25 June 2013 and in a meeting with the State Administration of Religious Affairs in Beijing on 26 June 2013. The EU will continue to monitor the situation and raise the issue of freedom of religion with the Chinese authorities.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008540/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(12 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Attentato contro l'albero sacro ai buddisti nel complesso di Bodh Gaya in India

È notizia recente che nove esplosioni hanno colpito il tempio buddista di Bodh Gaya, nello stato indiano del Bihar, dove la tradizione vuole che Siddartha Gautama abbia raggiunto l'illuminazione. Il complesso, secondo fonti giornalistiche, avrebbe riportato lievi danni, mentre alcuni monaci sarebbero stati feriti.

Il tempio è stato nominato patrimonio dell'umanità dall'Unesco e il sito accoglie, oltre che l'albero sacro ai fedeli buddisti, anche il santuario di Mahabodhi, di interesse internazionale per la sua architettura e l'arte in esso contenuta.

Inoltre la polizia indiana ha ricondotto il gesto al gruppo di estremisti islamici degli Indian Mujahideen, che hanno minacciato di compiere attentati, con modalità analoghe, anche in altri luoghi sacri al buddismo così da ottenere maggiore riconoscimento a livello internazionale.

Infine esiste l'impegno dell'Unione europea di tutelare il patrimonio artistico e culturale di paesi ad alto rischio di attentati in casi analoghi, ad esempio con riferimento alla Bosnia dove nel 2012 è stato realizzato un progetto pilota per la conservazione e recupero del patrimonio culturale nelle aree di conflitto.

Può la Commissione riferire:

— se è a conoscenza delle esplosioni verificatesi nel tempio buddista di Bodh Gaya;

— se e come intende procedere a tutela del patrimonio culturale locale, anche in considerazione delle implicazioni religiose che lo contraddistinguono?

Risposta di Androulla Vassiliou a nome della Commissione
(21 agosto 2013)

La Commissione è a conoscenza delle esplosioni avvenute nel complesso del tempio di Bodh Gaya in India ed esprime il proprio dispiacimento per questo attacco a un sito di fama internazionale e di rilevanza religiosa e culturale.

La protezione di questo tempio e di altri siti di rilevanza culturale locale rientra essenzialmente nelle competenze delle autorità locali e nazionali del Bihar e dell'India. L'Unione europea non ha sottoscritto la convenzione sul patrimonio dell'umanità delle Nazioni Unite e ha competenze limitate per intervenire in relazione alla tutela, alla conservazione e la restauro del patrimonio culturale. Conformemente all'articolo 167 del trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea l'azione dell'UE si limita ad incoraggiare la cooperazione tra Stati membri e ad appoggiare e ad integrare l'azione di questi ultimi ai fini della conservazione e salvaguardia del patrimonio culturale di importanza europea.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008540/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Attack on the Buddhist holy tree at the Bodh Gaya complex in India

According to recent news reports, nine explosions have struck the Bodh Gaya Buddhist temple in the Indian state of Bihar, where, according to tradition, Siddartha Gautama attained enlightenment. According to press sources, the complex was slightly damaged, while several monks were injured.

The temple is a Unesco world heritage site and, as well as the Buddhist holy tree, is home to the Mahabodhi shrine, which is internationally renowned for its architecture and the artworks inside it.

Moreover, the Indian police have linked the attack to the Indian Mujahideen Islamic extremist group, which has threatened to carry out similar attacks at other Buddhist holy sites in order to raise its international profile.

Lastly, the European Union is committed to protecting the artistic and cultural heritage of countries at high risk of attacks in similar cases, as in Bosnia for example, where a pilot project was conducted in 2012 to preserve and recover cultural heritage in conflict areas.

— Is the Commission aware of the explosions that took place at the Bodh Gaya Buddhist temple?

— Does it intend to protect the local cultural heritage, also in view of its religious significance, and, if so, how?

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

The Commission is aware of the explosions which took place at the Bodh Gaya Buddhist temple in India and regrets this attack on a heritage site of international renown and religious and cultural significance.

Protecting this temple and other local cultural heritage is primarily a matter for the local and national authorities in Bihar and India. The European Union is not a party to the United Nations Convention on World Heritage and has limited competence to intervene with regard to the protection, conservation and renovation of cultural heritage. In accordance with Article 167 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, EU action is limited to encouraging cooperation between Member States and supporting and supplementing their action, with a view to conserving and safeguarding cultural heritage of European significance.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008541/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(12 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Impegno del neo-eletto Presidente iraniano di liberare alcuni prigionieri di coscienza e rivedere il programma nucleare

Nel suo primo discorso pubblico, il neo-eletto Presidente dell'Iran Hassan Rouhani ha affermato che «un governo forte non è quello che pone dei limiti alla vita delle persone».

Il nuovo Capo di stato è risultato vincitore delle consultazioni dello scorso 17 giugno con il 50,7 % delle preferenze; durante la campagna elettorale egli si è impegnato con il popolo iraniano a eliminare le restrizioni alla libertà personale imposte dal suo predecessore Ahmadinejād fin delle rivolte del 2009 (l'Onda Verde).

Rouhani ha inoltre promesso ai suoi sostenitori, durante la campagna elettorale, di liberare gli esponenti dell'opposizione Mir-Hossein Mousavi e Mehdi Karroubi, incarcerati nel 2009 per il loro sostegno alle rivolte di intellettuali e studenti.

Il Presidente si è altresì impegnato a rivedere il programma nucleare intrapreso dal precedente governo malgrado l'opposizione della comunità internazionale e le sanzioni finanziarie imposte dall'Unione europea.

Alla luce di quanto sopra, si chiede all'Alto Rappresentante Ashton:

— se l'Unione europea intenda monitorare la liberazione dei prigionieri di coscienza in Iran;

— quali misure intenda promuovere per sostenere la cessazione del programma nucleare nel paese.

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

L'Unione europea segue da vicino la situazione dei diritti umani in Iran, compresa la questione della liberazione dei prigionieri politici. Il presidente eletto Hassan Rohani ha garantito maggiore attenzione ai timori della comunità internazionale in merito alla situazione dei diritti umani nel paese e l'AR/VP spera che questo impegno sarà rispettato. L'UE vigilerà attentamente su eventuali sviluppi al riguardo.

Per quanto concerne il programma nucleare iraniano, l'UE conferma il proprio impegno a lavorare con la nuova leadership del paese per una soluzione diplomatica basata su un duplice approccio, nel contesto E3/UE+3. Ulteriori sforzi diplomatici saranno intrapresi dopo l'insediamento del nuovo presidente.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008541/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — New Iranian President's pledge to release certain prisoners of conscience and to review Iran's nuclear programme

In his first public speech, the newly elected President of Iran, Hassan Rouhani, said that a strong government was not one that 'limits the lives of the people'.

The new head of state won the election of 17 June 2013 with 50.7% of the vote; during the election campaign he made a pledge to the Iranian people that he would remove the restrictions on personal freedom imposed by his predecessor, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, after the 2009 protests (the Green Revolution).

During the election campaign President Rouhani also promised his supporters that he would free the opposition figures Mir Hossein Mousavi and Mehdi Karroubi, who were imprisoned in 2009 for supporting the protests by intellectuals and students.

The President has also pledged to review the nuclear programme begun by the previous government despite opposition from the international community and the financial sanctions imposed by the European Union.

In view of the above, can the High Representative state:

— whether the European Union intends to monitor the release of prisoners of conscience in Iran;

— what action she will take to support the cessation of Iran's nuclear programme?

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

The European Union has been already monitoring the human rights situation in Iran, including the release of political prisoners. President-elect Hassan Rohani has pledged that he will be more receptive to the concerns of the international community over the human rights situation in the country. The HR/VP hope that Dr Rohani will live up to this pledge. The EU will closely follow any developments in this regard.

Concerning the Iranian nuclear file, the EU remains committed to work with the new Iranian leadership on a diplomatic solution based on double-track approach, within E3/EU+3 framework. Further diplomatic efforts will take place after the inauguration of the new president.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008542/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(12 luglio 2013)

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

In riferimento alla formulazione ed ai quesiti posti dall'interrogazione relativa al comune di Montale (E-004017/2013), la risposta della Commissione sembra non approfondire alcuni aspetti specifici legati alla spesa produttiva.

Il Consiglio ECOFIN del 5 marzo 2013 ha adottato conclusioni specifiche sulla qualità della spesa pubblica al fine di creare un ambiente favorevole alla crescita, anche attraverso l'adozione di pratiche di gestione pubblica basate sui risultati. La stessa Commissione ha peraltro più volte ribadito (interrogazioni E-004023/2013 ed E-004142/2013), che il patto di stabilità e crescita contiene disposizioni che consentono una certa flessibilità per tener conto della spesa per investimenti (i cosiddetti «fattori significativi»).

Inoltre, il Presidente della Commissione Barroso ha annunciato, lo scorso 3 luglio, che nel valutare i bilanci nazionali per il 2014, così come i risultati di bilancio del 2013, saranno valutate deviazioni temporanee per spese con un impatto di bilancio positivo, diretto e verificabile.

Tutto ciò premesso, e relativamente ai quesiti posti riguardo al Comune di Montale, si chiede alla Commissione:

— quali misure possono essere adottate, nell'ambito dei fattori del patto di stabilità e crescita, per stimolare crescita e occupazione utili anche per le amministrazioni locali;

— quali altri misure possono essere messe in atto nei confronti delle amministrazioni, soprattutto locali, per finanziare e completare i pagamenti relativi gli investimenti di pubblica utilità;

— di fornire un quadro generale della situazione.

Risposta di Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione
(3 settembre 2013)

Lo stanziamento di bilancio delle risorse pubbliche ai vari livelli di governo rientra fra le responsabilità di ogni Stato membro.

Il 9 luglio 2013 il Consiglio, su raccomandazione della Commissione, ha invitato l'Italia a «continuare a perseguire un miglioramento duraturo dell'efficienza e della qualità della spesa pubblica» (raccomandazione del Consiglio, del 9 luglio 2013, sul programma nazionale di riforma 2013 dell'Italia e che formula un parere del Consiglio sul programma di stabilità dell'Italia 2012-2017, Gazzetta ufficiale C 217 de 30.7.2013, pag. 42), che aiuterà ad assicurare che il consolidamento di bilancio, necessario per far calare il rapporto debito pubblico/PIL attualmente molto elevato, agevoli la crescita e sia equo.

Inoltre, in una lettera inviata il 3 luglio ai ministri delle Finanze, il Vicepresidente Rehn ha confermato che, per valutare i bilanci nazionali per il 2014 e i risultati di bilancio del 2013, per i paesi nel braccio preventivo del patto di stabilità e crescita, la Commissione considererà la possibilità di consentire deviazioni temporanee dal previsto andamento strutturale del disavanzo negli obiettivi a medio termine definiti nelle raccomandazioni specifiche per i singoli paesi, o negli obiettivi a medio termine per gli Stati membri che lo hanno raggiunto, a condizione che:

1. la crescita economica dello Stato membro resti negativa o abbondantemente al di sotto delle potenzialità;

2. la deviazione non comporti un superamento del tetto del 3 % del PIL stabilito per il disavanzo e la regola del debito pubblico sia rispettata;

3. la deviazione sia collegata alla spesa nazionale per progetti cofinanziati dall'UE a titolo della politica strutturale e di coesione, delle reti transeuropee (TEN) e del meccanismo per collegare l'Europa (CEF) con conseguenze positive, dirette e verificabili sul bilancio a lungo termine.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008542/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

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

With regard to the questions asked in Question E-004017/2013 on the municipality of Montale, the Commission's answer does not go into detail on any specific aspects of productive expenditure.

At the Ecofin Council meeting of 5 March 2013 specific conclusions were adopted on the quality of public expenditure in order to create an environment conducive to growth, including through the adoption of performance-based public management practices. Moreover, the Commission itself has reiterated on several occasions, as in its answers to Questions E-004023/2013 and E-004142/2013, that the Stability and Growth Pact contains provisions allowing for a certain degree of flexibility to account for investment expenditure ('relevant factors').

Moreover, President Barroso announced on 3 July 2013 that temporary deviations would be considered for expenditure having a positive, direct and verifiable impact on the budget when assessing the national budgets for 2014 and the budgetary outcomes for 2013.

In view of the questions about the municipality of Montale:

— What steps can be taken, in the framework of Stability and Growth Pact factors, to stimulate growth and employment and which are also useful for local authorities?

— What other measures can be put in place for authorities, especially local authorities, to finance and supplement payments for investments in the public interest?

— Can the Commission provide an overview of the situation?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(3 September 2013)

The budgetary allocation of public resources within and across the different levels of government is a prerogative of each Member State.

On 9 July 2013 the Council, upon a recommendation of the Commission, recommended Italy to 'continue pursuing a durable improvement of the efficiency and quality of public expenditure' (Council Recommendation of 9 July 2013 on the National Reform Programme 2013 of Italy and delivering a Council opinion on the Stability Programme of Italy, 2012-2017, Official Journal C 217, 30/07/2013, p. 42) which will help ensure that the process of fiscal consolidation, necessary to bring the very high government debt-to-GDP ratio onto a declining path, is growth-friendly and equitable.

Furthermore, Vice-President Rehn, in a letter sent to finance ministers on 3rd of July, confirmed that when assessing the national budgets for 2014 and the budgetary outcomes for 2013, for countries in the preventive arm of the Stability and Growth Pact, the Commission will consider allowing temporary deviations from the structural deficit path towards the medium-term objectives (MTO) set in the country specific recommendations, or the MTO for Member States that have reached it, provided that:

1. the economic growth of the Member State remains negative or well below its potential;

2. the deviation does not lead to a breach of the 3% of GDP deficit ceiling, and the public debt rule is respected;

3. the deviation is linked to the national expenditure on projects co-funded by the EU under the Structural and Cohesion policy, Trans-European Networks (TEN) and Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) with positive, direct and verifiable long-term budgetary effect.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008543/13
alla Commissione
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(12 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Mancata eradicazione della malattia vescicolare del suino e della peste suina africana nel sud Italia

Ormai da decenni, in Calabria e in Campania è nota la presenza di focolai della malattia vescicolare del suino, mentre, fin dal 1978, in Sardegna è diffusa la peste suina africana (PSA). Il permanere di tali focolai morbigeni costituisce un grave ostacolo per lo sviluppo dell'attività di esportazione delle produzioni suinicole italiane, poiché, sebbene l'Unione europea, applicando il principio della regionalizzazione veterinaria, riconosca il territorio italiano diverso dalle Regioni Calabria e Campania come indenne da malattia vescicolare, e quello diverso dalla Sardegna indenne dalla PSA, la maggior parte dei Paesi terzi adotta divieti all'importazione di carni suine e prodotti derivati dall'Italia intera, consentendo solo l'importazione di salumi a lunga stagionatura o cotti.

Considerato che, nonostante tali limitazioni, l'export italiano di carni suine e derivati verso i Paesi terzi raggiunge un valore di oltre 280 milioni di EUR l'anno, il danno derivante all'industria italiana del settore dalle restrizioni suddette è stimabile in 240-260 milioni di EUR annui.

Va poi rilevato che lo Stato italiano e la Comunità europea, nel tentativo di eradicare le patologie in oggetto, hanno più volte elargito indennizzi agli allevatori delle zone colpite, indennizzi sovente di entità superiore al valore dei suini sani; tuttavia, i piani di eradicazione si sono rivelati, all'atto pratico, inefficaci. Nel solo anno 2013 l'Unione europea ha stanziato 1,4 milioni di EUR a favore di interventi per l'eradicazione e il controllo della PSA in Sardegna, e tuttavia la situazione permane immutata.

In considerazione del duplice danno derivante all'economia italiana da tale stato di cose, ossia il danno legato alle mancate esportazioni e quello dovuto allo spreco di fondi pubblici impiegati nel vano tentativo di debellare i due morbi in questione, può la Commissione fornire dati dettagliati su quanto è stato speso negli ultimi dieci anni dall'Unione europea e dallo Stato italiano per i piani di eradicazione di dette patologie, su quanto è stato speso negli ultimi 10 anni dall'Unione europea e dallo Stato italiano per gli indennizzi agli allevatori delle regioni interessate e, infine, sull'entità dei fondi PAC destinati a queste tre regioni, anche in proporzione al numero dei capi, agli ettari coltivati e alle altre variabili rilevanti?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(3 settembre 2013)

I dati richiesti dall'onorevole deputato in merito alle misure di eradicazione sono consultabili nella tabella allegata.

Le cifre ivi riportate corrispondono al 50 % dell'importo ammissibile. Della seconda metà di tale importo si sono fatte carico le autorità italiane. La Commissione europea non dispone di informazioni sugli importi pagati dall'Italia al di là delle misure ammissibili.

Per quanto concerne la spesa legata all'indennizzo degli allevatori nelle regioni interessate, le statistiche relative a tali pagamenti sono compilate soltanto a livello di Stato membro e possono essere reperite sull'apposito sito web ([1]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/cap-funding/financial-reports/index_en.htm .

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008543/13
to the Commission
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Failure to eradicate swine vesicular disease and African swine fever in southern Italy

For decades now, outbreaks of swine vesicular disease have been recorded in Calabria and Campania, while African swine fever (ASF) has been widespread in Sardinia since 1978. These constant outbreaks of disease are seriously hindering the development of Italy's pigmeat export industry, because, although the European Union applies the veterinary regionalisation principle and has accordingly recognised Italy as free from vesicular disease (apart from in the regions of Calabria and Campania) and from ASF (apart from in Sardinia), most non-EU countries prohibit imports of pigmeat and pigmeat products from the whole of Italy, only allowing imports of cured meats that have been cooked or that have had a long maturation period.

Considering that, in spite of these restrictions, Italian exports of pigmeat and pigmeat products to non-EU countries generate more than EUR 280 million per year, the damage caused by those restrictions to the Italian sector in question is an estimated EUR 240-260 million per year.

It should also be noted that the Italian State and the European Union, in an effort to eradicate the diseases in question, have on several occasions paid compensation to farmers in the affected areas, with the sums often exceeding the value of their healthy pigs; however, the eradication plans have proven ineffective in practice. In 2013 alone, the European Union has contributed EUR 1.4 million towards measures to eradicate and control ASF in Sardinia, but the situation remains unchanged.

Given that this situation is damaging the Italian economy in two ways, because of the lack of exports and because public funds are being wasted in a vain attempt to eradicate the two diseases in question, can the Commission provide details of how much the European Union and the Italian State have spent in the last 10 years on plans to eradicate these diseases, how much the European Union and the Italian State have spent in the last 10 years on compensating farmers in the regions concerned and, finally, how much CAP funding has been allocated to these three regions, including in relation to the number of animals, the hectares cultivated and the other relevant variables?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(3 September 2013)

The data requested by the Honourable Member concerning the eradication measures can be found in the enclosed table.

The figures shown correspond to 50% of the eligible amount. The other part thereof was supported by the Italian authorities. The European Commission has no information on the amounts paid by Italy on top of the eligible measures.

As far as the expenditure related to compensating farmers in the regions concerned the statistics for these payments are only made on Member State level and can be found on the following website ([1]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/cap-funding/financial-reports/index_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008544/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Barbara Matera (PPE)
(12 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Situazione in Nigeria

Un commando di estremisti islamici ha recentemente attaccato un liceo a Mamudo, nello Stato nord-orientale di Yobe, Nigeria nord-orientale, uccidendo 42 persone. I superstiti hanno raccontato che gli assalitori hanno dato fuoco al collegio e che alcuni ragazzi sono morti tra le fiamme. Secondo fonti ospedaliere la maggior parte delle vittime sono studenti, ma anche un insegnante e dipendenti ausiliari hanno perso la vita.

Si ritiene che gli assalitori appartengano alla setta ultra-radicale Boko Haram: la strage sarebbe stata una rappresaglia per l'uccisione, il 6 luglio scorso, di 22 loro compagni in occasione di un'incursione delle truppe governative nella vicina cittadina di Dogon Kuka. Ricerche sono in corso nella boscaglia che circonda il villaggio, alla ricerca di altri giovani datisi alla fuga per sottrarsi alla carneficina: finora ne sono stati tratti in salvo sei, tutti seriamente feriti e adesso ricoverati in ospedale.

Alcuni genitori hanno protestato per la mancanza di forze militari o di polizia a presidio della scuola, nonostante lo stato d'emergenza in vigore da metà maggio in tre Stati nigeriani, compreso quello di Yobe. Un altro eccidio è stato frattanto perpetrato nello Stato centrale di Benue, dove pastori musulmani di etnia Fulani hanno assaltato un agglomerato abitato da agricoltori, per lo più cristiani appartenenti al gruppo Tiv. Numerose case sono state bruciate e, secondo i mass media locali, venti persone avrebbero perso la vita. Le violenze legate ai diritti di pascolo sono frequenti nel paese africano e, nelle regioni centrali, sono spesso associate alle tensioni inter-religiose.

A tal proposito, si chiede al Vice-Presidente/Alto Rappresentante quanto segue:

La Commissione può adottare misure affinché nella Nigeria nord-orientale siano ripristinate condizioni di sicurezza accettabili?

Considerando che il gruppo Boko Haram ritiene l'insegnamento nelle scuole pubbliche un fattore di corruzione, contrario ai dettami dell'Islam, cosa può fare l'Europa affinché non siano ridotti la disponibilità e l'accesso all'istruzione per i bambini nigeriani?

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

L'UE collabora con il governo e la popolazione della Nigeria per contribuire a porre fine all'attuale ciclo di violenza, sia nell'ambito di un dialogo politico costante su soluzioni adeguate ai problemi che attraverso interventi mirati a sostegno di iniziative nigeriane. L'UE ha adottato un approccio globale in materia di sicurezza, governance e sviluppo per aiutare la Nigeria ad affrontare l'attuale crisi di sicurezza e le sue cause di fondo. Il 10° FES sostiene un'ampia gamma di programmi e interventi relativi alla governance nei settori delle risorse idriche, degli impianti igienico-sanitari e della salute materna. Lo strumento per la stabilità sostiene numerosi programmi di pacificazione e mediazione e prossimamente verrà fornita ulteriore assistenza nel settore della sicurezza e dello Stato di diritto.

La disponibilità e l'accessibilità dell'istruzione costituivano un problema nel nord-est della Nigeria già prima dell'attuale stato di emergenza. La situazione è stata ulteriormente aggravata dallo stato di emergenza, dagli scontri tra militari e insorti e dagli attacchi subiti da numerose scuole nelle scorse settimane. Inoltre, la grave situazione socioeconomica di queste zone delle Nigeria favorisce la radicalizzazione ad opera dei fondamentalisti islamici. L'UE sta aiutando le autorità nigeriane a ripristinare la pace, a combattere la radicalizzazione e a promuovere lo sviluppo, onde contribuire a creare un contesto stabile che favorisca la disponibilità e l'accessibilità dell'istruzione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008544/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Barbara Matera (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Situation in Nigeria

A group of Islamic extremists recently attacked a secondary school in Mamudo, in Yobe State, north-eastern Nigeria, killing 42 people. According to survivors, the attackers set fire to the school and several children died in the blaze. According to hospital sources, most of the victims were students but a teacher and some assistants were also killed.

The attackers are believed to be part of the ultra-radical sect Boko Haram. The massacre was carried out in retaliation for the killing of 22 of their comrades in a raid by government troops in the neighbouring town of Dogon Kuka on 6 July 2013. The scrubland surrounding the village is being searched for any other youngsters who fled the carnage. Six have been found alive up to now, all seriously wounded and now in hospital.

Some parents have complained that there was no military or police force to protect the school, despite the state of emergency in force in three Nigerian states, including Yobe, since mid-May. In the meantime, another massacre has taken place in the central state of Benue, where Fulani Muslim herdsmen attacked a settlement inhabited by farmers, mostly Tiv Christians. Many houses were burned and, according to local media, 20 people were killed. Violence linked to grazing rights is a frequent occurrence in Nigeria and, in central regions, violence is often related to tensions between different religious groups.

Can the Commission take action so that an acceptable level of safety is restored in north-eastern Nigeria?

Given that Boko Haram considers teaching in public schools to be a corrupting influence that goes against the teachings of Islam, what can Europe do so that there is no restriction on the availability of education and on Nigerian children's access to it?

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

The EU is working with the government and people of Nigeria to help bring an end to the current cycle of violence through both continuous political dialogue on appropriate solutions to the problems, as well as targeted aid interventions in support of Nigerian initiatives. Through a comprehensive approach targeting security, governance and development the EU is assisting Nigeria to tackle the current security crisis and its underlying root causes. The 10th EDF is supporting a broad range of governance related programmes and interventions in the field of water, sanitation and maternal health. The Instrument for Stability is supporting several peace and mediation programmes and further assistance in the area of security and the rule of law will start soon.

The availability of, and access to education is already a problem in the North-East of Nigeria without the current emergency state. The emergency state, the fighting between military and insurgents and the attacks on several schools in the past weeks make the situation even worse. In addition, the dire socioeconomic situation in these parts of Nigeria is providing an enabling environment for the radicalisation efforts by Islamic fundamentalists. Against this background the EU is helping the Nigerian authorities to restore peace, to combat radicalisation and to enhance development in order to contribute to an enabling and stable environment that favours availability and accessability of education.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008545/13
ao Conselho
Edite Estrela (S&D)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Revisão da Diretiva Licença de Maternidade

O processo de revisão da Diretiva Licença de Maternidade começou em 2008 com a apresentação da proposta da Comissão. Em 20 de outubro de 2010, o Parlamento adotou a sua posição. Até agora, o Conselho ainda não tomou uma posição formal sobre a proposta. Esta iniciativa legislativa integra o denominado pacote de conciliação. Das três propostas deste pacote, só a revisão da Diretiva Licença de Maternidade aguarda ainda pela posição do Conselho.

O Parlamento já demonstrou por diversas vezes abertura e flexibilidade para trabalhar em conjunto com o Conselho, para se chegar a um acordo equilibrado que satisfaça as necessidades e expectativas das famílias europeias.

Quando é que o Conselho vai tomar uma decisão sobre esta proposta que defende a segurança e a saúde das mulheres no local de trabalho, promove a conciliação entre a vida familiar e a vida profissional e contribui para travar o declínio demográfico, um dos mais graves desafios que a UE enfrenta?

Resposta
(16 de setembro de 2013)

Desde que o Parlamento Europeu adotou o seu parecer em outubro de 2010, não foi possível atingir o requisito da maioria qualificada para a adoção de uma posição em primeira leitura pelo Conselho.

O Conselho não está em condições de antecipar o resultado nem a duração das negociações.

Dado o enorme fosso existente entre o parecer do Parlamento Europeu em primeira leitura e o entendimento do Conselho, seria necessário um enorme grau de flexibilidade para quebrar o atual impasse.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008545/13
to the Council
Edite Estrela (S&D)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Revision of the Maternity Leave Directive

The process of revising the Maternity Leave Directive began in 2008 when the Commission tabled its proposal. Parliament adopted its position on 20 October 2010. To date, the Council has not yet adopted a formal position on the proposal. This legislative initiative is part of what is known as the reconciliation package. Of the package's three proposals, only the revision of the Maternity Leave Directive is still awaiting the Council's position.

Parliament has already demonstrated several times openness and flexibility towards working alongside the Council to reach a balanced agreement that meets the needs and expectations of European families.

When will the Council reach a decision on this proposal that defends the health and safety of women in the workplace, promotes the reconciliation of professional and family life and helps to stem demographic decline, which is one of the most serious challenges that the EU faces?

Reply
(16 September 2013)

Since the European Parliament adopted its Opinion in October 2010, it has not been possible to reach the requisite qualified majority for the adoption of a position at first reading by the Council.

The Council is not in a position to anticipate the outcome or duration of the negotiations.

Given the considerable gulf between the Parliament's first reading opinion and the Council's views, a substantial degree of flexibility would be necessary to break the current deadlock.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008546/13
an die Kommission
Jan Philipp Albrecht (Verts/ALE)
(12. Juli 2013)

Betrifft: PRISM, Tempora und andere Überwachungsprogramme

In den letzten Wochen gelangten wichtige Enthüllungen über umfassende internationale Überwachungssysteme, die von den Vereinigten Staaten, vom Vereinigten Königreich und von Frankreich eingesetzt werden, sowie über die gezielte Überwachung von EU-Büros an die Öffentlichkeit. Durch Programme wie PRISM und Tempora werden die Grundrechte der europäischen Bürger und der Menschen weltweit untergraben.

In einer Entschließung vom 2. Juli 2013 ([1]) verurteilte das Parlament dieses Ausspionieren und forderte, unverzüglich Maßnahmen in einer Reihe von Bereichen zu ergreifen. Die Kommission hat ebenfalls Bedenken über die unlängst aufgedeckten Systeme zur Massenüberwachung geäußert.

1. Sind Daten, die durch Tempora oder andere Programme der „Government Communications Headquarters" (GCHQ) bezogen wurden, in Verbindung mit dem britischen „e-Border"-Programm (Fluggastdatensätze/PNR) genutzt worden, um Personenprofile zu erstellen?

2. Kann sich die Kommission der vom „Electronic Privacy Information Center" (EPIC — Informationszentrum über elektronischen Datenschutz) vor dem Obersten Gerichtshof der Vereinigten Staaten eingereichten Klage gegen PRISM und andere entsprechende Programme als ein „Amicus Curiae" anschließen? Erwägt die Kommission, dies zu tun?

3. Hat die Kommission vor dem Hintergrund des Programms Tempora unter Verweis auf die Bestimmungen der Datenschutzrichtlinie für die elektronische Kommunikation, auf Artikel 16 AEUV sowie auf die Artikel 7, 8 und 11 der Charta der Grundrechte Vertragsverletzungsverfahren gegen das Vereinigte Königreich eingeleitet?

4. Hat die Kommission vor dem Hintergrund der Informationen über die Überwachungsprogramme im Bereich der Telekommunikation unter Verweis auf die Bestimmungen der Datenschutzrichtlinie für die elektronische Kommunikation, auf Artikel 16 AEUV sowie auf die Artikel 7, 8 und 11 der Charta der Grundrechte Vertragsverletzungsverfahren gegen weitere Mitgliedstaaten eingeleitet?

5. Welche Schutzklauseln hat die Kommission in den EU-Vorschlag über die Verwendung von Fluggastdatensätzen eingebaut, um jegliche Querverweise zwischen Fluggastdatensätzen und Daten, die von Nachrichtendiensten illegal erhalten wurden, zu verhindern? Wie werden derartige Schutzklauseln durchgesetzt werden?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(19. September 2013)

Aufgabe der Behörden der Mitgliedstaaten, unter anderem der Datenschutzbehörden ist es, gegenüber öffentlichen und privaten Einrichtungen in der Europäischen Union für die korrekte Anwendung und Durchsetzung der EU-Datenschutzvorschriften zu sorgen. Die Kommission hat in ihrer Funktion als Hüterin der Verträge die Berichterstattung in den Medien über die angeblichen Praktiken im Vereinigten Königreich verfolgt und ist entsprechend tätig geworden. Insbesondere hat sie die Behörden des Vereinigten Königreichs um Aufklärung über den Umfang des sogenannten „Tempora-Programms" gebeten, über seine Verhältnismäßigkeit und darüber, inwieweit es gerichtlicher Aufsicht unterliegt.

Die Kommission hat überdies die Vereinigten Staaten um Aufklärung in Bezug auf Medienberichte ersucht, nach denen die US-Behörden massiv über große amerikanische Onlinedienst-Anbieter auf Daten von Europäern zugreifen und diese verarbeiten. Dieses Auskunftsersuchen enthält auch Fragen zum Zugang zu Daten, die mit Überwachungsprogrammen wie PRISM erhoben werden.

([1]) Angenommene Texte, P7_TA(2013)0322.

Nach dem Vorschlag der EU über die Verwendung von Fluggastdatensätzen können diese nur dann mit in anderen Datenbanken gespeicherten Daten abgeglichen werden, wenn die betreffenden Datenbanken für die Zwecke der Verhütung, Aufdeckung, Aufklärung und strafrechtlichen Verfolgung von terroristischen Straftaten und schwerer Kriminalität relevant sind, einschließlich Datenbanken betreffend Personen oder Gegenstände, nach denen gefahndet wird oder die Gegenstand einer Ausschreibung sind. Dabei sind die für solche Datenbanken einschlägigen nationalen, internationalen und EU-Vorschriften einzuhalten. Die in dem Vorschlag vorgesehenen Schutzmaßnahmen können von den für die Überwachung der Verwendung dieser Daten zuständigen Behörden der Mitgliedstaaten durchgesetzt werden.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008546/13
to the Commission
Jan Philipp Albrecht (Verts/ALE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: PRISM, Tempora and other surveillance programmes

Important revelations have been made in recent weeks of massive international surveillance systems in use by the United States, the United Kingdom and France, as well as of targeted surveillance against EU offices. Programmes like PRISM and Tempora undermine the fundamental rights of European citizens and people around the world.

In a resolution of 2 July 2013 ([1]), Parliament condemned this spying and called for urgent action on a number of fronts. The Commission has also expressed concern over the previously undisclosed mass-surveillance systems.

1. Has data obtained by Tempora or other GCHQ programmes been used in conjunction with the UK e-Borders (passenger name record (PNR)) programme for profiling purposes?

2. Can the Commission join the case against PRISM and related programmes brought by the Electronic Privacy Information Center (EPIC) before the United States Supreme Court as an amicus curiae? Will the Commission consider this?

3. Has the Commission started infringement procedures against the United Kingdom in light of Tempora, with reference to the provisions of the e-Privacy Directive, Article 16 TFEU and Articles 7, 8, and 11 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights?

4. Has the Commission started infringement procedures against other Member States in light of information about their telecommunications surveillance programmes, with reference to the provisions of the e-Privacy Directive, Article 16 TFEU and Articles 7, 8, and 11 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights?

5. What safeguards has the Commission built into to EU PNR proposal to prevent any cross referencing of PNR data with data obtained illegally by secret services? How will such safeguards be enforced?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(19 September 2013)

While it is for national authorities, including data protection supervisory authorities, to ensure the correct implementation and enforcement of EU data protection legislation vis-à-vis public and private bodies in the European Union, the Commission is guardian of the Treaties, and, in view of this role, the Commission is aware of the media reports in relation to the alleged practices in the UK and is taking the appropriate steps. In particular, the Commission has asked the UK authorities to clarify the scope of the so-called 'Tempora programme', its proportionality and the extent of judicial oversight that applies.

The Commission had also requested clarifications from the United States regarding media reports according to which the US authorities are accessing and processing, on a large scale, the data of Europeans using major US online service providers. This request includes questions on the issue of access to data collected by programs such as PRISM.

Under the EU PNR proposal PNR data can be cross-referenced with data held in other databases only if that database is relevant for the purpose of prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution of terrorist offences and serious crime, including databases on persons and objects sought or under alert, in accordance with Union, international and national rules applicable to such databases. The safeguards foreseen in the propsal can be enforced by the national authority overseeing the use of the data.

([1]) Texts adopted, P7_TA(2013)0322.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008547/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(12 Ιουλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Στήριξη των ευάλωτων κοινωνικών ομάδων στην Ελλάδα

Το περασμένο έτος και σύμφωνα με την Επιτροπή, η Ελλάδα είχε αξιοποιήσει μόλις το 12,59% της προτεραιότητας «Πλήρης ενσωμάτωση όλων των ανθρώπινων πόρων σε μια κοινωνία ίσων ευκαιριών» (συνολικός προϋπολογισμός 273 855 563 ευρώ), στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος «Ανάπτυξη ανθρώπινων πόρων» για την περίοδο 2007-2013 για την υποστήριξη των πλέον ευάλωτων κοινωνικών ομάδων.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Είναι σε θέση να με ενημερώσει για το κατά πόσον επιταχύνθηκε η διαδικασία αξιοποίησης των πόρων για την συγκεκριμένη προτεραιότητα από την Ελλάδα; Ποια εικόνα παρουσιάζεται σήμερα;

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(2 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Σύμφωνα με τις πληροφορίες που λάβαμε από τις ελληνικές αρχές, έως το τέλος του 2011 η αξιοποίηση των πόρων του θεματικού άξονα προτεραιότητας 4 «Πλήρης ενσωμάτωση όλων των ανθρώπινων πόρων σε μια κοινωνία ίσων ευκαιριών» του επιχειρησιακού προγράμματος «Ανάπτυξη ανθρώπινου δυναμικού» βρισκόταν στο επίπεδο του 12,32% του συνολικού προϋπολογισμού του άξονα προτεραιότητας, δηλαδή δημόσιες δαπάνες ύψους 33 728 578,25 ευρώ. Έως το τέλος του 2012, το ποσοστό αξιοποίησης αυξήθηκε σε 21,27%, δηλαδή δημόσιες δαπάνες ύψους 58 260 631,48 ευρώ. Στις αρχές του Ιουλίου 2013 το ποσό των νομικών δεσμεύσεων έφτασε το 59,12% του προϋπολογισμού, ενώ οι πληρωμές ανήλθαν σε 66 951 137 ευρώ, δηλαδή ποσοστό αξιοποίησης 25,5%. Το ποσοστό αυτό αναμένεται να αυξηθεί σημαντικά έως το τέλος του 2013 χάρη στην προκήρυξη δύο νέων δράσεων του επιχειρησιακού προγράμματος «Ανάπτυξη ανθρώπινου δυναμικού» που αποβλέπουν στην κοινωνικοοικονομική ένταξη ευάλωτων ομάδων του πληθυσμού. Η πρώτη αποσκοπεί στην κοινωνική και επαγγελματική ενσωμάτωση ανέργων από τις ευάλωτες ομάδες του πληθυσμού μέσω ολοκληρωμένων προγραμμάτων που έχουν δρομολογηθεί από αναπτυξιακές συμπράξεις σε τοπικό επίπεδο. Η δεύτερη αποβλέπει στην καταπολέμηση της φτώχειας με την καθιέρωση κοινωνικών δομών, όπως τα κοινωνικά παντοπωλεία και τα κοινωνικά φαρμακεία, ανοικτών κέντρων ημερήσιας υποδοχής ανέργων κ.λπ. και επιδοτεί την απασχόληση νέων ανέργων στις δομές αυτές.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008547/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Support for vulnerable social groups in Greece

According to Commission figures, last year Greece took up just 12.59% of the priority 'Complete integration of all human resources into a society of equal opportunities' (total budget EUR 273 855 563), which was designed to support the most vulnerable social groups under the 'Development of Human Resources' programme 2007-2013.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

Is it in a position to tell me if Greece is now taking up resources for that particular priority more quickly? What is the current situation?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(2 September 2013)

According to information provided by the Greek Authorities, until the end of 2011 the take-up rate of the Thematic Priority Axis 4 'Full integration of the entire labour force into an equal opportunities society' under the Operational Programme 'Human Resources Development' (HRD OP) stood at 12,32% of the total budget of the Priority Axis, i.e. EUR 33.728.578,25 public expenditure. By the end of 2012 the take up rate had increased to 21,27% i.e. EUR 58.260.631,48 public expenditure. By the beginning of July 2013 the amount of legal commitments reached 59,12% of the budget, whereas payments amounted to EUR 66.951.137, i.e. a take-up rate of 25,5%. This rate is expected to increase markedly by the end of 2013 due to the launching under the HRD OP of two new actions which target the socioeconomic inclusion of vulnerable population groups. The first aims at the social and vocational integration of unemployed from vulnerable groups through integrated projects launched by Development Partnerships at a local level. The second at combatting poverty through the establishment of social structures such as social groceries and social pharmacies, open centres for the daily reception of homeless etc. and subsidises the employment of young unemployed people in these structures.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008548/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(12 Ιουλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ολοκλήρωση υλοποίησης του έργου «Προστασία και αναδάσωση του εθνικού δρυμού της Πάρνηθας στην Αττική»

Η Επιτροπή συγχρηματοδότησε το έργο LIFE+ «Προσαρμογή της διαχείρισης των δασών στην κλιματική αλλαγή στην Ελλάδα», για την περίοδο από 1ης Ιανουαρίου 2010 έως τις 30 Ιουνίου 2013, με συνολικό προϋπολογισμό ύψους 1 719 112 ευρώ και μέγιστη συνεισφορά της ΕΕ 833 356 ευρώ. Το έργο στόχευσε να καταδείξει ότι η διαχείριση των δασών μπορεί να προσαρμοστεί στην αλλαγή του κλίματος, και παράλληλα να βελτιώνεται η ικανότητα των δασικών υπηρεσιών. Στο έργο συμπεριελήφθησαν τέσσερις πρότυπες τοποθεσίες, μία από τις οποίες ήταν ο εθνικός δρυμός της Πάρνηθας.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Καθώς η Επιτροπή παρακολούθησε την υλοποίηση του έργου, διαπιστώνει ότι η τελική υλοποίησή του έγινε με ικανοποιητικό τρόπο;

Απάντηση του κ. Potočnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(20 Αυγούστου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή παρακολουθεί προσεκτικά την εφαρμογή των έργων LIFE+ «Προσαρμογή της διαχείρισης των δασών στην κλιματική αλλαγή στην Ελλάδα» (LIFE08ENV/GR/000554).

Το έργο αυτό προχωρεί όπως έχει προγραμματιστεί και παρήγαγε χρήσιμα στοιχεία σχετικά με τις πιθανές επιπτώσεις της αλλαγής του κλίματος στις τέσσερις πιλοτικές περιοχές.

Δεδομένου ότι αναμένεται ότι το εν λόγω έργο θα οριστικοποιηθεί μέχρι τις 31 Δεκεμβρίου 2014, κρίνεται πρόωρο να εκτιμηθεί ο βαθμός στον οποίο έχει εφαρμοστεί ικανοποιητικά.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008548/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Completion of project 'Protection and reforestation of Parthina National Park in Attica'

The Commission co-financed the Life+ project 'Adaptation of forest management to climate change in Greece' for the period from 1 January 2010 to 30 June 2013 with a total budget of EUR 1 719 112 and a maximum EU contribution of EUR 833 356. The purpose of the project was to demonstrate that forest management can be adapted to climate change and, at the same time, to improve the skills of forestry departments. The project included four pilot sites, one of which was Parthina National Park.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

As the Commission monitored implementation of the project, did it find that it was ultimately implemented satisfactorily?

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

The Commission is carefully monitoring the implementation of the LIFE+ project 'Adaptation of forest management to climate change in Greece' (LIFE08ENV/GR/000554).

This project is progressing as planned and has produced useful information about the potential impact of climate change on the four pilot sites.

As it is expected that this project will be finalised by 31 December 2014 it appears premature to assess to which extent it has been implemented satisfactorily.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008549/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(12 Ιουλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ενίσχυση της λειτουργίας του Πρότυπου Νηπιοτροφείου Καλλιθέας στην Ελλάδα

Το Πρότυπο Νηπιοτροφείο Καλλιθέας φιλοξενεί παιδιά οικογενειών που έχουν χτυπηθεί αμείλικτα από την κρίση. Μετράει περίπου 100 χρόνια λειτουργίας και μάλιστα στην περίοδο της κατοχής της Ελλάδας φιλοξενούσε παιδιά θύματα πολέμου. Ιστορικής κοινωνικής σημασίας και προσφοράς, το Πρότυπο Νηπιοτροφείο σήμερα παρουσιάζει σημαντικά λειτουργικά προβλήματα, που έχουν να κάνουν τόσο με τις μισθολογικές ανάγκες των εργαζομένων όσο και με την απαιτούμενη υλικοτεχνική υποδομή για την ομαλή φιλοξενία των παιδιών οικογενειών που πλήττονται από την φτώχεια.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Είναι δυνατή η χρηματοδότηση από το ΕΚΤ ιδρυμάτων με κοινωνική συμβολή, ιδίως εκείνων που απευθύνονται σε παιδιά φτωχών οικογενειών;

— Καθώς διαφαίνεται πως — έστω και με μειωμένους πόρους — κατά το νέο πολυετές δημοσιονομικό προγραμματισμό της ΕΕ θα τεθεί σε λειτουργία ένα νέο ταμείο για τους άπορους, προσανατολίζεται να προτείνει την διευκόλυνση αποδέσμευσης πόρων για σημαντικά ιδρύματα όπως για παράδειγμα το Πρότυπο Νηπιοτροφείο Καλλιθέας;

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(4 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο (ΕΚΤ) έχει ως στόχο τη βελτίωση της οικονομικής και κοινωνικής συνοχής μέσω της βελτίωσης της απασχόλησης και των ευκαιριών εργασίας. Σύμφωνα με τον κανονισμό του ΕΚΤ για την περίοδο 2007-2013, το ΕΚΤ μπορεί να υποστηρίξει «… την αύξηση της συμμετοχής στη διά βίου εκπαίδευση και κατάρτιση, μεταξύ άλλων με τη λήψη μέτρων για την επίτευξη μείωσης του αριθμού των μαθητών που εγκαταλείπουν το σχολείο σε μικρή ηλικία και των διαχωρισμών βάσει του φύλου, και την αύξηση της πρόσβασης και της ποιότητας της βασικής, επαγγελματικής και της τριτογενούς εκπαίδευσης και κατάρτισης …»· στο πλαίσιο του επιχειρησιακού προγράμματος για την ανάπτυξη των ανθρώπινων πόρων για την περίοδο 2007-13, οι γυναίκες μπορούν να επωφεληθούν από ετήσια κουπόνια για την πρόσβαση σε εγκαταστάσεις παιδικής φροντίδας, ώστε να μπορέσουν να αναζητήσουν ή να αναλάβουν θέση εργασίας. Επίσης, το ΕΚΤ προωθεί την ανάπτυξη του τομέα της κοινωνικής οικονομίας στην Ελλάδα με τη στήριξη της κοινωνικών συνεταιριστικών επιχειρήσεων της κοινωνικής πρόνοιας για την παροχή τέτοιων υπηρεσιών.

Το σχέδιο κανονισμού ΕΚΤ για την περίοδο 2014-2020 προτείνει, στο πλαίσιο του θεματικού στόχου «Προώθηση της κοινωνικής ένταξης και καταπολέμηση της φτώχειας» επενδυτικές προτεραιότητες, όπως η «ενεργητική ένταξη» και η «βελτίωση της πρόσβασης σε οικονομικά προσιτές, βιώσιμες και υψηλής ποιότητας υπηρεσίες, στην υγειονομική περίθαλψη και σε κοινωνικές υπηρεσίες γενικού συμφέροντος» που μπορούν να επιλεγούν προς στήριξη στο πλαίσιο του ΕΚΤ.

Η πρόταση της Επιτροπής για ένα Ταμείο Ευρωπαϊκής Βοήθειας προς τους απόρους προβλέπει ότι τα παιδιά που κινδυνεύουν από τη φτώχεια θα μπορούσαν να αποτελούν μια συγκεκριμένη ομάδα στόχο. Κάθε δημόσιος φορέας ή μη κερδοσκοπική οργάνωση που παρέχει υλική βοήθεια, καθώς και τα ενδεχόμενα συνοδευτικά μέτρα, θα μπορούσε να είναι δικαιούχος του Ταμείου, υπό την προϋπόθεση ότι επιλέγονται βάσει δίκαιων και διαφανών κριτηρίων από τις εθνικές αρχές που είναι αρμόδιες για τη διαχείριση του οικείου επιχειρησιακού προγράμματος.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008549/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Support for model nursery in Kallithea, Greece

The model nursery in Kallithea provides places for children from families which have been hard hit by the crisis. It was founded about 100 years ago and even operated during the Greek occupation, providing places for child war victims. The model nursery has an historic social importance and has made an historic social contribution — however, it has run into serious operational problems in terms of paying employees' wages and obtaining the material and technical infrastructure needed in order for it to be able to provide places for children from families affected by poverty.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

— Is it possible for institutions of social importance to be funded by the ESF, especially those providing places for children from poor families?

— As it would appear that a new fund for the poor will be commissioned during the new multiannual financial programme, albeit with reduced resources, does it intend to propose facilitating the release of resources for important institutions such as the model nursery in Kallithea?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(4 September 2013)

The European Social Fund (ESF) aims to improve economic and social cohesion by improving employment and job opportunities. In accordance with the ESF Regulation for 2007-2013, the ESF can support '…increased participation in education and training throughout the life-cycle, including through actions aiming to achieve a reduction in early school leaving and in gender-based segregation of subjects and increased access to and quality of initial, vocational and tertiary education and training…' Under the 2007-13 Human Resources Development Operational Programme, women can benefit from yearly vouchers for access to childcare facilities to allow them to look for or take up employment. The ESF also promotes the development of the social economy sector in Greece by supporting social cooperative enterprises of social care to provide such services.

The draft ESF Regulation for 2014-2020 proposes under the Thematic Objective 'Promoting social inclusion and combating poverty' investment priorities such as 'Active Inclusion' and 'Enhancing access to affordable, sustainable and high-quality services, healthcare and social services of general interest' which may be chosen for support under ESF.

The Commission proposal for a Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived provides that children at risk of poverty could be a specific target group. Any public body or non-profit organisation that provides material assistance, along with any accompanying measures, could be a beneficiary of the Fund, provided that it is selected on the basis of fair and transparent criteria by the national authorities in charge of managing the relevant operational programme.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008550/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(12 Ιουλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Διανομή τροφίμων σε απόρους στην Ελλάδα

Με την έναρξη ισχύος του νέου νομικού πλαισίου του καθεστώτος, τα κράτη μέλη επιλέγουν τα τρόφιμα προς διανομή στους απόρους με βάση αντικειμενικά κριτήρια, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της θρεπτικής αξίας και της καταλληλότητας για διανομή. Η Επιτροπή εξάλλου είχε δηλώσει ότι κατά το ετήσιο πρόγραμμα 2013 θα λάβει υπόψη τις πλέον άρτιες εκτιμήσεις για τον αριθμό των απόρων στα κράτη μέλη.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Καθώς η Επιτροπή έλαβε έγκαιρα το ελληνικό εθνικό προγράμματα διανομής τροφίμων, ποιο είναι το αποτέλεσμα που προκύπτει από την επεξεργασία του; Ποιο το ύψος των κονδυλίων το οποίο τελικά προβλέπεται να αξιοποιηθεί φέτος από την Ελλάδα;

— Ποια συμπεράσματα προκύπτουν για τον αριθμό των απόρων στα κράτη μέλη και ποια η περίπτωση στην Ελλάδα;

Απάντηση του κ. Ciolos εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(22 Αυγούστου 2013)

Η Ελλάδα ζήτησε γαλακτοκομικά, ζυμαρικά, ρύζι και ελαιόλαδο αξίας 28,7 εκατομμυρίων ευρώ (και επιπλέον 1,578 εκατομμύρια ευρώ για άλλες δαπάνες) προκειμένου να υλοποιήσει το εθνικό της πρόγραμμα διανομής τροφίμων στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος της ΕΕ για τους απόρους το 2013. Σύμφωνα με την εξήγηση που έδωσαν οι ελληνικές αρχές, τα προϊόντα επελέγησαν με βάση τη θρεπτική τους αξία και τις μεσογειακές διατροφικές συνήθειες των Ελλήνων. Η διανομή των τροφίμων προγραμματίστηκε είτε με τη μορφή παροχής των τροφίμων σε πακέτα είτε με τη μορφή συσσιτίων.

Το ετήσιο σχέδιο 2013 ([1]) προβλέπει συνολικό κονδύλιο 22 017 677 ευρώ για την Ελλάδα.

Σύμφωνα με τις τελευταίες στατιστικές της Eurostat, το 8,8% του πληθυσμού της ΕΕ-27 ήταν εκτεθειμένο σε σοβαρές υλικές στερήσεις το 2011. Το ποσοστό αυτό ήταν αυξημένο κατά 0,7 ποσοστιαίες μονάδες σε σχέση με το αντίστοιχο ποσοστό του 2009. Στην Ελλάδα, το ποσοστό αυτό του πληθυσμού ανερχόταν σε 15,2% το 2011, ήταν δηλαδή κατά 4 ποσοστιαίες μονάδες αυξημένο σε σχέση με το 2009. Την ίδια περίοδο, η Ελλάδα από 7η έγινε η 6η χώρα της ΕΕ-27 με το μεγαλύτερο ποσοστό πληθυσμού εκτεθειμένου σε σοβαρές υλικές στερήσεις ([2]). Γι' αυτόν ακριβώς τον λόγο, η κατανομή πόρων του προγράμματος για τους απόρους στην Ελλάδα αυξήθηκε κατά 10%, δηλ. από 20 σε 22 εκατομμύρια ευρώ, τα τελευταία τρία χρόνια.

([1]) Εκτελεστικός κανονισμός (ΕΕ) αριθ. 1020/2012 της Επιτροπής (ΕΕ L 307 της 7.11.2012, σ. 62).
([2]) Βλ. το τελευταίο δελτίο Τύπου με τις πιο πρόσφατες εξελίξεις και σύντομες μεθοδολογικές εξηγήσεις στη διεύθυνση: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_PUBLIC/3-03122012-AP/EN/3-03122012-AP-EN.PDF και το σύνολο δεδομένων στον ιστότοπο της Eurostat: http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=ilc_mddd11&lang=en.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008550/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Food distribution to the poor in Greece

When the new legal framework for this scheme entered into force, the Member States chose which foods should be distributed to the poor based on objective criteria, such as nutritional value and suitability for distribution. Moreover, the Commission stated that, during the 2013 programme, it will take account of the most integral estimates of the number of poor in the Member States.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

— As the Commission received the Greek national food distribution programme on time, what is the result now that it has been processed? What amount in appropriations has finally been provided this year for Greece?

— What are the conclusions as to the number of poor in the Member States and how does Greece rank?

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

Greece requested dairy products, pasta, rice and olive oil in the value of EUR 28.7 million (and additional EUR 1 578 million for other expenses) for the implementation of their national food distribution programme in the framework of the Most Deprived Programme of the EU in 2013. Based upon the explanation given by the Greek administration, the products have been chosen due to their nutritional value and Greece's Mediterranean dietary habits. The distribution was planned either in the form of packages as one-off donations or in the form of regular meals.

The 2013 annual plan ([1]) granted a total allocation of EUR 22 017 677 to Greece.

According to the latest Eurostat statistics, 8.8% of the EU-27 population was severely materially deprived in 2011, i.e. 0.7 percentage points more than in 2009. The same ratio was 15.2% in Greece in 2011, up by 4 percentage points since 2009. In the same period, the rank of Greece changed from the 7th to the 6th highest in the EU-27 in terms of severe material deprivation. ([2]) This is why the Greek Most Deprived allocation increased by 10%, from EUR 20 to 22 million in the last three years.

([1]) Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 1020/2012 (OJ L 307, 7.11.2012, p. 62).
([2]) See the latest press release with the most recent developments and short methodological notes at: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_PUBLIC/3-03122012-AP/EN/3-03122012-AP-EN.PDF and the dataset on Eurostat website: http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=ilc_mddd11&lang=en

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008551/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(12 Ιουλίου 2013)

Θέμα: 4G ασύρματη τεχνολογία

Η ασύρματη τεχνολογία 4G που επιτρέπει μεγαλύτερες ταχύτητες στο διαδίκτυο με ασύρματα μέσα σταδιακά εξαπλώνεται στα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ. Ωστόσο, οι διαφορετικές οικονομικές συνθήκες στα κράτη μέλη και η ικανότητα των επιχειρήσεων να επενδύσουν στην νέα τεχνολογία δημιουργούν σοβαρές ανισότητες στην επέκταση του 4G.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Είναι σε θέση να με ενημερώσει για το κατά πόσον τα κράτη μέλη προχωρούν με γρήγορους ρυθμούς στην επέκταση της χρήσης της τεχνολογίας 4G; Παρατηρεί καθυστερήσεις σε χώρες που πλήττονται από την κρίση; Ποια η περίπτωση της Ελλάδας;

— Με ποιο τρόπο προτίθεται η Επιτροπή να διευκολύνει την επέκταση χρήσης της νέας τεχνολογίας αποφεύγοντας έτσι την ανομοιομορφία της εικόνας στα κράτη μέλη;

Απάντηση της κ. Kroes εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(26 Αυγούστου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή είναι προβληματισμένη για τους αργούς ρυθμούς ανάπτυξης των γρήγορων ασύρματων ευρυζωνικών δικτύων στην ΕΕ και τον χαμηλό βαθμό διείσδυσης των υπηρεσιών αυτών. Μόνον η Γερμανία, η Εσθονία και η Σουηδία διαθέτουν εκτεταμένα δίκτυα 4G. Τον Δεκέμβριο του 2012, συνολικά πρόσβαση σε δίκτυα 4G διέθετε το 26% των νοικοκυριών. Στην Ελλάδα, όπως και σε πολλά άλλα κράτη μέλη, τα δίκτυα 4G ουσιαστικά δεν καλύπτουν τις αγροτικές περιοχές — μόλις το 2,2% του πληθυσμού της Ελλάδας.

Καθώς η οικονομική κρίση έχει σίγουρα συμβάλει στη μείωση των επενδύσεων σε υποδομές σε ορισμένα κράτη μέλη, οι καθυστερήσεις στην εκχώρηση ραδιοφάσματος που παρατηρούνται στα κράτη μέλη και οι κατακερματισμένοι κανόνες που διέπουν την εκχώρηση αυτή είναι σαφές ότι δυσχεραίνουν το επενδυτικό περιβάλλον στην Ένωση.

14 κράτη μέλη έχουν υποβάλει αίτηση για παρέκκλιση από την υποχρέωση που υπέχουν βάσει του Προγράμματος Πολιτικής για το Ραδιοφάσμα (RSPP) να ανοίξουν τη ζώνη των 800 MHz για την ασύρματη ευρυζωνικότητα έως την 1η Ιανουαρίου 2013. Εννέα από τις αιτήσεις έχουν γίνει δεκτές. Αυτή της Ελλάδας εκκρεμεί. Κατά την εξέταση των αιτήσεων για παρέκκλιση, η Επιτροπή έχει μέχρι τώρα υιοθετήσει αυστηρή γραμμή και έχει καταστήσει σαφές ότι οι παρεκκλίσεις πρέπει να περιοριστούν στο ελάχιστο.

Επιπροσθέτως, η Επιτροπή σκοπεύει να αντιμετωπίσει την έλλειψη συντονισμού στην εκχώρηση ραδιοφάσματος στην ΕΕ, δρομολογώντας μια πρωτοβουλία ενόψει του Ευρωπαϊκού Συμβουλίου του Οκτωβρίου με στόχο τη λήψη συγκεκριμένων μέτρων για την ολοκλήρωση της Ενιαίας Αγοράς στον χώρο των ηλεκτρονικών επικοινωνιών. Η πρωτοβουλία αυτή αφορά τομείς όπως ο συγχρονισμός της εκχώρησης ραδιοφάσματος, η επαρκής και σταθερή διάρκεια ισχύος των αδειών, η ίση μεταχείριση και οι όροι αδειοδότησης.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008551/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: 4G wireless technology

4G wireless technology, which provides very high-speed wireless broadband, is gradually spreading to the EU Member States. However, the different economic conditions in the Member States and the ability of companies to invest in the new technology are creating serious inequalities in the use of 4G.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

— Is it in a position to tell me if the Member States are making fast progress in terms of the use of 4G technology? Are there any delays in countries which have been hit by the crisis? How does Greece rank?

— How does the Commission intend to facilitate use of the new technology, thereby preventing inequalities between the Member States?

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

The Commission is concerned with regard to slow progress in deployment of fast wireless broadband networks in the EU and the low take-up of services. Only Germany, Estonia and Sweden have advanced roll-out of 4G networks. Overall 4G networks were available to 26% of households in December 2012. Regarding Greece, as in many other Member States 4G networks are virtually not covering rural areas — just 2.2% of population in Greece.

Whereas the economic crisis has certainly contributed to slowing down infrastructure investments in certain Member States, delays by Member States in spectrum assignments and the fragmentation of spectrum assignment rules are clearly undermining the investment environment in the Union.

14 Member States have requested derogations from their obligation set out in the RSPP to authorise the 800 MHz band for wireless broadband by 1 January 2013. Nine of the requests have been granted; that of Greece is still pending. When reviewing the requests for derogations, the Commission has thus far taken a strict approach and made it clear that derogations had to be limited to the minimum.

Furthermore, the Commission plans to tackle the issue of uncoordinated spectrum assignment in the EU by launching an initiative ahead of the European Council in October regarding concrete measures on the completion of the Single Market in electronic communications. The initiative deals with areas such as the synchronised timing of spectrum release, sufficient and coherent duration of licences, equality of treatment and the conditions attached to licences.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008552/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Níveis de concentração de ozono

Considerando que:

— O ozono é um poluente secundário que se forma a partir de outros, emitidos sobretudo pelo tráfego rodoviário, como os óxidos de azoto e compostos orgânicos voláteis, e cuja formação é muito condicionada pela forte radiação solar e pelas elevadas temperaturas;

— Os efeitos na saúde da exposição a curto prazo ao ozono passam por danos nos pulmões, aumento da tosse e maior probabilidade de ataques de asma para as pessoas mais sensíveis, crianças, idosos e doentes respiratórios;

— Na última semana, em Portugal, as concentrações de ozono ultrapassaram 27 vezes o limiar que obriga a informar a população de acordo com a legislação comunitária e nacional.

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento desta situação?

2. Como a avalia?

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

1. Algumas semanas após cada mês civil, durante o verão, as autoridades portuguesas notificam à Comissão as situações em que o limiar estabelecido para o ozono tenha sido excedido no mês em questão. Esses dados são transmitidos através do sistema de intercâmbio de informações EIONET ([1]). O último conjunto de dados que a Comissão recebeu oficialmente refere-se a junho de 2013. A Comissão tem também conhecimento do sítio Web da Agência Portuguesa do Ambiente, com dados sobre as concentrações de ozono, incluindo as do mês de julho de 2013 ([2]).

2. Não foram ainda enviados pelas autoridades portuguesas dados oficiais relativos ao mês de julho de 2013. Os dados que figuram no sítio Web da Agência Portuguesa do Ambiente apontam para pequenas superações do limiar de informação estabelecido para o ozono — a saber, 180 $\mu g/m^3$ —, sobretudo no dia 8 de julho de 2013 e em datas próximas.

([1]) http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/pt/eu/monthlyozone
([2]) http://www.prevqualar.org/jsp/pt/tabelahistoricotemporalzonas.do

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008552/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Ozone concentration levels

Ozone is a secondary pollutant formed from precursors, emitted primarily by road traffic, including nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds; the highest concentrations occur in hot weather with strong sunlight.

The health effects of short-term exposure to ozone range from lung damage to increased coughing and a greater likelihood of asthma attacks in those who are more sensitive, for example children, the elderly, and people with respiratory diseases.

Last week ozone concentration levels in Portugal were 27 times higher than the 'population information threshold', that is to say, the point at which, under EU and national legislation, the public have to be warned.

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation?

2. What is its assessment?

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

1. A few weeks after each full calendar month during the summer season, the Commission is notified by the Portuguese authorities of the exceedances for ozone in that month. These data are submitted through the Eionet information exchange system ([1]). The latest set of data which the Commission has formally received concerns June 2013. The Commission is also aware of the website of the Portuguese Environment Agency with data on ozone concentrations, including those for the month of July 2013 ([2]).

2. No official data have yet been submitted by the Portuguese authorities for the month of July 2013. The data on the website of the Portuguese Environment Agency suggest small exceedances of the information threshold for ozone of 180 µg/m3 mainly on and around 8 July 2013.

([1]) http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/pt/eu/monthlyozone.
([2]) http://www.prevqualar.org/jsp/pt/tabelahistoricotemporalzonas.do.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008553/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Pessoas na pobreza

Considerando que:

— De acordo com as estimativas do «Relatório Económico e Social 2013» do Conselho Económico e Social da ONU (Ecosoc), o número de pessoas que vivem em situação de pobreza pode triplicar para os 3 mil milhões até 2050 se não forem adotadas novas medidas.

— Atualmente há cerca de mil milhões de pessoas a viver em bairros pobres, sem acesso a infraestruturas, a água potável, saneamento, eletricidade e serviços básicos de saúde e educação.

— O Secretário-Geral Adjunto com a pasta do Desenvolvimento Económico na ONU sublinhou a ideia de que «o desenvolvimento sustentável será a chave para a erradicação da pobreza», acrescentando que «não é aceitável que a fome e a malnutrição, embora diminuindo nos países em desenvolvimento, permaneça persistentemente em tantos outros, pelo que é necessário promover um enfoque completo para alcançar as metas de desenvolvimento».

Como pode a Comissão contribuir para a adoção de novas medidas e estratégias que contribuam para alicerçar o desenvolvimento sustentável a nível mundial?

Resposta dada por Andris Piebalgs em nome da Comissão
(12 de setembro de 2013)

Na sua Comunicação «Uma vida digna para todos» ([1]), adotada em fevereiro de 2013, a Comissão reafirmou a necessidade de dar resposta aos desafios de erradicação da pobreza e de promoção do desenvolvimento sustentável de forma integrada. A nível da UE, a Comissão — que executa quase 25 % do esforço da ajuda coletiva da UE — está a pôr esta ideia em prática com base na Agenda para a Mudança que adotou em 2011. A Agenda para a Mudança ([2]) estabelece um ambicioso programa de mudança concebido com vista a potenciar o impacto do desenvolvimento para erradicar a pobreza e melhorar os resultados em relação aos Objetivos de Desenvolvimento do Milénio (ODM).

Através da Agenda para a Mudança, os esforços envidados pela Comissão para reforçar o desenvolvimento sustentável global concentram-se nos países mais necessitados e nos setores prioritários que promovem os direitos humanos, a democracia e outros elementos da boa governação, bem como o crescimento inclusivo e sustentável ao serviço do desenvolvimento humano. Embora a Comissão possa adotar novas medidas para promover o desenvolvimento sustentável no futuro, a sua prioridade é honrar os compromissos enunciados na Agenda para a Mudança.

As ações da Comissão para erradicar a pobreza e alcançar um desenvolvimento sustentável produziram resultados significativos. Por exemplo, as estimativas para o período 2004-2013 sugerem que a cooperação para o desenvolvimento da Comissão permitiu prestar ajuda a mais 46 500 000 pessoas através de transferências de tesouraria relacionadas com a segurança alimentar, dar assistência a mais 7 500 000 nascimentos por pessoal de saúde qualificado e abastecer mais 70 000 000 pessoas por fontes de água potável segura. No futuro, a Comissão assegurará que a sua ação continue a produzir resultados significativos.

([1]) COM(2013) 92 final.
([2]) COM(2011) 637 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008553/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: People in poverty

— According to estimates in the 'World Economic and Social Survey 2013' by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the number of people living in poverty could treble to 3 billion by 2050 if new measures are not adopted.

— There are currently around 1 billion people living in slums, without access to infrastructure, drinking water, sanitation, electricity, and basic healthcare and education services.

— The UN Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development has stressed that sustainable development will be crucial to eradicating poverty, that it is not acceptable that hunger and malnutrition, while decreasing in developing countries, remain persistent in many others, and that it is therefore necessary to focus completely on achieving development goals.

How can the Commission contribute to adopting new measures and strategies to help lay the foundations for sustainable development at global level?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(12 September 2013)

In its communication 'A Decent Life for All' ([1]), which was adopted in February 2013, the Commission reaffirmed the need to address the challenges of eradicating poverty and promoting sustainable development in an integrated manner. At EU level, the Commission — which implements nearly 25% of the EU's collective aid effort — is currently putting this vision into practice on the basis of the Agenda for Change which it adopted in 2011. The Agenda for Change ([2]) sets out an ambitious programme of change designed to further heighten development impact to eradicate poverty and improve results against the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Through the Agenda for Change, the Commission's efforts to further global sustainable development concentrate on the countries which are most in need and on priority sectors that promote human rights, democracy and other elements of good governance as well as inclusive and sustainable growth for human development. While the Commission may adopt new measures to further sustainable development in the future, the priority is to implement the commitments outlined in the Agenda for Change.

The Commission's action to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development yielded significant results. For example, estimations for the period 2004-2013 suggest that the Commission's development cooperation led to 46 500 000 more people being assisted through food security related cash transfers, 7 500 000 more births attended by skilled health personnel and 70 000 000 more people connected to improved drinking water sources. In the future, the Commission will ensure that its action continues to yield significant results.

([1]) COM(2013) 92 final.
([2]) COM(2011) 637 final.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008554/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Portugal — um dos países mais envelhecidos do mundo

De acordo com dados divulgados recentemente no *Retrato de Portugal*, com base em indicadores desde 1960 da base de dados Pordata, Portugal transformou-se em apenas 50 anos num dos países mais envelhecidos do mundo, atualmente com mais de 2 milhões de idosos.

Em 2012 registaram-se menos de 90 mil nascimentos, registando-se a mais baixa taxa de natalidade desde sempre.

1. Tem a Comissão conhecimento da situação descrita?

2. Pode a Comissão indicar se estão previstas medidas de incentivo à natalidade na UE e, em particular, relativamente a Portugal? Em caso afirmativo, quais?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(2 de setembro de 2013)

A Comissão está consciente da situação demográfica em Portugal e nos outros países da UE, que se encontra refletida numa publicação recente da Comissão sobre a evolução demográfica ([1]).

A Comissão defendeu um maior investimento em medidas políticas relativas à infância que, entre outras coisas, possam facilitar às pessoas terem o número de filhos que desejam. Estas medidas foram abordadas na Comunicação «Investimento social a favor do crescimento e da coesão» ([2]), adotada em fevereiro de 2013 e no recente relatório da Comissão sobre os objetivos de Barcelona ([3]). Além disso, a Recomendação intitulada «Investir nas Crianças» ([4]) sublinha importância de serviços de educação e cuidados na primeira infância de qualidade e acessíveis para melhorar as oportunidades de desenvolvimento das crianças e, ao mesmo tempo, apoiar os pais que trabalham.

Essas orientações foram igualmente apoiadas pelo Programa-Quadro de Investigação da UE, como exemplificado pelos projetos «Repro» ([5]) e «Family Platform» ([6]). Além disso, os instrumentos financeiros da UE, como o programa Progress (que passará a EaSI em 2014) e o FSE têm permitido financiar programas e projetos experimentais de apoio à família e à parentalidade na UE. A Plataforma Europeia para Investir nas Crianças (EPIC) ([7]) contribui para o intercâmbio de experiências e de competências especializadas nas diferentes áreas relacionadas com as políticas relativas à infância e à família, e identifica e avalia boas práticas.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/population/publications/demography_sub
([2]) Ver COM(2013) 083.
([3]) Ver COM(2013) 322.
([4]) Ver C(2013) 778 final.
([5]) Consultar: http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/projects/429_en.html
([6]) Consultar: http://eldorado.tu-dortmund.de:8080/bitstream/2003/27726/1/Family%20Platform%20Brochure%20I.pdf
([7]) Consultar: http://europa.eu/epic/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008554/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Portugal — one of the oldest countries in the world

Figures recently published in *Retrato de Portugal*, based on indicators from 1960 onwards taken from the Pordata database, show that Portugal has become one of the oldest countries in the world over the last 50 years, and currently has over 2 million elderly people.

In 2012, there were fewer than 90 000 births, the lowest birth rate ever recorded.

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation?

2. Can the Commission state whether it is planning measures to stimulate the EU birth rate, particularly in Portugal? If so, what are they?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(2 September 2013)

The Commission is aware of the demographic situation in Portugal and in other EU countries as reported upon in a recent Commission publication on demographic trends ([1]).

The Commission has argued for more investment in child policy measures that among other things can make it easier for people to have the number of children they want. These measures have been addressed in the communication 'Towards Social Investment for Growth and Cohesion' ([2]), adopted in February 2013 and in the Commission's recent report on the Barcelona objectives ([3]). Furthermore the 'Recommendation on Investing in Children' ([4]) stresses the importance of quality, accessible early childhood education and care (ECEC) services to improve children's' opportunities for development while supporting working parents.

These policy orientations were also supported by the EU Research Framework programme, as exemplified by the Repro ([5]) and Family Platform ([6]) projects. Moreover, EU financial instruments such as PROGRESS (to become EaSI in 2014) and the ESF have been funding programmes and experimental projects that support family and parenthood in the EU. The European Platform on Investing in Children(EPIC) ([7]) helps to share experience and expertise on different areas related to child and family policy, and identifies and evaluates good practices.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/population/publications/demography_sub
([2]) See COM(2013)083.
([3]) See COM(2013)322.
([4]) See C(2013)778 Final.
([5]) See http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/projects/429_en.html .
([6]) See http://eldorado.tu-dortmund.de:8080/bitstream/2003/27726/1/Family%20Platform%20Brochure%20I.pdf .
([7]) See http://europa.eu/epic/ .

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008555/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Portugal e Finlândia defendem mais crédito às PME

Considerando que:

— Os primeiros-ministros de Portugal e da Finlândia publicaram ontem uma carta no *The Wall Street Journal* em que pedem o apoio europeu para desbloquear o financiamento das pequenas e médias empresas (PME), afirmando que esta é uma condição fundamental para promover o crescimento e o emprego;

— Os dois primeiros-ministros afirmam que «as PME podem desempenhar um importante papel na geração de crescimento e emprego».

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento desta situação?

2. Pondera vir a atribuir mais crédito às PME?

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

A Comissão está plenamente consciente do papel primordial desempenhado pelas PME na Europa e está a pôr em prática ações concretas a fim de melhorar o seu acesso ao financiamento, tal como reconhecido na Carta do Presidente do Conselho de Ministros de Portugal e da Finlândia.

No que diz respeito ao ponto sobre capitalização bancária levantado na carta, foi alcançado um acordo final sobre a proposta de revisão da diretiva relativa aos requisitos de capital. A fim de garantir um fluxo de crédito às PME no atual contexto económico, as novas regras irão introduzir uma redução dos requisitos de fundos próprios relativa aos riscos destas empresas, mediante a aplicação de um fator de desconto a favor das PME.

A carta também menciona a necessidade de reforçar a utilização de recursos do próximo QFP, bem como do BEI ([1]), para facilitar o financiamento das PME. Os instrumentos financeiros incluídos no futuro programa COSME ([2]) deverão tirar partido da experiência do atual PCI ([3]) e trabalhar em conjunto com o programa Horizonte 2020, a fim de proporcionar um melhor financiamento às PME através de intermediários financeiros, tais como fundos de capital de risco, bancos e sociedades de garantias mútuas.

O Conselho Europeu de junho de 2013 reconheceu a necessidade de intensificar os esforços do BEI para apoiar a concessão de crédito à economia. Além disso, convidou o BEI a aplicar o seu plano destinado a aumentar as suas atividades de concessão de empréstimos na UE em, pelo menos, 40 % no período de 2013-2015. Para o efeito, o BEI identificou o acesso das PME ao financiamento como uma das suas prioridades.

Por último, no que respeita à necessidade de ações inovadoras, a Comissão está a trabalhar na elaboração de um mecanismo comum de partilha de riscos, numa base múltipla que inclui recursos orçamentais da UE e fundos estruturais, além do instrumento de empréstimo e de garantia do BEI, do FEI ([4]) e de bancos de promoção nacionais. A reunião de esforços permitirá atingir a massa crítica decorrente dos acordos à escala da UE e criará um maior impulso para aumentar os empréstimos às PME.

([1]) Banco Europeu de Investimento.
([2]) Programa para a Competitividade das Empresas e PME para o período de 2014-2020.
([3]) Programa-Quadro para a Competitividade e a Inovação (2007-2013). O PCI já beneficiou mais de 220 000 empresas e apoiou financiamentos a PME no valor de mais de 15 mil milhões de euros.
([4]) Fundo Europeu de Investimento.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008555/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Portugal and Finland advocate more credit for SMEs

Given that:

— Yesterday, the prime ministers of Portugal and Finland published a letter in *The Wall Street Journal* calling for European aid to unlock funds for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), stating that this is a key condition for promoting growth and jobs.

— The two prime ministers state that 'SMEs can play a large part in generating growth and jobs'.

Can the Commission state:

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation?

2. Is it considering more credit for SMEs?

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

The Commission is fully aware of the primary role played by SMEs in Europe and is putting in place concrete actions to improve their access to finance, as recognised in the letter from the Prime Ministers of Portugal and Finland.

Regarding the point on bank capitalisation raised in the letter, a final agreement has been reached on the proposed review of the Capital Requirements Directive. In order to ensure an appropriate flow of credit to SMEs in the current economic context, the new rules will introduce a reduction in the capital charges for exposures to SMEs through the application of a SME discount factor.

The letter also mentions the need to strengthen the use of resources in the next MFF, as well as those of the EIB ([1]), to facilitate the funding of SMEs. The financial instruments included in the future COSME ([2]) programme will build on the experience of the current CIP ([3]) and work together with Horizon 2020 to provide better financing to SMEs through financial intermediaries, such as Venture Capital funds, banks and mutual guarantees societies.

The European Council of June 2013 recognised the need to step up efforts by the EIB to support lending to the economy. It also called on the EIB to implement its plan to increase its lending activity in the EU by at least 40% over 2013-2015. To this effect, the EIB has identified SME access to finance as one of its priorities.

Finally, with regard to the need for innovative schemes, the Commission is working on a joint risk-sharing mechanism to be developed by blending EU budget resources and structural funds with the lending and guarantee capacity of the EIB, EIF ([4]) and national promotional banks. Joining forces would achieve the critical mass provided by EU-wide arrangements and create greater leverage to increase lending to SMEs.

([1]) European Investment Bank.
([2]) Programme for the Competitiveness of enterprises and SMEs 2014-2020.
([3]) Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme 2007-2013. CIP has already benefited over 220 000 companies and supported more than 15 billion EUR of funding for SMEs .
([4]) European Investment Fund.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008556/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Resultados da cimeira G8

Considerando que:

— Recentemente teve lugar a cimeira G8 em Lough Erne, na Irlanda do Norte;

— Um dos assuntos da referida cimeira é a situação na Síria.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Qual ou quais os resultados práticos obtidos na recente cimeira do G8?

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

Os principais resultados da Cimeira do G8 sobre a situação na Síria constam do respetivo comunicado.

Os dirigentes acordaram em reiterar as contribuições suplementares de quase 1,5 mil milhões de USD para satisfazer as necessidades humanitárias na Síria e nos seus vizinhos. Os líderes do G8 acordaram igualmente em coordenar esforços para a convocação da Conferência de Genebra sobre a Síria (Genebra II). Ainda de destacar o facto de todos terem concordado que os resultados deverão desembocar na criação de um órgão governamental provisório com plenos poderes executivos que controlaria as forças armadas e os serviços de segurança. Os dirigentes estiveram de acordo com a importância de assegurar a continuidade dos serviços públicos durante o período de transição. A reunião apelou igualmente a que a oposição e o regime sírio expulsem todas as organizações que operam na Síria e que estão associadas a atividades terroristas. A reunião instou todas as partes na Síria a autorizar que a equipa das Nações Unidas presente no país investigue os indícios de utilização de armas químicas. Por último, o G8 destacou a especial responsabilidade das autoridades sírias no cumprimento da legislação internacional em matéria humanitária e de direitos humanos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008556/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Results of G8 summit

Given that:

— The Lough Erne Summit recently took place in Northern Ireland.

— One of the subjects at this summit was the Syria situation.

Can the Commission state:

What practical results were achieved at the recent G8 summit?

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

The main results of the G8 summit concerning the situation in Syria are contained in the G8 communique.

The leaders agreed to confirm additional contributions of almost USD 1.5 billion to meet humanitarian needs in Syria and its neighbours. The G8 leaders also agreed to jointly push for convening the Geneva Conference on Syria (Geneva II). Importantly, all agreed that the outcome of the conference should be the establishment of a transitional governing body with full executive powers that would oversee military forces and security services. The leaders agreed on the importance of ensuring the continuity of public services during the transition. The meeting also called on the opposition and the Syrian regime to expel all organisations operating inside Syria that are linked to terrorist activities. The meeting called on all parties in Syria to allow the UN investigation team into Syria to investigate reports of use of chemical weapons. Finally, the G8 noted the particular responsibility of the Syrian authorities for observing international humanitarian and human right laws.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008557/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Alzheimer — nova descoberta

Considerando que:

— Uma equipa de cientistas da Universidade de Toronto tem vindo a implementar uma nova técnica que consiste na estimulação cerebral através de impulsos elétricos;

— Os investigadores fizeram testes em vários pacientes, que já tinham sido diagnosticados há pelo menos um ano, e passado um ano depois de receberem este novo tratamento, não houve registo de sinais de permanência ou regresso da doença em qualquer dos pacientes.

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento desta recente descoberta?

2. Como a avalia?

Resposta dada por Máire Geoghegan-Quinn em nome da Comissão
(22 de agosto de 2013)

A Comissão tem conhecimento dos recentes resultados obtidos pela equipa do Professor Andres Lozano e seus colaboradores (Memory Clinic, Toronto Western Hospital) que demonstraram a existência de benefícios clínicos para os doentes que se encontram na fase inicial de doença de Alzheimer, mediante a aplicação de estimulação cerebral profunda (DBS) ([1]). Embora os investigadores tenham demonstrado que o tratamento é seguro e bem tolerado, é necessária mais investigação para avaliar a sua eficácia. Em especial, o número reduzido de doentes envolvidos não permite tirar qualquer conclusão sobre a eficácia deste tratamento para travar a progressão da doença de Alzheimer.

Embora este estudo não tenha sido apoiado pelo Sétimo Programa-Quadro da União Europeia de atividades em matéria de investigação, desenvolvimento tecnológico e demonstração (7.° PQ, 2007-2013), o 7.° PQ investiu mais de 10 milhões de EUR em investigação, recorrendo à estimulação cerebral profunda para o tratamento de doenças neurológicas e de doenças neurodegenerativas. Desde 2007, o 7.° PQ afetou 401 milhões de EUR a atividades de investigação sobre doenças neurodegenerativas, incluindo 201 milhões de EUR para a doença de Alzheimer. A Comissão apoia igualmente a execução da iniciativa de programação conjunta sobre as doenças neurodegenerativas, em especial a doença de Alzheimer (JPND) ([2]), uma iniciativa liderada pelos Estados-Membros que visa aumentar o impacto da investigação europeia nesta área através da coordenação dos esforços entre os vários países. O programa Horizonte 2020, o próximo programa-quadro de investigação e inovação da UE (2014-2020), pode proporcionar novas oportunidades de apoio à investigação sobre doenças neurodegenerativas.

([1]) Ver artigo em Lyketsos et al., Innovations in Clinical Neuroscience (2012): 9, 10-17.
([2]) http://www.neurodegenerationresearch.eu/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008557/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Alzheimer's — new discovery

Given that:

— A team of scientists from the University of Toronto has been implementing a new technique that consists of stimulating the brain with electrical impulses.

— The researchers performed tests on several patients who had been diagnosed more than a year previously and, a year after receiving this new treatment, there were no signs that the disease had stayed or come back in any of the patients.

Can the Commission state:

1. Is it aware of this recent discovery?

2. What is its assessment thereof?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(22 August 2013)

The Commission is aware of the recent findings by the team of Professor Andres Lozano and collaborators (Memory Clinic, Toronto Western Hospital) who demonstrated clinical benefits to patients with mild (early) Alzheimer's disease by applying deep brain stimulation (DBS) ([1]). Whilst the researchers were able to show that the treatment is safe and well tolerated, further research is needed to assess the effectiveness of this treatment. In particular, the low number of patients involved does not allow for any conclusion on how effective this treatment is in stopping Alzheimer's disease progression.

Although this study was not supported by the Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7, 2007-2013), FP7 invested more than EUR 10 million in research using deep brain stimulation for treating neurological and neurodegenerative diseases. Since 2007, FP7 has devoted EUR 401 million in research on neurodegenerative diseases, including EUR 201 million on Alzheimer's disease. The Commission also supports the implementation of the Joint Programming Initiative on Neurodegenerative Diseases, in particular Alzheimer's (JPND) ([2]), a Member State-led initiative that aims at increasing the impact of European research in this area by coordinating efforts across countries. Horizon 2020, the next EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020), may provide further opportunities to support research on neurodegenerative diseases.

([1]) See review in Lyketsos et al., Innovations in Clinical Neuroscience (2012): 9, 10-17.
([2]) http://www.neurodegenerationresearch.eu/.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008558/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Sida — transplante de medula

Considerando que:

— No âmbito de uma investigação em que participaram especialistas do Hospital de Brigham and Womens, de Massachusetts, dois homens afetados com o Vírus da Imunodeficiência Humana (VIH) há 30 anos foram submetidos a um transplante de medula, um dos locais favoritos para o vírus se alojar;

— O êxito do transplante de medula, a que os dois homens se submeteram, foi recentemente confirmado, sendo que ambos já não necessitam de tomar antirretrovirais, os medicamentos que reduzem o vírus da sida;

— Os especialistas adiantam que é ainda necessário «seguir os doentes durante mais tempo», mas afirmam que «o vírus desapareceu por um ano ou mesmo por dois» e que «depois de pararmos o tratamento as hipóteses de reincidência são extremamente baixas».

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Que avaliação faz desta importante descoberta?

2. Tem conhecimento de algum estudo idêntico na UE?

Resposta dada por Máire Geoghegan-Quinn em nome da Comissão
(21 de agosto de 2013)

1. A Comissão está a acompanhar de perto os desenvolvimentos científicos no domínio das doenças infecciosas e do VIH/SIDA, em particular. Tal inclui o relatório sobre dois doentes do Massachusetts, aparentemente livres do vírus HI, após terem recebido um transplante de medula óssea. Porém, a Comissão está igualmente consciente de que os transplantes de medula óssea realizados nestes pacientes eram necessários devido ao facto de ambos terem desenvolvido linfomas malignos. Noutras circunstâncias, os transplantes de medula óssea seriam demasiado arriscados para os doentes, cuja doença pode ser controlada com os fármacos existentes.

2. A Comissão participa ativamente no financiamento da investigação do VIH através dos seus programas-quadro de investigação. No quadro das atividades do Sétimo Programa-Quadro de investigação, desenvolvimento tecnológico e demonstração (7.° PQ, 2007-2013), foram atribuídos mais de 165 milhões de EUR à investigação no domínio do HIV, 50 % dos quais consagrados à investigação do seu tratamento. No âmbito do próximo programa-quadro, 2020 (2014-2020), a Comissão irá provavelmente continuar a apoiar a investigação neste domínio e a definição das suas prioridades terá em conta todos os principais desenvolvimentos científicos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008558/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: AIDS — bone-marrow transplant

— As part of a research project involving specialists from Brigham and Women's Hospital in Massachusetts, two men infected with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) for 30 years underwent bone-marrow transplants, given that bone-marrow cells often harbour the virus.

— It has recently been confirmed that these bone-marrow transplants were a success; neither man now needs to take antiretrovirals, the drugs that combat the AIDS virus.

— The specialists say that they are 'going to need longer follow-up', but add that 'if the virus does stay away for a year or even two years after we stopped the treatment, that the chances of the virus rebounding are going to be extremely low.'

1. What is the Commission's assessment of this important discovery?

2. Is it aware of any other research like this in the EU?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(21 August 2013)

1. The Commission is following closely the scientific developments in infectious diseases and in HIV/Aids in particular. This includes the report on two patients from Massachusetts apparently free of HI virus after having received a bone marrow tranplant. The Commisison is however also aware that the bone marrow transplants performed in the these patients were necessary because of malignant lymphomas the two individuals had developed. Otherwise, bone marrow transplants would currently be considered too risky for patients, whose disease can be controlled with existing drugs.

2. The Commission is actively involved in funding HIV research through its Research Framework Programmes. During the Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7, 2007-2013), over EUR 165 million have been committed to HIV research, 50% of which is devoted to research in HIV treatment. In the upcoming new framework programme, Horizon 2020 (2014-2020), the Commission will most probably continue to support research in this area and its priority setting will take into account all relevant major scientific developments.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008559/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Capitais fogem do Luxemburgo

Considerando que:

— No passado dia 10 de abril as autoridades luxemburguesas revelaram que iam diminuir o nível de secretismo associado às contas bancárias naquele país e que iriam partilhar informações fiscais com outros países;

— Em maio os líderes europeus comprometeram-se a aumentar o nível de combate à fraude e evasão fiscal.

— Os responsáveis alfandegários da Alemanha têm notado um crescente volume de dinheiro a passar a fronteira vindo do Luxemburgo, nos últimos dois meses, o que indica que os alemães estão a retirar verbas daquele país.

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento da situação descrita?

2. Que interpretação faz relativamente ao exposto?

Resposta dada por Algirdas Šemeta em nome da Comissão
(22 de agosto de 2013)

A Comissão congratula-se com o anúncio recente pelo Luxemburgo de que irá passar incondicionalmente a efetuar a troca automática de informações no âmbito da atual diretiva relativa à tributação da poupança, a partir de 1 de janeiro de 2015, e apoia plenamente as conclusões do Conselho Europeu de maio no sentido de acelerar o combate à fraude fiscal, à evasão fiscal e ao planeamento fiscal agressivo, bem como promover e alargar o âmbito da troca automática de informações a todos os níveis. Com efeito, a campanha a favor de uma maior transparência e da troca de informações constitui uma evolução encorajadora, não só a nível da UE, mas também no contexto internacional mais vasto.

No entanto, a Comissão não tem conhecimento nem dispõe de meios para verificar as alegações feitas pelo Senhor Deputado em relação a um crescente volume de dinheiro atravessar a fronteira do Luxemburgo para a Alemanha. O Tratado sobre o Funcionamento da União Europeia garante a livre circulação de capitais, embora existam algumas possibilidades deixadas ao critério dos Estados-Membros para aplicarem medidas proporcionadas destinadas a evitar certos abusos desta liberdade. Os residentes dos Estados-Membros devem cumprir todas as obrigações fiscais que lhes incumbam relativas aos capitais ou rendimentos decorrentes dos mesmos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008559/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Capital flight from Luxembourg

— On 10 April the Luxembourgish authorities revealed that they would be increasing transparency as regards bank accounts in the country and sharing tax information with other countries.

— In May, European leaders pledged to step up the fight against tax fraud and tax evasion.

— German customs authorities have noticed an increasing amount of money crossing the border from Luxembourg in recent months, which means that Germans are pulling money out of the country.

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation?

2. What is its interpretation of it?

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

The Commission welcomes the recent announcement by Luxembourg that it will unconditionally switch to automatic exchange of information under the current Savings Directive as of 1 January 2015 and fully supports the May European Council conclusions to accelerate the fight against tax fraud, tax evasion and aggressive tax planning, while promoting and broadening the scope of the automatic exchange of information at all levels. Indeed, the drive towards more transparency and exchange of information is an encouraging development not only within the EU, but also in the wider international context.

However, the Commission is neither aware nor has it any means of verifying the claims made by the Honourable Member on an increasing amount of money crossing the border from Luxembourg to Germany. The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union guarantees the free movement of capital, although there are some possibilities left to Member States to apply proportionate measures aimed at avoiding specific abuses of this freedom. Residents of Member States should comply with any tax obligations they may have pertaining to this capital or the income derived from it.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008560/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Ministro das Finanças alemão admite apoiar PME com 800 milhões de euros

Considerando que:

— O Ministro das Finanças alemão afirmou recentemente que vai disponibilizar 800 milhões de euros em empréstimos às pequenas e médias empresas de Espanha, através do banco de fomento KfW;

— De acordo com a imprensa internacional o Ministro alemão é citado como tendo também «oferecido» este programa a Portugal.

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento do anúncio feito pelo Ministro das Finanças alemão?

2. Que avaliação faz do mesmo?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(3 de setembro de 2013)

A Comissão está ao corrente do anúncio, pelo Ministro das Finanças alemão, da disponibilização de apoio a favor das pequenas e médias empresas espanholas. Contudo, não compete à Comissão avaliar este tipo de cooperação bilateral.

Estão em curso várias iniciativas para aliviar os condicionalismos de crédito e liquidez que as empresas, em especial as PME, enfrentam em Espanha. As medidas de promoção da intermediação não bancária, anunciadas em novembro de 2012 no contexto do programa para o setor bancário, estão a ser aplicadas e foram pormenorizadas e desenvolvidas no programa nacional de reformas.

Para mais informações, queira consultar as avaliações do programa de assistência financeira do FEEF para a recapitalização das instituições financeiras em Espanha e o documento de trabalho da Comissão que avalia o programa nacional de reformas espanhol para 2013:
http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/ocp155_en.pdf
http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/nd/swd2013_spain_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008560/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: German Finance Ministry agrees EUR 800 million in aid for SMEs

Given that:

— The German Finance Ministry recently stated that it will make available EUR 800 million in loans to Spanish small and medium-sized enterprises through the KfW development bank.

— The international press also quotes the German Finance Ministry as having 'offered' Portugal this programme.

Can the Commission state:

1. Is it aware of the announcement by the German Finance Ministry?

2. What is its assessment thereof?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(3 September 2013)

The Commission is aware of the announcement by the German Finance Ministry to provide support to Spanish small and medium-sized enterprises. However, it is not up to the Commission to assess such bilateral cooperation.

Several initiatives are underway to alleviate credit and liquidity constraints for companies, in particular SMEs, in Spain. Measures promoting non-bank intermediation, announced in November 2012 in the context of the banking sector programme, are being implemented and have been further detailed and developed in the national reform programme.

For more information, please refer to the Reviews of the EFSF Financial Assistance Programme for the Recapitalisation of Financial Institutions in Spain, and the Commission Staff Working Document assessing the 2013 Spanish national reform programme:
http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/ocp155_en.pdf
http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/nd/swd2013_spain_en.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008561/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Eleição de Hassan Rohani

Considerando que:

— Após ter sido eleito e na primeira conferência de imprensa, o presidente Hassan Rohani centrou as suas declarações no nuclear e nas sanções que foram impostas ao Irão;

— Nas suas declarações afirmou que «pretende criar uma interação construtiva com o mundo», e assumiu estar disponível para voltar às negociações sobre o nuclear.

Pergunto à Vice-Presidente/Alta-Representante:

1. Como interpreta as declarações do novo Presidente iraniano?

2. De que forma tem a UE lidado com o programa nuclear do Irão?

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

A AR/VP manifestou na sua declaração de 15 de junho sobre as eleições no Irão o compromisso de trabalhar com os novos dirigentes iranianos em prol de uma solução rápida para a questão nuclear com base na abordagem assente em duas vertentes, no quadro E3/UE+3. A UE está totalmente empenhada no processo no quadro da AIEA, e tem desenvolvido esforços no sentido de obter uma solução nesse foro. A UE avaliará os esforços da Presidente Hassan Rohani com base nos factos e não em promessas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008561/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Election of Hassan Rohani

Given that:

— At his first press conference after being elected, President Hassan Rohani focused his statements on the nuclear issue and the sanctions being imposed on Iran.

— He stated that he aims to implement constructive interaction with the world and expressed his willingness to re-open negotiations on the nuclear issue.

Can the Vice-President/High Representative state:

1. How does she interpret the new Iranian President's statements?

2. How has the EU been tackling Iran's nuclear programme?

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

The HR/VP expressed in her statement on 15 June on the Iranian elections, the commitment to work with the new Iranian leadership towards a swift solution of the nuclear issue based on double-track approach, within E3/EU+3 framework. The EU is fully engaged with the process within the IAEA framework, and has been working towards a solution in that forum as well. The EU will assess the efforts of President Hassan Rohani based on facts rather than promises.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008562/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Criação de emprego em Portugal com o acordo de comércio livre EUA-UE

Caso se concretize, o acordo de comércio livre ente a União Europeia e os Estados Unidos vai produzir a maior zona comercial livre do mundo. Segundo Durão Barroso, o início das negociações vai ser «decisivo para a economia global», e, no caso específico de Portugal, o acordo pode resultar numa descida de 0,76 pontos percentuais na taxa de desemprego e na criação de 42,5 mil postos de trabalho.

Em Portugal, que tipos de emprego prevê a Comissão que sejam criados?

Resposta dada por Karel De Gucht em nome da Comissão
(21 de agosto de 2013)

Uma iniciativa comercial abrangente e ambiciosa entre os EUA e a UE poderá criar novas oportunidades de negócio no valor de dezenas de milhares de milhões de euros, que irão gerar centenas de milhares de novos postos de trabalho em ambos os lados do Atlântico. Dado o aumento do fluxo de bens e serviços gerado pelo estreitar das relações económicas transatlânticas, as exportações irão contribuir para a criação de um grande número de postos de trabalho em cada uma das economias. Tal contribuirá para uma base de empregabilidade mais sustentável, já que estes postos de trabalho poderão ser encontrados em empresas que estão direta ou indiretamente expostas à forte pressão da concorrência dos mercados globais. Em termos de exportações para os EUA, os pontos fortes de Portugal encontram-se nos combustíveis e produtos mineiros, máquinas e equipamento de transporte ou outros produtos intermediários.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008562/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Jobs created in Portugal by the EU-US free trade agreement

If it comes to fruition, the EU-US free trade agreement will create the world's largest free trade area. According to President Barroso, the start of negotiations will be 'a game changer for the global economy' and, in the specific case of Portugal, the agreement could reduce unemployment by 0.76 percentage points and create 42 500 jobs.

What types of job does the Commission expect to be created in Portugal?

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

A comprehensive and ambitious trade initiative between the US and the EU could create new business opportunities worth tens of billions of euros, which will in turn support hundreds of thousands of new jobs on both sides of the Atlantic. Given the increased flow of goods and services generated by closer transatlantic economic relations, a greater number of jobs in each economy will be supported by exports. This will contribute to a more sustainable employment base as these jobs will be found in firms that are either directly or indirectly successfully exposed to the strong competition pressure of the global markets. In terms of exports to the US, Portugal is strongest in the areas of fuels and mining products, machinery and transport equipment or other semi-manufactures.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008563/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Erro da Comissão Europeia relativamente às PPP

De acordo com a Comissão Europeia e com a sua agência estatística (Eurostat) as Parcerias Público-Privadas (PPP) são um tipo de contratação que não é considerada dívida pública.

Em Portugal, vários governantes recorreram de forma excessiva a esta prática, de forma a realizarem obra sem se endividarem formalmente.

1. Que avaliação faz a Comissão da referida situação?

2. Considera que possa existir alguma lacuna por parte da Comissão nesta matéria? Em caso afirmativo, qual?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(26 de setembro de 2013)

As parcerias público-privadas (PPP) são classificadas, do ponto de vista do direito da UE, como contratos públicos ou concessões. Para efeitos de uma explicação sobre a aplicação dos princípios do Tratado a determinados tipos de concessões, bem como sobre as regras da UE aplicáveis aos contratos públicos e sobre as propostas da Comissão relativas à revisão das regras existentes neste domínio, atualmente objeto de negociações entre o Parlamento Europeu e o Conselho, a Comissão remete o Senhor Deputado para a resposta dada à pergunta E-005098/2013 ([1]). A Comissão considera que a adoção das propostas referidas contribuirá para reforçar a transparência na adjudicação das PPP, em especial no caso das concessões de serviços. As decisões dos Estados-Membros visando lançar projetos de infraestruturas através de PPP não estão sujeitas à aprovação prévia da Comissão. O papel da Comissão na recolha de estatísticas (realizada pelo Eurostat) consiste em verificar se o registo nas contas nacionais foi feito segundo as regras aplicáveis às PPP especificadas no Manual sobre o défice público e a dívida pública ([2]). Estas regras aplicam-se a todos os Estados-Membros.

No que diz respeito à utilização alargada das PPP em Portugal, o Programa de Ajustamento Económico para este país tem vindo, desde que foi lançado, a contemplar esta questão. Queira consultar a resposta dada à pergunta E-005098/2013 para obter informações adicionais. Quanto às eventuais consequências para o défice público e a dívida pública, a Comissão, tal como mencionado supra, aplica rigorosamente as regras do Manual sobre o défice público e a dívida pública (capítulo VI) no respeitante às PPP.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/product_details/publication?p_product_code=KS-RA-13-001

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008563/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Mistake by the Commission regarding PPPs

According to the Commission and its statistics agency (Eurostat), public-private partnerships (PPPs) are a way to contract out work without it being considered public debt.

In Portugal, a number of government bodies have made excessive use of PPPs in order to perform works without becoming formally indebted.

1. What is the Commission's view of this situation?

2. Does the Commission believe that it has been negligent in any way in this regard and if so how?

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

Public-private partnerships (PPPs) qualify, from the point of view of EC law, as public contracts or concessions. For an explanation about the application of the Treaty principles to certain types of concessions, on existing EU public procurement rules and on the Commission's proposals for revision of the existing rules in this area, presently subject to negotiation between the Parliament and the Council, the Commission refers the Honourable Member to the answer given to Question E-005098/2013 ([1]). The Commission considers that the adoption of the said proposals will contribute to enhancing transparency on the award of PPPs, particularly those qualifying as service concessions. Member States' decisions to launch infrastructure projects through PPPs are not subject to Commission's pre-approval. The Commission's statistical role (undertaken by Eurostat) is to check whether the recording in national accounts has been made according to the rules for PPPs specified in the Manual on Government Deficit and Debt ([2]). These rules apply to all Member States.

Regarding the extensive use of PPPs in Portugal, the Economic Adjustment Programme for Portugal has been tackling this issue since its inception. Please refer to the answer given to E-005098/2013 for further details. Concerning the possible effect on government deficit and debt, as stated above, the Commission strictly applies the rules of the Manual on Government Deficit and Debt (Chapter VI) with respect to PPPs.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/product_details/publication?p_product_code=KS-RA-13-001

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008564/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Esclerose múltipla

Em Portugal, estima-se que a prevalência da esclerose múltipla esteja em 50 casos por 100 mil habitantes e que todos os anos surjam 250 novos casos.

De acordo com um neurologista do Centro Hospitalar e Universitário de Coimbra, já existem métodos que permitem detetar precocemente a doença, embora considere que dos mais de 6 000 portadores de esclerose múltipla existentes em Portugal apenas «três quartos estejam diagnosticados».

O programa «Esclerose Múltipla para a Medicina Geral e Familiar», implementado em Coimbra, pretende «alertar os médicos para a doença e fornecer instrumentos para a deteção mais precoce dos seus sintomas nos doentes».

1. Dispõe a Comissão de dados epidemiológicos sobre a prevalência da esclerose múltipla na UE?

2. Considera a Comissão que esta doença pode estar subdiagnosticada a nível europeu?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(3 de outubro de 2013)

A Comissão não procede à recolha dos dados de que dispõe sobre a prevalência da esclerose múltipla na UE. Os dados relativos à epidemiologia da esclerose múltipla nos Estados-Membros da UE e noutros países estão disponíveis na base de dados «Atlas dos Estados-Membros», que é gerida pela Federação Internacional da Esclerose Múltipla ([1]). Esta base de dados reflete a situação de 2006 a 2008 e mostra que a prevalência da esclerose múltipla variou entre 17,5 casos por cada 100 mil pessoas, na Eslováquia, e 149 pessoas, na Alemanha. Prevê-se que, em outubro de 2013, estejam disponíveis dados atualizados.

A Comissão não chegou a uma conclusão sobre o facto de a esclerose múltipla estar subdiagnosticada na UE. No entanto, tem conhecimento de informações como as apresentadas pelo perito de Portugal e citadas pelo Senhor Deputado que indiciam a possibilidade da existência dessa situação de subdiagnóstico.

([1]) http://www.atlasofms.org/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008564/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Multiple sclerosis

Multiple sclerosis is estimated to affect 50 out of every 100 000 people in Portugal and there are thought to be 250 new cases annually.

According to a neurologist at the Coimbra Hospital and University Centre, there are already ways of detecting the disease early, although he believes that only three quarters of the 6 000 plus people suffering from multiple sclerosis in Portugal are diagnosed.

The 'Multiple Sclerosis for General and Family Medicine' programme implemented in Coimbra aims to alert doctors to the disease and provide instruments for earlier detection of its symptoms in sufferers.

1. Does the Commission have any epidemiological data on the prevalence of multiple sclerosis in the EU?

2. Does the Commission believe that this disease could be under-diagnosed at European level?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(3 October 2013)

The Commission does not collect its own data on the prevalence of Multiple Sclerosis in the EU. Data on the epidemiology of Multiple Sclerosis in EU Member States and other countries is available in the 'Atlas of MS'- database, which is operated by the Multiple Sclerosis International Federation ([1]). This database reflects the situation from 2006 to 2008, and it shows that the prevalence of multiple sclerosis ranged from 17,5 cases per 100 000 people in Slovakia to 149 people in Germany. Updated figures are expected to be available in October 2013.

The Commission has no position on whether Multiple Sclerosis is under-diagnosed in the EU. It is however aware of information, such as presented by the expert from Portugal quoted by the Honourable Member, which suggests that such under-diagnosis may exist.

([1]) http://www.atlasofms.org/

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008565/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Coreia do Norte propõe conversações com os EUA

No seguimento do terceiro teste nuclear de Pyongyang, que potenciou meses de fortes tensões, a Coreia do Norte apresentou uma proposta para a abertura de conversações com os EUA para assegurar a paz na península coreana.

Os Estados Unidos responderam mostrando-se disponíveis para dialogar.

De que dados dispõe a Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante sobre o atual ponto da situação?

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

A Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente está ao corrente das conversações preparatórias das conversações atualmente em curso, estando também em contacto direto para debater essa questão com os seus homólogos dos Estados Unidos, China, Japão e Coreia do Sul. As principais questões que se colocam — a resolver através dos esforços diplomáticos que estão a ser desenvolvidos atualmente — são: assegurar que quaisquer novas negociações sejam credíveis e conduzam à desnuclearização da República Popular Democrática da Coreia (RPDC) e da Península; o formato das conversações, ou seja, as Conversações a Seis ou conversações com um caráter mais bilateral; o papel da reconciliação intercoreana, tendo os contactos recentes entre a República da Coreia e a República Popular Democrática da Coreia (RPDC) sido difíceis e não conclusivos. A Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente exortou as autoridades da RPDC a adotarem uma estratégia de envolvimento positivo em relação à comunidade internacional, tendo passado esta mensagem diretamente ao respetivo Ministro dos Negócios Estrangeiros aquando da Reunião Ministerial do Fórum Regional da Associação das Nações do Sudeste Asiático, recentemente realizada no Brunei.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008565/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — North Korea proposes talks with the US

Following Pyongyang's third nuclear test, which led to months of serious tension, North Korea has tabled a proposal to open talks with the US on securing peace in the Korean peninsula.

The US responded that it was open to talks.

What details does the Vice-President/High Representative have on the current state of play?

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

The HR/VP is aware of the talks-about-talks now underway and is in direct contact with her counterparts in the US, China, Japan and South Korea on that matter. Key issues at stake, which have yet to be resolved through the ongoing diplomatic efforts, are ensuring that any new talks are credible, that is leading to denuclearisation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and of the Peninsula; the format of the talks, either a return to the Six Party Talks or with a more bilateral character; the role of intra-Korean reconciliation, where recent RoK/DPRK contacts have proved difficult and inconclusive. The HR/VP has called on the DPRK authorities to take a positive path of engagement with the international community and has passed that message directly to the Foreign Minister of the DPRK at the recent Association of Southeast Asian Nations Regional Forum Ministerial Meeting in Brunei.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008566/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Rússia trava ajuda humanitária à Síria

Depois dos intensos combates entre o exército regular e os rebeldes registados nos últimos dias na cidade de Qusair, na Síria, a Cruz Vermelha lançou um alerta para a situação dramática que se vive na região e fez um apelo para ser autorizada a deslocar as suas equipas para o local para prestar ajuda às vítimas.

No Conselho de Segurança da ONU, a Grã-Bretanha propôs um projeto de resolução que pretendia proteger os civis na cidade de Qusair, e que pedia ao governo de Bashar al-Assad que autorizasse «o acesso imediato total e sem barreiras» às organizações humanitárias.

Este documento foi vetado pelo governo russo.

Tratando-se de uma questão de ordem humanitária, de que forma reagiu ou tenciona a Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante reagir face ao veto da Rússia?

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

Ver a resposta dada à pergunta 6626/13 ([1]).

A União Europeia está preocupada com os factos referidos pelo Senhor Deputado. A AR/VP emitiu uma declaração em 1 de junho de 2013 ([2]) em que exprimia a sua profunda preocupação com o conflito armado em Qusair que causou centenas de vítimas e deixou muitos civis numa situação extremamente crítica.

Prestar assistência humanitária a todas as regiões do país continua a ser um desafio importante para todas as agências e organizações que trabalham na Síria. A UE defende um maior acesso, através de todos os canais possíveis, bem como uma presença reforçada das equipas da ajuda humanitária internacional em toda a Síria, a fim de chegar a todas as pessoas necessitadas de assistência.

No que respeita à Rússia e à sua posição no Conselho de Segurança, a Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente abordou a questão com o ministro russo dos Negócios Estrangeiros em diversas ocasiões, sendo a mais recente durante a Cimeira UE — Rússia de Yekaterinburg realizada em 3 e 4 de julho de 2013. A UE continua a instar a Rússia a apoiar os esforços da comunidade internacional no sentido de prestar ajuda humanitária à Síria. Neste contexto, a UE congratula-se com os «Elementos para a imprensa» do Conselho de Segurança das Nações Unidas de 18 de abril de 2013, em que todos os membros do Conselho de Segurança exortam todas as partes no conflito sírio a proteger os civis e a respeitar os direitos humanos e o direito humanitário internacional e recordam a responsabilidade primária das autoridades sírias a este respeito.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/pt/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm
([2]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/137369.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008566/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Russia blocks humanitarian aid to Syria

Following intense fighting between the Syrian army and rebel forces in recent days in the city of Qusair, the Red Cross has issued a warning about the tragic situation in the region and has appealed for authorisation to mobilise its teams to the region to provide aid to the victims.

The UK tabled a draft resolution in the UN Security Council which aimed to protect civilians in the city of Qusair and called on the Assad government to authorise immediate, full and unrestricted access for humanitarian organisations.

The Russian Government vetoed this document.

As this is a humanitarian issue, how did the Vice-President/High Representative react or does she intend to react to the Russian veto?

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

Please refer to the reply given to the question 6626/13 ([1]).

The EU is concerned about the mentioned facts illustrated by the Honourable MEP. The HR/VP issued a statement on 1 June 2013 ([2]) expressing deep concern at the fighting in Qusayr that caused hundreds of victims and left many civilians in an extremely critical situation.

Providing humanitarian assistance to all parts of the country remains an important challenge for all agencies and organisations working in Syria. The EU advocates increased access, through all possible channels, and strengthened presence of international humanitarian workers throughout Syria in order to reach all people in need of assistance.

With regards to Russia and its position within the Security Council, the HRVP has raised the issue with the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs on several occasions, most recently during the EU-Russia Summit in Yekaterinburg held on 3-4 July 2013. The EU continues to urge Russia to support the efforts of the international community to provide humanitarian aid to Syria. In this context, the EU very much welcomed the UNSC 'elements for the press', issued on 18 April 2013, in which all members of the Security Council urged all parties in Syria to protect civilians and respect human rights and international humanitarian law and recalling the primary responsibility of the Syrian authorities in this regard.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm.
([2]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/137369.pdf

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008567/13
à la Commission (Vice-Présidente / Haute Représentante)
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(12 juillet 2013)

Objet: VP/HR — Expulsions Orissa

Les autorités de l'État d'Orissa, en Inde, doivent accorder sans délai des recours et des réparations aux familles expulsées de force dans le district de Jagatsinghpur, dans le cadre d'un projet du géant sud-coréen de l'acier, POSCO. Ces expulsions, illégales, ont détruit les moyens de subsistance de milliers de personnes. Les autorités ont acquis les terrains sans engager de véritable consultation avec les personnes concernées, ne leur ont pas fait parvenir de préavis suffisant ni de compensation adéquate. Elles bafouent les droits de ces villageois depuis des années. Elles doivent désormais veiller à ce que les familles touchées bénéficient de recours utiles. Les responsables du gouvernement et de la police de l'Orissa ont repris les expulsions forcées le 28 juin, poursuivant leurs efforts pour acquérir les terrains destinés au projet. Le même jour, des policiers armés de matraques ont chargé les manifestants, blessant au moins 20 d'entre eux.

1. Comment réagissez-vous face à ces expulsions?

2. Est-ce que l'Union compte en faire écho lors de ses rencontres avec le gouvernementindien?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(26 août 2013)

L'Union européenne a constamment et régulièrement sensibilisé les autorités indiennes à l'importance qu'elle attache à la question de la protection des droits fonciers et à leur corollaire, c'est-à-dire l'indemnisation adéquate des personnes expulsées dans le cadre des projets d'extraction à grande échelle entrepris dans l'État d'Orissa et dans un certain nombre d'États indiens possédant d'importantes ressources minières. Cette question, qui a eu une incidence négative sur la vie des populations autochtones et des personnes défavorisées, a été examinée au cas par cas par la Commission nationale des Droits de l'homme à chaque demande d'assistance émanant des défenseurs des Droits de l'homme, ainsi qu'avec le partenaire indien de l'UE dans le cadre du dialogue UE-Inde sur les Droits de l'homme.

L'UE prend note des évolutions positives récentes comme la loi sur le droit à l'information qui, depuis 2006, accorde aux citoyens indiens l'accès aux documents ayant trait à leur affaire, un préalable indispensable à un recours en justice. Elle est cependant consciente que ces recours en justice devraient être davantage accessibles aux personnes victimes d'irrégularités et de traitements inéquitables. Faire en sorte que les victimes d'expulsions aient davantage conscience de leurs droits et que la justice soit rendue avec célérité sont quelques-unes des préoccupations qui seront exprimées dans le cadre du prochain dialogue sur les Droits de l'homme.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008567/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Evictions in Odisha

The authorities of the state of Odisha, India, must immediately offer the right to take legal action and compensation to the families evicted in Jagatsinghpur district to make way for a project proposed by the South Korean steel giant POSCO. These unlawful evictions have destroyed the livelihoods of thousands of people. The authorities purchased land without properly consulting the individuals concerned, or giving adequate notice or compensation. They have been violating the rights of these villagers for years. They must now ensure that the affected families are granted an effective right of appeal. Officials from the Odisha government and police resumed forced evictions on 28 June 2013 in a further effort to acquire land for the project. On the same day, police baton-charged protestors, injuring at least 20 people.

1. What is your reaction to these evictions?

2. Does the EU intend to raise this issue in its meetings with the Indian Government?

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

The EU has consistently and regularly been raising with Indian authorities the importance it gives to the issue of the protection of land rights and its corollary, i.e. due compensation for evictions in the context of mass scale extraction projects in Odisha and a number of mineral-rich States of India. The issue which has had an adverse impact on indigenous and less privileged people has been addressed on a case-by-case basis with the National Human Rights Commission whenever assistance was sought by human rights defenders, as well as with the EU's Indian partner in the framework of the EU-India Human Rights Dialogue.

While taking note of recent positive developments such as the Right to Information Act, which since 2006 grants Indian citizens access to documents pertaining to their case, a pre-requisite to appeal in court, the EU is aware that access to justice should further be facilitated for those complaining of malpractice and unfair treatment. Enhancing the rights' awareness of those evicted as well as ensuring speedy justice are part of the concerns that will be conveyed in the framework of the forthcoming Human Rights Dialogue.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008569/13
à la Commission (Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante)
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(12 juillet 2013)

Objet: VP/HR — Liberté d'expression en Gambie

En Gambie, un nouveau projet de loi prévoyant de longues peines de prison et de lourdes amendes pour les personnes critiquant sur Internet des représentants du gouvernement représente une attaque scandaleuse contre la liberté d'expression, a déclaré Amnesty International.

Avec ce nouveau projet de loi, qui entend réprimer la dissidence jusque sur Internet, les restrictions en matière de liberté d'expression atteignent un niveau choquant en Gambie. Au titre du projet de loi 2013 portant modification de la loi sur l'information et la communication, un simple dessin humoristique ou une satire pourrait valoir à son auteur jusqu'à quinze années de réclusion et une amende pouvant atteindre trois millions de dalasis (environ 64 000 euros).

Si ce projet de loi prévoit des sanctions en cas d'«instigation à la violence contre le gouvernement ou des fonctionnaires», il vise également toute personne qui «caricature ou tient des propos désobligeants envers des représentants de l'État» ou qui imite ou se fait passer pour un fonctionnaire.

1. Quelle est votre position sur ce dossier? Trouvez-vous normal que les autorités gambiennes fassent tout ce qui est en leur pouvoir pour empêcher les gens de les critiquer?

2. Partagez-vous notre indignation quant au fait que les autorités aient notamment fermé des stations de radios et des journaux, expulsé des journalistes étrangers et emprisonné des militants et maintenant, qu'elles s'en prennent à Internet?

3. Allez-vous émettre une réaction officielle?

4. Comptez-vous provoquer une réunion avec les autorités du pays?

Réponse donnée par la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante Ashton au nom de la Commission
(24 septembre 2013)

La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante a connaissance de l'adoption récente, par l'Assemblée nationale gambienne, d'une modification de la loi d'information et de communication de 2009 portant notamment sur la «diffusion de fausses informations». La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante est préoccupée par la sévérité disproportionnée des sanctions prévues par ce projet de loi, qui n'aura valeur de loi qu'après sa signature par le Président.

Quelques jours après l'adoption de cette modification par l'Assemblée nationale gambienne, l'Union européenne a exprimé son inquiétude sur ce point lors d'une réunion bilatérale à Banjul entre le directeur général pour l'Afrique du SEAE et le président de la Gambie ainsi qu'à l'égard d'autres questions essentielles en matière de bonne gouvernance et de Droits de l'homme, notamment les questions plus vastes de la liberté d'expression et de l'indépendance des médias. Lors de la réunion de dialogue politique avec le gouvernement gambien au titre de l'article 8, qui s'est tenue le 11 juillet, l'UE a réitéré l'expression de ces préoccupations et a fait part de ses attentes en termes d'amélioration de la situation des Droits de l'homme dans ce pays aux représentants de la Gambie. La possibilité d'entamer une procédure au titre de l'article 96 de l'accord de Cotonou (laquelle pourrait aboutir à la suspension de l'aide de l'UE à la Gambie, dont elle est le premier donateur) si les violations aux principes de bonne gouvernance, des Droits de l'homme et de l'État de droit continuent a été mentionnée expressément.

L'UE aide la Gambie avec un projet important sur la bonne gouvernance, mis en œuvre dans le cadre du 10e Fonds européen de développement, et qui prévoit des actions visant, entre autres, à améliorer l'exercice effectif de la liberté de la presse. Par ce volet, l'UE contribue à la révision du cadre juridique en matière des médias, ce qui rendrait la législation gambienne conforme aux normes internationales, de clarifierait les définitions de la diffamation et de la sédition. Le programme financera également la rédaction d'un code professionnel pour les journalistes et la formation des journalistes au sein de l'université de la Gambie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008569/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Freedom of expression in The Gambia

A new bill in The Gambia which could impose lengthy prison sentences and hefty fines for criticising government officials on the Internet has been criticised by Amnesty International as an outrageous attack on freedom of expression.

The proposed Information and Communication (Amendment) Act 2013, intended to repress dissent even on the Internet, takes the restriction of freedom of expression in the Gambia to a shocking new level. Under the proposed legislation a simple cartoon or satirical comedy could carry up to 15 years in jail and a fine of up to of three million dalasis (approx EUR 64 000).

While the bill imposes penalties for 'instigating violence against the government or public officials', it also targets individuals who 'caricature or make derogatory statements against officials' or 'impersonate public officials'.

1. What is the attitude of the Vice-President of the Commission/ High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to this situation? Is it considered normal that the Gambian authorities are doing all they can to prevent people from criticising them?

2. Does the High Representative share our indignation over the authorities' closure of radio stations and newspapers, their expulsion of foreign journalists and the imprisonment of activists, and now this attack on the Internet?

3. Does the High Representative intend to express an official reaction?

4. Does the High Representative intend to seek a meeting with the Gambian authorities?

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

The HR/VP is aware of the recent adoption by the Gambia's National Assembly of an amendment to the 2009 Information and Communication Act, notably in the area of '*spreading false news*'. The HR/VP is concerned with the disproportionately severe sanctions stipulated by this bill, which has yet to be signed by the President, if it is to become a law.

A few days after its adoption by the National Assembly, the EU concerns about this amendment were raised in a bilateral meeting in Banjul between the EEAS Managing Director for Africa and the President of The Gambia, alongside other key governance and human rights issues, including wider issues of freedom of expression and the media. These concerns were reiterated in the Art. 8 political dialogue meeting held with the Gambian government on 11 July and expectations in terms of improving the situation of human rights in the country were presented to the Gambian side. The possibility to start Article 96 procedures under the Cotonou agreement (potentially leading to suspension of EU aid to the Gambia, where it is the largest donor) was specifically mentioned, should violations to governance, human rights and the rule of law continue.

The EU is supporting The Gambia with an important governance project implemented under the 10th European Development Fund, which includes actions aimed, *inter alia*, at improving effective exercise of press freedom. Through the latter component, the EU contributes to revising the legal framework on the media, which would put the Gambian legislation in conformity with international standards, clarify the definitions of libel and sedition. The programme will also support the drafting of a professional code for journalists and training of journalists within the University of The Gambia.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008571/13
à la Commission (Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante)
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(12 juillet 2013)

Objet: VP/HR — Torture au Liban

Les autorités libanaises doivent mener une enquête approfondie sur la mort en détention de Nader al Bayoumi, 35 ans, arrêté à la suite des affrontements armés qui ont opposé au mois de juin l'armée libanaise à des combattants soutenant le chef religieux sunnite Sheikh Ahmed al Assir à Saïda, dans le sud du Liban. Dans une nouvelle synthèse publiée mardi 9 juillet, plusieurs ONG rendent également compte des allégations de torture et de mauvais traitements formulées par d'autres personnes arrêtées, dont un mineur.

Les zones d'ombre qui entourent la mort de Nader al Bayoumi, dont le corps a été restitué trois jours après son arrestation, sont inacceptables. Il est crucial que soit menée sans délai une enquête indépendante et transparente sur son décès.

Les témoignages d'au moins trois détenus qui ont expliqué avoir été torturés par l'armée et les services de renseignements libanais ont été recueillis. L'un d'entre eux, âgé de 15 ans, a raconté avoir subi des décharges électriques et avoir été frappé à coups de ceinture et de bâton, avant d'être contraint de signer de faux «aveux».

Ces allégations de torture sont alarmantes; tous les détenus doivent être protégés, avoir la possibilité de consulter un avocat et bénéficier de tous les soins médicaux dont ils pourraient avoir besoin.

1. Quelle est votre réaction à ce genre d'agissements?

2. S'agit-il à vos yeux d'une violation évidente des droits humains?

3. Comptez-vous contacter les autorités libanaises et évoquer le sujet?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(5 septembre 2013)

La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante est profondément préoccupée par les violations des Droits de l'homme perpétrées au Liban et suit la question de près. En particulier, la délégation de l'UE entretient des contacts réguliers sur ces sujets avec les ministères libanais des affaires étrangères et de l'intérieur. Les préoccupations de l'UE ont été rapportées aux autorités compétentes à de nombreuses occasions, entre autres dans le cadre du sous-comité UE-Liban sur les Droits de l'homme, la démocratie et la gouvernance qui s'est réuni à Beyrouth, le 23 avril 2013. L'UE continuera à inciter les autorités libanaises à prendre des mesures appropriées afin de garantir le respect des Droits de l'homme des détenus.

Enfin, l'UE surveille en permanence la situation sur le terrain et entretient un dialogue constant avec les principales parties prenantes dans le but de prendre des mesures appropriées, en particulier dans les circonstances actuelles, selon le contexte politique.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008571/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Torture in Lebanon

The Lebanese authorities must conduct an exhaustive inquiry into the case of Nader al-Bayoumi, a 35-year-old man who, having been arrested in the wake of the June fighting in the southern city of Sidon between the army and armed supporters of the Sunni religious leader Sheikh Ahmed al-Asseer, died while he was in custody. A new NGO briefing published on Tuesday, 9 July also quotes allegations of torture and ill-treatment made by other detainees, one of whom is a child.

It is unacceptable that the death of Nader al-Bayoumi, whose body was returned to his family three days after his arrest, should be shrouded in mystery. A transparent independent investigation has to be carried out without delay in order to establish how he died.

Evidence has been obtained from at least three detainees who have said that they were tortured by the Lebanese army and intelligence services. One of them, aged 15, claims to have been given electric shocks and hit with a belt and a cudgel before being forced to sign false 'confessions'.

These allegations of torture are alarming. All detainees must be protected; they must be allowed to consult a lawyer and receive whatever medical attention they might require.

1. How does the Vice-President/High Representative view actions of this kind?

2. Does she believe them to amount to a clear violation of human rights?

3. Will she raise the matter with the Lebanese authorities?

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

The HR/VP is deeply concerned regarding the violation of human rights in Lebanon and follows the issue closely. In particular, the EU Delegation keeps regular contacts with the Lebanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Interior on these matters. The EU's concerns have been expressed at numerous occasions to the competent authorities *inter alia* in the context of the EU-Lebanon Sub-Committee on Human Rights, Democracy and Governance which took place in Beirut on 23 April 2013. The EU will continue to urge the Lebanese authorities to take the appropriate measures to ensure that detainees' human rights are fully respected.

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.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008573/13
à la Commission (Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante)
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(12 juillet 2013)

Objet: VP/HR — Torture au Kazakhstan

Dans un rapport rendu public jeudi 11 juillet 2013, Amnesty International dénonce l'impunité dont jouissent les forces de sécurité et l'omniprésence de la torture dans les centres de détention.

Ce rapport, intitulé Old habits: The routine use of torture and other ill-treatment in Kazakhstan, précise qu'au moins 15 personnes ont été tuées et plus d'une centaine d'autres grièvement blessées lorsque les forces de sécurité ont fait usage d'une force excessive et meurtrière pour disperser des manifestants à Janaozen, en décembre 2011. Des dizaines de personnes ont été arrêtées par les forces de l'ordre et torturées dans des cellules souterraines surpeuplées de la police.

Amnesty International appelle le président à autoriser et à faciliter l'ouverture d'une enquête internationale indépendante sur le recours à la force meurtrière par les forces de sécurité à Janaozen en décembre 2011, comme l'a recommandé la Haut-Commissaire des Nations unies aux Droits de l'homme, Navi Pillay. Les forces de sécurité du Kazakhstan ont blessé et tué des gens lors de la dispersion des manifestations à Janaozen, elles ont torturé les personnes arrêtées et les ont mises dans des prisons où les conditions de détention s'apparentent à des mauvais traitements, tandis que les autorités leur garantissaient l'impunité en n'enquêtant pas sur ces agissements, en violation flagrante de leurs obligations. Bien que les autorités n'aient cessé d'affirmer qu'elles avaient mené des enquêtes approfondies et impartiales, 17 mois après les violences de Janaozen, justice n'a toujours pas été rendue pour le recours à une force excessive et meurtrière, les détentions arbitraires ainsi que la torture et les autres mauvais traitements qui se sont traduits par des procès inéquitables pour des dizaines de personnes. Amnesty international conclut: «Les promesses du gouvernement du président Nazarbaïev devant les Nations unies resteront sans lendemain tant qu'il n'autorisera pas une enquête internationale entièrement indépendante pour réaliser ce que les autorités kazakhes n'ont pas su accomplir en plus d'un an. Sans une telle enquête, les forces de sécurité continueront d'agir en toute impunité».

1. Quelle est votre position sur ce dossier?

2. Selon vous, y-a-t-il violation des Droits de l'homme?

3. Allez-vous aborder le sujet avec les autorités nationales?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(10 octobre 2013)

La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante a pris bonne note des points soulevés dans la question et elle suit le sujet avec attention, tant depuis Bruxelles qu'à travers la délégation de l'UE à Astana.

La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante fait remarquer que le gouvernement kazakh a adopté, il y a peu, une loi relative au mécanisme national de prévention de la torture. Plus récemment, la délégation de l'UE a examiné avec la Coalition d'ONG contre la torture au Kazakhstan la mise en œuvre, par les organismes publics kazakhs, du plan d'action national pour les Droits de l'homme 2009-2012 et en particulier celle de la section afférante au droit de ne pas être soumis à des actes de torture ou à des traitements cruels ou dégradants.

L'UE soutient pleinement la position de la Haut-Commissaire des Nations unies aux Droits de l'homme qui estime qu'une enquête internationale indépendante serait le meilleur moyen d'obtenir une vision claire de la situation.

Les points soulevés dans la question ont été abordés avec les autorités kazakhes lors du récent conseil de coopération et le seront à nouveau à l'occasion du prochain dialogue sur les Droits de l'homme.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008573/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Torture in Kazakhstan

In a report published on Thursday, 11 July 2013 Amnesty International speaks out against the impunity enjoyed by the Kazakh security forces and the fact that torture remains commonplace in detention centres.

The report, entitled *Old Habits: The Routine Use of Torture and Other Ill-Treatment in Kazakhstan*, states that at least 15 people were killed and over a hundred others seriously injured as a result of the excessive — not to say lethal — force used by the security forces when they clashed with demonstrators in Zhanaozen in December 2011. Dozens were arrested by the security forces and tortured in overcrowded underground police cells.

Amnesty International is calling on the Kazakh President to authorise and facilitate an independent international investigation, as recommended by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, into the use of lethal force by the security forces in Zhanaozen in December 2011. The Kazakh security forces killed and wounded people when they broke up the demonstrations in Zhanaozen; and they tortured those whom they had arrested and put them in prisons where the conditions of detention in themselves constitute ill-treatment. The authorities, for their part, have let them go unpunished; and their failure to investigate such abuses flies in the face of their obligations. Although the authorities have continually insisted that they have carried out thorough and impartial investigations, 17 months on from the violence in Zhanaozen, justice has still not been done, neither for the use of lethally excessive force nor for the arbitrary arrests, the torture, and the other forms of ill-treatment, which have been followed by scores of unfair trials. By way of a conclusion, Amnesty International takes the view that the promises which President Nazarbaev's Government has made before the United Nations will remain hollow for as long as it does not allow a fully independent international investigation to do what the Kazakh authorities have not managed to achieve in more than a year. Without such an investigation, Amnesty maintains, the security forces will continue to act with complete impunity.

1. What attitude is the Vice-President/High Representative taking to this matter?

2. Does she believe that human rights are being violated?

3. Does she intend to raise the subject with the national authorities?

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

The HR/VP has taken good note of the issues raised in the question and is following the subject closely, both from Brussels and through the EU Delegation in Astana.

The HR/VP notes that the Kazakh government has recently passed a legislation on National Preventive Mechanism against torture. The EU Delegation has most recently worked with the Kazakhstan NGOs Coalition against torture on the review of implementation of the 2009-2012 National Action Plan on Human Rights by state bodies of Kazakhstan and in particular the section on the right not to be subject to torture and other crual or degrading treatments.

The EU fully supports the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in stating that the best way to reach a clear view of the situation would be through an independent international investigation.

The issues mentioned in the question have already been raised with the authorities of Kazakhstan in the recent Cooperation Council, and will be dealt with again at the forthcoming human rights dialogue.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008575/13
au Conseil
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(12 juillet 2013)

Objet: Europe en mal d'union bancaire

On a vu dans l'affaire Dexia et Fortis, pour ne citer que ces cas-là, combien il nous manquait un processus de décision rapide. Dans la zone euro, les banques sont de moins en moins nationales au moment où les autorités de supervision et de résolution sont nationales.

1. N'y-a-t-il pas pour le Conseil un non-sens absolu dans cette équation?

2. Quel est l'agenda d'une vraie union bancaire?

Réponse
(7 octobre 2013)

Dans ses conclusions du 28 juin 2013, le Conseil européen a rappelé les éléments clés de l'union bancaire et le calendrier pour leur adoption ([1]):

«a) les nouvelles règles relatives aux exigences de fonds propres pour les banques (CRR/CRD) et le nouveau mécanisme de surveillance unique (MSU) joueront un rôle fondamental pour assurer la stabilité du secteur bancaire;

b) au cours de la phase de transition vers le MSU, il sera procédé à une évaluation des bilans, qui comprend un examen de la qualité des actifs suivi d'un test de résistance. Dans ce contexte, les États membres participant au MSU prendront toutes les dispositions utiles, y compris la mise en place de dispositifs nationaux de soutien, avant l'achèvement de cet exercice;

c) l'Eurogroupe s'est mis d'accord sur les principales caractéristiques du cadre opérationnel pour la recapitalisation directe des banques par le Mécanisme européen de stabilité (MES). Il convient de poursuivre les travaux afin que, une fois mis en place un mécanisme de surveillance unique effectif, le Mécanisme européen de stabilité ait, à la suite d'une décision ordinaire, la possibilité de recapitaliser directement les banques;

d) le Conseil européen a salué l'accord intervenu au sein du Conseil sur le projet de directive établissant un cadre pour le redressement et la résolution des défaillances des banques et invité le Conseil et le Parlement à engager des négociations en vue de l'adoption de la directive avant la fin de l'année. Il a également exprimé le souhait que la proposition relative aux systèmes de garantie des dépôts soit adoptée avant la fin de l'année;

e) afin de produire pleinement ses effets, le MSU doit, pour les banques relevant de sa compétence, s'appuyer sur un mécanisme de résolution unique (MRU). Le Conseil européen attend avec intérêt la proposition de la Commission établissant un mécanisme de résolution unique, l'objectif étant qu'un accord intervienne au sein du Conseil avant la fin de l'année, de manière à ce que la proposition puisse être adoptée avant la fin de la législature actuelle. La Commission compte adopter, à l'été 2013, des règles révisées en matière d'aides d'État en faveur du secteur financier afin de garantir l'égalité de traitement dans les décisions de résolution faisant intervenir un soutien des pouvoirs publics».

Pour le Conseil, achever l'union bancaire conformément aux conclusions du Conseil européen afin d'assurer la stabilité financière, de réduire la fragmentation financière et de rétablir des conditions normales d'octroi de crédits à l'économie revêt clairement un caractère prioritaire.

En particulier, le Parlement européen et le Conseil mènent actuellement des négociations en vue de parvenir à un accord en première lecture sur un projet de directive établissant un cadre pour le redressement et la résolution des défaillances d'établissements de crédit et d' entreprises d'investissement.

([1]) EUCO 104/2/13, p. 9.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008575/13
to the Council
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Why Europe needs a banking union

The Dexia and Fortis bank sagas, to cite but two examples, have highlighted just how badly the EU needs a process for rapid decision making. Banks in the eurozone today are increasingly international, yet supervisory and resolution authorities are national.

1. Does the Council not consider this a nonsensical situation?

2. What are the plans and likely timescale for a genuine banking union?

Reply
(7 October 2013)

In its Conclusions of 28 June 2013 the European Council recalled the key elements of the Banking Union and the timetable for their adoption ([1]):

'(a) the new rules on capital requirements for banks (CRR/CRD) and the new Single Supervisory Mechanism (SSM) will have a key role in ensuring the stability of the banking sector;

(b) in the transition towards the SSM, a balance sheet assessment will be conducted, comprising an asset quality review and subsequently a stress test. In this context, Member States taking part in the SSM will make all appropriate arrangements, including the establishment of national backstops, ahead of the completion of this exercise;

(c) the Eurogroup has agreed on the main features of the operational framework for direct bank recapitalisation by the European Stability Mechanism (ESM). Work should continue so that, when an effective single supervisory mechanism is established, the European Stability Mechanism will, following a regular decision, have the possibility to recapitalise banks directly;

(d) the European Council welcomed the agreement reached in Council on the draft directive establishing a framework for the recovery and resolution of banks and invited the Council and Parliament to start negotiations with the aim of adopting the directive before the end of the year. It also called for the adoption before the end of the year of the proposal for a Deposit Guarantee Scheme;

(e) a fully effective SSM requires a Single Resolution Mechanism (SRM) for banks covered by the SSM. The European Council looks forward to the Commission's proposal establishing an SRM with a view to reaching agreement in the Council by the end of the year so that it can be adopted before the end of the current parliamentary term. The Commission intends to adopt revised state aid rules for the financial sector in the summer of 2013 with a view to ensuring a level playing-field in resolution decisions involving public support.'

It is a clear priority for the Council to complete the Banking Union in line with the European Council conclusions to ensure financial stability, reduce financial fragmentation and restore normal lending to the economy.

In particular, the European Parliament and the Council are currently engaged in negotiations with a view to an agreement at first reading on a draft Directive establishing a framework for the recovery and resolution of credit institutions and investment firms ([2]).

([1]) EUCO 104/2/13, p. 9.
([2]) 11066/12.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008576/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(12 juillet 2013)

Objet: Europe en mal d'union bancaire

On a vu dans l'affaire Dexia et Fortis, pour ne citer que ces cas-là, combien il nous manquait un processus de décision rapide. Dans la zone euro, les banques sont de moins en moins nationales au moment où les autorités de supervision et de résolution sont nationales.

1. N'y-a-t-il pas pour la Commission un non-sens absolu dans cette équation?

2. Que compte mettre en place la Commission pour corriger cela?

3. Quel est l'agenda d'une vraie union bancaire?

Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission
(3 septembre 2013)

1. La Commission estime qu'un mécanisme unique et centralisé de surveillance et de restructuration des banques est indispensable pour assurer la stabilité financière et la croissance dans l'Union européenne, en particulier au sein de la zone euro.

2. En s'appuyant sur le solide cadre réglementaire commun aux 28 États membres (le «règlement uniforme»), la Commission a donc proposé des mesures visant à créer une union bancaire. En septembre 2012, elle a, dans un premier temps, proposé un mécanisme de surveillance unique (MSU) pour les banques, dirigé par la Banque centrale européenne, qui garantira une surveillance cohérente et de haute qualité des banques dans la zone euro et dans les autres États membres participants. En juillet 2013, elle a ensuite proposé un mécanisme de résolution unique (MRU), qui appliquera de façon cohérente et centralisée les règles de fond de la future directive sur le redressement et la résolution bancaires, en garantissant la prise de décisions cohérentes en matière de résolution bancaire et la mise en place de dispositifs communs de financement des procédures de résolution.

3. La Commission prévoit que le mécanisme de surveillance unique sera pleinement opérationnel dans les meilleurs délais, en 2014. Le mécanisme de résolution unique devrait commencer ses activités en janvier 2015, date prévue d'entrée en vigueur de la réglementation régissant la résolution des défaillances bancaires dans le marché intérieur.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008576/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Why Europe needs a banking union

The Dexia and Fortis bank sagas, to cite but two examples, have highlighted just how badly the EU needs a process for rapid decision making. Banks in the eurozone today are increasingly international, yet supervisory and resolution authorities are national.

1. Does the Commission not consider this a nonsensical situation?

2. What structures does the Commission intend to put in place to rectify the problem?

3. What are the plans and likely timescale for a genuine banking union?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(3 September 2013)

1. The Commission believes that a single centralised mechanism for the supervision and restructuring of banks is indispensable to ensure financial stability and growth in the European Union, and in particular the euro area.

2. Building on the strong regulatory framework common to the 28 Member States (single rulebook), the Commission has therefore proposed measures to create a Banking Union. As a first step, in September 2012, the Commission proposed a single supervisory mechanism for banks (SSM) led by the European Central Bank, which will ensure coehrent and high quality supervision of banks in the euro area and in other participating Member States. In July 2013, the Commission proposed also a single resolution mechanism (SRM) which will apply the substantive rules of the future Bank Recovery and Resolution Directive in a coherent and centralised way ensuring consistent decisions for the resolution of banks, and common resolution financing arrangements.

3. The Commission expects that the SSM will be fully operational as rapidly as possible in 2014. The SRM should commence operations in January 2015, when the rulebook governing bank resolution across the internal market is set to enter into force.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008577/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(12 juillet 2013)

Objet: Accord UE-Algérie améliorable

Répondant aux critiques émises par les opposants algériens à ce partenariat énergétique, qui estiment que l'accord est inégal et désavantage fortement l'Algérie, José Manuel Barroso a reconnu que «le volet commercial du partenariat UE-Algérie, dont l'accord d'association est le point d'ancrage, peut certainement être encore amélioré, élargi et diversifié».

La Commission pourrait-elle nous apporter des explications précises sur ces améliorations, élargissements et diversifications?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(18 octobre 2013)

L'Union européenne estime que son partenariat avec l'Algérie dans le domaine de l'énergie est solide et profitable aux deux parties.

Le 7 juillet 2013, le président de la Commission européenne José Manuel Barroso et le Premier ministre algérien Abdelmalek Sellal ont signé un Mémorandum d'entente sur l'établissement d'un partenariat stratégique dans le domaine de l'énergie ([1]). Sa mise en œuvre se traduira, de fait, par un élargissement et une diversification de la coopération entre l'UE et l'Algérie.

Outre la question énergétique, l'établissement d'étroites relations économiques et commerciales avec l'Algérie dans l'intérêt des deux parties a toujours été une priorité pour l'UE. L'Accord d'association, conclu en 2005, offre de nombreuses possibilités d'approfondir les relations entre l'UE et l'Algérie, comme la mise en œuvre progressive du libre-échange de marchandises sur une période de 12 ans, à compter de septembre 2005, ou l'accès préférentiel des produits agricoles sous forme de quotas, encore partiellement sous-utilisés.

De même, les discussions en cours sur un premier plan d'action UE-Algérie permettront de fixer de nouveaux objectifs à moyen et à long terme, tels que, la préparation de négociations en vue de la conclusion d'un accord relatif à l'évaluation de la conformité et à l'acceptation des produits industriels (ACAA) ainsi que le soutien de l'accession de l'Algérie à l'Organisation mondiale du commerce (OMC).

Au-delà de la dimension commerciale des relations Nord-Sud, l'UE continue d'encourager l'intégration économique régionale dans la région du Sud de la Méditerranée, dans le cadre de l'Union du Maghreb arabe, ainsi que l'extension de l'accord d'Agadir à d'autres partenaires méditerranéens arabes.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/energy/international/bilateral_cooperation/algeria_fr.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008577/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Scope for improving the EU-Algeria agreement

In response to criticism of the energy partnership from Algerian opposition groups, who consider the agreement unfair and greatly disadvantageous to Algeria, José Manuel Barroso has acknowledged that the trade chapter of the EU-Algeria association is merely an anchoring point which can be improved, expanded and diversified.

Can the Commission say precisely how it could be improved, expanded and diversified?

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

The EU deems that the partnership with Algeria on energy matters is solid and reciprocally advantageous.

On 7 July 2013, the President of the European Commission signed with the Algerian Prime Minister A. Sellal a Memorandum on the establishment of a strategic partnership in the area of energy ([1]). The implementation of this Memorandum will indeed expand and diversify the Algeria-EU cooperation.

Beside the energy issue, developing strong economic and commercial relations with Algeria with mutual benefits was always an EU priority. The Association Agreement which dates back to 2005 provides numerous possibilities for the deepening of EU-Algeria relations, such as the gradual implementation of free trade in goods over 12 years starting in September 2005 or the preferential access for agricultural products in the form of quotas which are still partly under-utilised.

Likewise, ongoing discussions on a first EU-Algeria Action Plan will also enable to agree new medium and long term targets, such as the preparation for the negotiations of an agreement on conformity assessment and acceptance of industrial products (ACAA) and supporting Algeria's accession to the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

Beyond the North-South trade dimension, the EU continues to encourage regional economic integration in the southern Mediterranean region in the framework of the Arab Maghreb Union and the extension of the membership of the Agadir Agreement to other Arab Mediterranean partners.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/energy/international/bilateral_cooperation/algeria_en.htm

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008578/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(12 juillet 2013)

Objet: Orphacol: dérapage de la Commission

Le 4 juillet 2013, la Commission s'est fait désavouer par la justice européenne qui a annulé sa décision refusant de mettre sur le marché un médicament orphelin, l'Orphacol, destiné à traiter une maladie rare et mortelle du foie. C'est la fin d'un cauchemar bureaucratique pour CTRS, le petit laboratoire français qui commercialise ce produit dans l'Hexagone, la Commission s'étant acharnée pendant presque 4 ans, en s'appuyant sur des arguties juridiques balayées par le Tribunal de l'Union européenne, pour avoir la peau de l'Orphacol. Sans doute pour complaire à un laboratoire américain — Asklepion Pharmaceuticals —, qui voulait s'emparer du marché. Il s'agit d'une première, la Commission s'étant toujours contentée, faute d'expertise scientifique propre, de valider les avis de l'Agence européenne du médicament (AEM), basée à Londres. Le Tribunal de Luxembourg, saisi par CTRS, appuyé par la France, la Grande-Bretagne, l'Autriche, le Danemark et la République tchèque, réduit en lambeaux tous les arguments de la Commission.

1. La Commission compte-t-elle faire appel?

2. Que retire la Commission de ses nombreuses erreurs dans ce dossier?

3. Pourquoi la Commission a-t-elle demandé des tests cliniques afin de «fournir des données complètes», alors que la chose est contraire à toute déontologie dans le cas d'une maladie rare, puisqu'un essai clinique exposerait les patients au risque de lésions hépatiques graves, voire de décès?

4. Pourquoi la Commission a-t-elle prétendu qu'à défaut de tests, il fallait prouver un «usage médical bien établi» pendant au moins dix ans, alors que, pour elle, ce délai ne court qu'à partir de 1997, date du dépôt de la marque Orphacol, et non pas de 1993, car, à l'époque, il s'agissait d'une «simple préparation pharmaceutique» hospitalière…?

5. La Commission accepte-t-elle le fait que l'argument précité ne tient pas la route puisqu'il s'agit bien de la même substance active, même si elle a été utilisée sans autorisation de mise sur le marché, et que seul le nom a changé?

6. En outre, il n'est pas contesté qu'il n'existe aucun médicament mis sur le marché permettant de soigner les affections hépatiques en cause, susceptibles d'entraîner rapidement le décès de la personne affectée. Comment dès lors, dans l'article paru dans Libération, Frédéric Vincent, le porte-parole du commissaire chargé de la santé, a-t-il osé arguer de manière totalement fallacieuse du fait qu'il existait bien un traitement alternatif: «la greffe du foie»?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(21 août 2013)

La Commission examine actuellement les conséquences de l'arrêt du Tribunal dans l'affaire T-301/12 — Laboratoires CTRS contre Commission (Orphacol).

L'interprétation des règles par la Commission, qui a conduit au refus de l'autorisation de mise sur le marché de l'Orphacol, visait à garantir le maintien de critères élevés concernant les données que toute entreprise pharmaceutique doit produire concernant l'efficacité et la sécurité du médicament avant la délivrance de l'autorisation de mise sur le marché.

La Commission a demandé des données complètes à la suite de la position de la Cour de Justice européenne dans une affaire antérieure concernant les demandes sur base bibliographique ([1]).

Cependant, la Commission n'a pas demandé la réalisation d'essais cliniques à l'appui de la demande concernant l'Orphacol, pas plus qu'elle n'a exigé la preuve d'un usage bien établi depuis 1997. Sur ce point, la Commission a considéré que l'utilisation en France conformément à l'article 5 n'avait débuté qu'en 2007. Ce point de vue est conforme à l'avis des États membres sur ce point particulier, exprimé lors de la réunion du comité permanent.

([1]) Affaire C-440/93, The Queen/Licensing Authority of the Department of Health and Norgine, ex parte Scotia Pharmaceuticals, Rec. 1995, p. I-2851.

L'utilisation de traitements autres que ceux à base d'acide cholique pour les pathologies concernées est citée dans les données bibliographiques communiquées à l'appui de la demande d'autorisation de mise sur le marché de l'Orphacol, comme précisé dans le rapport d'évaluation du CHMP.

Cette affaire montre l'importance de la validation des demandes d'autorisation de mise sur le marché et des mesures appropriées ont été prises pour renforcer cette étape de la procédure.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008578/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Orphacol: serious error by the Commission

On 4 July 2013 the Commission was ordered by the European Court of Justice (ECJ) to reverse its refusal to authorise Orphacol, an orphan drug used to treat a rare fatal liver condition. This marks the end of a bureaucratic nightmare for CTRS, a small French laboratory that markets Orphacol in France and which the Commission has victimised for four years on the basis of flimsy legal arguments that the ECJ has now comprehensively refuted. This campaign was probably carried out at the behest of an American laboratory, Asklepion Pharmaceuticals, that wished to take over the market. This is a first; up until now the Commission, which has no scientific expertise of its own, has always blindly followed the opinion of the European Medicines Agency in London. The ECJ, seized by CTRS with the support of France, the UK, Austria, Denmark and the Czech Republic, has shown that, legally, the Commission did not have a leg to stand on.

1. Does the Commission intend to appeal?

2. What lessons will the Commission draw from the many mistakes it made in this case?

3. Why did the Commission demand clinical tests to provide comprehensive data when this is unethical in the case of a rare disease, since a clinical trial would expose patients to the risk of serious liver damage or even death?

4. Why did the Commission claim that evidence of 'well-established medicinal use' of at least 10 years had to be established from 1997, when Orphacol was registered as a trademark, and not 1993 since it was then a mere 'pharmaceutical preparation' used in hospitals?

5. Does the Commission acknowledge that the above argument does not hold water because it concerns the same active substance used without a marketing authorisation and under a different name?

6. The fact that there is no other drug on the market that can treat the potentially rapidly fatal liver conditions in question is not in doubt. Why then was Frédéric Vincent, the Commission's spokesman for health and consumer affairs, quoted in the *Libération* newspaper making the ludicrous claim that there was indeed an alternative course of treatment, namely a liver transplant?

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

The Commission is considering the consequences of the judgment of the general court in Case T-301/12 — Laboratoires CTRS v Commission (Orphacol).

The Commission's interpretation of the rules that led to the refusal of the marketing authorisation for Orphacol was designed to maintain a high threshold in terms of the data that must be developed by any pharmaceutical company about the efficacy and safety of a medicine before a marketing authorisation is granted.

The Commission requested comprehensive data following the position expressed by the European Court of Justice at a previous case concerning bibliographic applications. ([1]) However, the Commission did not require for Orphacol that clinical tests be conducted for this application, nor did it require that the well-established use had to be established since 1997. On this point, the Commission took the position that the use in accordance with Article 5 in France had only taken place since 2007. This date was in conformity with the position of the Member States on this specific question during the standing committee.

([1]) C-440/93, The Queen / Licensing Authority of the Department of Health and Norgine, ex parte Scotia Pharmaceuticals, ECR 1995 p. I-2851.

The use of treatments other than cholic acid for the treatment of the relevant conditions is referred in the literature data submitted as part of the marketing authorisation for Orphacol, as it is explained in the assessment report of the CHMP.

The case has shown the importance of the validation of marketing authorisation applications and appropriate steps have been taken to strengthen this step of the procedure.

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-008579/13
до Комисията
Monika Panayotova (PPE)
(12 юли 2013 г.)

Относно: Потенциал на доброволчеството за повишаване конкурентоспособността на младите хора на пазара на труда

Вземайки предвид 2011 г. — Европейска година на доброволческата дейност, както и доклада на Европейската комисия от декември (COM(2012) 781 final), свързан с нея, бих искала да отправя на Вашето внимание следните въпроси по отношение на направения от Вас обзор, както и на постигнатите резултати, които биха били полезни в дебата за образованието и конкурентоспособността на младите:

1. Каква е Вашата оценка за Европейската година на доброволческата дейност, считате ли, че постигнатото ще има устойчив характер и влияние в дългосрочен план? Бихте ли посочили примери за инициативи, които са проведени в сферата на доброволчеството от страна на ЕК, след 2011 г.? Съществува ли унифицирана система за обмен на идеи за успешни доброволчески практики и дейности между държавите членки?

2. Доброволчеството притежава потенциала да развива трансверсалните и меки умения на младите хора, които често трудно биват постигани пълноценнно в рамките на традиционното образование. В контекста на настоящия дебат за повишаване конкурентоспособността на младите хора на пазара на труда и подобряване на възможностите им за намиране на работа, чрез адаптация и реформа на образователната система в съзвучие със съвременните тенденции, доброволчеството би могло да има своята добавена стойност.

В тази връзка възнамерява ли Европейската комисия да насочи вниманието на заинтересованите страни в дебата към неизползвания потенциал на доброволчеството за развитието на умения в младите хора? Предвидени ли са конкретни инициативи в това отношение? Как и под каква форма би могло то да бъде интегрирано в учебните програми?

Отговор, даден от г-жа Vassiliou от името на Комисията
(18 септември 2013 г.)

Комисията споделя мнението на уважаемия член на Европейския парламент относно ползата от доброволчеството не само като подход, изразяващ форма на активно участие в обществения живот, но и като дейност за неформално обучение, водеща до придобиване на умения, които могат да бъдат признати с оглед улесняване на ученето през целия живот и пригодността за намиране на работа.

Комисията подкрепя инициативите, благоприятстващи доброволческата дейност на младите хора, по два начина. Насърчаването на доброволчеството е една от осемте области на действие от обновената рамка за европейското сътрудничество по въпросите на младежта (2010—2018 г.). Работният документ на Комисията ([1]), придружаващ съвместния доклад на Съвета и на Комисията относно прилагането на тази рамка в периода 2010—2012 г., отчита мерките, предприети от държавите членки в тази област. Освен това в рамките на програма „Младежта в действие“ Комисията въвежда Европейска доброволческа служба, която от 2014 г. ще започне да получава повече средства по линия на програма „Еразъм+“. Що се отнася до евентуалното интегриране на доброволческата дейност в учебните програми, Комисията държи да подчертае, че съгласно член 165 от ДФЕС държавите членки носят пълна отговорност за съдържанието на учебния процес.

На 19 септември 2012 г. Комисията прие също така законодателно предложение относно инициативата „Европейски доброволчески корпус за хуманитарна помощ“. Целта е да се създаде общоевропейски проект, чрез който на около 4000 европейци да се предостави възможност да станат доброволци в операции по оказване на хуманитарна помощ, провеждани в третите държави, които са най-засегнати от природни бедствия и хуманитарни кризи. За повече информация можете да посетите уебсайта: http://ec.europa.eu/echo/euaidvolunteers/index_fr.htm

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/youth/documents/national_youth_reports_2012/eu_youth_report_swd_results_of_eu_youth_strategy_2010-2012.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008579/13
to the Commission
Monika Panayotova (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: The potential of volunteering to make young people more competitive in the labour market

With regard to the 2011 European Year of Volunteering and the Commission report on it of December 2012 (COM(2012) 781 final), there are a number of questions in relation to the survey that the Commission conducted and the results obtained, which could inform the current debate about young people's education and employability.

1. What is the Commission's assessment of the European Year of Volunteering? Does it consider that the year produced lasting achievements that will have a long-term influence? Can the Commission point to initiatives that it has taken in relation to volunteering since 2011? Is there a uniform system whereby Member States can exchange ideas about successful volunteering practice and activities?

2. Volunteering has the potential to foster transverse and soft skills which young people may not be able to develop fully in the context of conventional education. Against the backdrop of the current debate about making young people more competitive in the labour market and improving their chances of finding jobs by adapting and reforming the education system to reflect trends in labour demand, volunteering may offer a distinct form of added value.

Does the Commission therefore intend to draw the attention of those countries concerned to the untapped potential of volunteering in terms of young people's skills development? Are any practical initiatives planed in this regard? How and in what form could volunteering be integrated into school curricula?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Vassiliou au nom de la Commission
(18 septembre 2013)

La Commission partage l'avis de l'Honorable Parlementaire quant à l'utilité du volontariat, non seulement en tant que démarche traduisant une forme de participation active à la société, mais aussi en tant qu'activité d'apprentissage non-formel résultant en l'acquisition des compétences qui peuvent être validées pour faciliter l'apprentissage continu et l'employabilité.

La Commission soutient les initiatives en faveur du volontariat des jeunes de deux manières. La promotion du volontariat est un des huit champs d'action du cadre renouvelé pour la coopération européenne dans le domaine de la jeunesse (2010-2018). Le document de travail de la Commission ([1]) qui accompagne le rapport conjoint du Conseil et de la Commission sur la mise en œuvre de ce cadre de 2010 à 2012 rend compte des mesures prises par les États membres en la matière. Par ailleurs, la Commission met en œuvre, au sein du programme Jeunesse en Action, le Service volontaire européen, qui, à compter de 2014, bénéficiera de moyens accrus dans le cadre du programme Erasmus+. En ce qui concerne une possible intégration du volontariat dans les programmes scolaires, la Commission tient à souligner que, selon l'article 165 du TFUE, les États membres sont pleinement responsables pour le contenu de l'enseignement.

En outre, le 19 septembre 2012, la Commission a adopté un projet législatif sur l'initiative «EU Aid Volunteers». L'objectif est de créer un projet pan-européen qui permettra à quelques 4 000 Européens de se porter volontaires pour des opérations d'aide humanitaire menées dans les pays tiers qui sont les plus affectés par des catastrophes naturelles et crises humanitaires. Pour plus d'information: http://ec.europa.eu/echo/euaidvolunteers/index_fr.htm

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/youth/documents/national_youth_reports_2012/eu_youth_report_swd_results_of_eu_youth_strategy_2010-2012.pdf

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-008580/13
до Комисията
Monika Panayotova (PPE)
(12 юли 2013 г.)

Относно: Нормативна рамка за доброволчеството в държавите членки

В контекста на 2011 като Европейска година на доброволческата дейност, вземайки предвид доклада на Европейската комисия от декември 2012 г. (COM(2012)0781 final), както и изследването от февруари 2010 г. (DG EAC, GHK, 2010), в които се обръща внимание на степента на законово регулиране на доброволческата дейност в държавите членки като предпоставка за създаването на благоприятна среда за развиване на доброволчеството, бих искала да поставя следните въпроси:

Считате ли, че наличието на законова рамка за доброволчеството в определени страни членки води до повишаване на интереса към и прилагането на доброволческата дейност в тях? Какви мерки предприемате, за да насърчите обмена на добри практики между държавите членки в това отношение?

Отговор, даден от г-жа Василиу от името на Комисията
(5 септември 2013 г.)

Европейската комисия не заема позиция относно това дали наличието на законова рамка за доброволчеството в определени държави членки може да повиши интереса към доброволческата дейност и не възнамерява да препоръчва на държавите членки да прилагат такова законодателство.

Същевременно, обаче, в проучването за доброволчеството в Европейския съюз ([1]), проведено от GHK по поръчка на Европейската комисия през 2010 г., се посочва, че „в страни, в които не съществува рамка за доброволчеството или в които има слаба традиция или култура на доброволчество, приемането на законодателство може да спомогне за развитието на доброволчеството.“ В проучването се посочва също, че „установяването на правна рамка за извършването на доброволческа дейност (която би уредила несигурността относно разходите, условията на работа и застраховката на доброволците) би създало значителни възможности за развитието на доброволческия сектор.“ Тези констатации се основават на собствените изследвания на GHK, а така също и на изследванията, извършени от Европейския център за нестопанско право ([2]).

В отговор на препоръката на Съвета относно мобилността на младите доброволци в Европейския съюз (2008 г.) Комисията създаде експертна група от представители на държавите членки и гражданското общество, за да оказва съдействие на държавите членки за изпълнението на препоръката и за да обменя най-добри практики. Тази група заседава два пъти в годината, като обръща внимание и на протичащото разработване на законодателство в държавите членки относно доброволчеството.

Новата програма на ЕС в сферата на образованието, обучението и младежта „Еразъм+“, която ще стартира през 2014 г., ще предложи по-големи възможности за трансгранична мобилност на доброволците, както и за партньорства и обмен на опит в областта на доброволчеството.

([1]) Study on Volunteering in the European Union — Final Report (Проучване относно доброволчеството в Европейския съюз — Окончателен доклад), GHK, февруари 2010 г.

([2]) Европейски център за нестопанско право (ECNL), „Сравнителен анализ на европейските правни системи и . практики по отношение на доброволчеството“, Катерина Хаджи-Мицева.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008580/13
to the Commission
Monika Panayotova (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Regulatory framework for volunteering in the Member States

With regard to the 2011 European Year of Volunteering, and with reference to the Commission report on it of December 2012 (COM(2012) 781 final) and the study conducted in February 2010 (commissioned by the Directorate General for Education and Culture) highlighting the relevance of the level of regulation of voluntary activity in Member States as a prerequisite for creating an environment in which volunteering can thrive, I have two questions.

Does the Commission consider that the existence of a regulatory framework for volunteering in specific Member States will lead to increased interest in voluntary activity there? What measures are proposed to encourage exchanges of best practice among Member States in this regard?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(5 September 2013)

The European Commission takes no position on whether the existence of a regulatory framework for volunteering in specific Member States can increase the interest in voluntary activity, and has no plans to recommend to Member States that they implement such legislation.

Nonetheless, the study 'Volunteering in the European Union' ([1]) carried out by GHK for the Commission in 2010 states that, 'in countries where there is nothing existing for volunteering, where there is a weak tradition or culture of volunteering, adopting legislation can support the development of volunteering.' It also states that 'the establishment of a legal framework for undertaking voluntary work (that would resolve the uncertainty concerning volunteers' expenses, work conditions and insurance) would represent considerable opportunities for developing the voluntary sector.' This is based upon both its own research and that carried out by the European Center for Not for Profit Law ([2]).

In response to the Council Recommendation on the Mobility of Young Volunteers across the European Union (2008), the Commission set up an Expert Group of representatives from Member States and civil society to help Member States with the implementation of the recommendation and to share best practice. This Group meets twice a year; it addresses also the ongoing development of volunteering legislation in Member States.

The EU's new programme for education, training and youth, Erasmus+, which will become operational in 2014, will offer increased opportunities for cross-border mobility of volunteers, partnerships and opportunities to exchange experience on volunteering.

([1]) Study on Volunteering in the European Union — Final Report, GKH, February 2010.
([2]) European Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ECNL), Comparative Analysis of European Legal Systems and Practices Regarding Volunteering, Katerina Hadzi-Miceva.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008581/13
an die Kommission
Hermann Winkler (PPE)
(12. Juli 2013)

Betrifft: Maßnahmen der EU-Kommission zum Bürokratieabbau

Der Bürokratieabbau ist ein Thema, welches sowohl den Bürgern, den Unternehmen, den Interessenvertretern als auch dem Europäischen Parlament sehr am Herzen liegt. Bürokratieabbau auf allen Ebenen der Verwaltung ist sicherlich eines der wichtigsten Ziele, die wir im Kampf um mehr Wettbewerbsfähigkeit und höhere Beschäftigung erreichen müssen. Die EU-Kommission hat dies erkannt und bemüht sich seit Jahren redlich, dabei zu helfen.

In der Sitzung der EVP-Fraktion vom 2. Juli 2013 erwähnte der Präsident der Kommission, José Manuel Barroso, die Bemühungen der EU-Kommission um Bürokratieabbau, welche häufig vonseiten des Ministerrats blockiert würden.

Kann die Kommission eine aktuelle Aufstellung liefern, welche die konkreten Bemühungen der EU-Kommission in Sachen Bürokratieabbau deutlich macht sowie den aktuellen Stand im Legislativverfahren insbesondere mit Blick auf die Verhandlungsdauer im Ministerrat?

Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(20. August 2013)

Die Kommission begrüßt es, dass ihre Bemühungen um den Bürokratieabbau vom Europäischen Parlament und vom Rat anerkannt und unterstützt werden. In ihren neuesten Berichten, die sie dem Parlament und dem Rat vorgelegt hat, werden Vorschläge aufgeführt, mit denen der bürokratische Aufwand deutlich reduziert werden könnte.

Zu diesen Berichten gehört der Abschlussbericht zum Aktionsprogramm zur Verringerung der Verwaltungslasten in der EU (SWD(2012)423) vom 12. Dezember 2012), in dem der Stand der Legislativverfahren — vorgeschlagene und angenommene Maßnahmen — wiedergegeben wird.

Im Bericht für den Europäischen Rat vom Frühjahr 2013 über „Intelligente Regulierung — Anpassung an die Bedürfnisse kleiner und mittlerer Unternehmen“ (KOM(2013)122) und in der darauf folgenden Mitteilung „Folgemaßnahmen der Kommission zu den 10 wichtigsten Konsultationen der KMU zur EU-Regulierung“ (KOM(2013)446) wird Bilanz gezogen in Bezug auf die von der Kommission ergriffenen Maßnahmen zum Bürokratieabbau zugunsten von KMU. Insbesondere legt die Kommission darin dar, was sie bereits im Hinblick auf die zehn EU-Rechtsvorschriften unternommen hat, die von den KMU als besonders belastend empfunden werden. In diesen Dokumenten werden Vorschläge hervorgehoben, die von den Mitgesetzgebern geprüft werden; diese sehen einen neuen jährlichen Anzeiger vor, mit dem bei Vorschlägen mit erheblichen Auswirkungen auf KMU die Fortschritte im Rechtsetzungsverfahren festgehalten werden.

Ferner wurden jetzt die ersten Ergebnisse der Erfassung und Prüfung im Rahmen des regulatorischen Eignungs- und Leistungsprogramms (KOM(2012)746) veröffentlicht (SWD(2013)401). Für jeden Bereich werden ein Überblick über die politische Strategie und den legislativen Rahmen sowie ein Hinweis auf Vorschläge gegeben, die Vereinfachung/Bürokratieabbau bewirken könnten und die den Mitgesetzgeber vorliegen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008581/13
to the Commission
Hermann Winkler (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Commission measures to reduce bureaucracy

Reducing bureaucracy is a subject about which the EU's citizens, companies, stakeholders and the European Parliament feel very strongly. Reducing bureaucracy at all levels of administration is one of the main goals which we must achieve in the struggle for greater competitiveness and increased employment. The Commission is aware of this and for years has been genuinely trying to help solve the problem.

At the meeting of the EPP Group held on 2 July 2013, Commission President José Manuel Barroso talked about the Commission's attempts to reduce bureaucracy, which were often blocked by the Council.

Will the Commission draw up an up-to-date list of its specific endeavours to reduce bureaucracy which also shows the current situation of the legislative procedure, with special reference to the duration of the Council negotiations?

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

The Commission welcomes the support and endorsement of the European Parliament and the Council for its work to reduce and minimise administrative and regulatory burden. In its most recent reports, it has listed proposals with potential for significant burden reduction potential that are before the co-legislator.

These reports include the final report on the 'Action Programme for Reducing Administrative Burdens in the EU' (SWD(2012) 423, 12 December 2012), which presents the situation of the legislative procedure in terms of measures adopted and proposed.

The report to the Spring European Council on 'Smart Regulation — Responding to the needs of small and medium-sized enterprises' (COM(2013)122) and a follow-up communication 'Commission follow-up to the "TOP TEN" Consultation of SMEs on EU Regulation' (COM(2013)446) take stock of the measures the Commission has taken to minimise regulatory burden to SMEs and lists actions already taken in regard to the top **ten most burdensome pieces of EU legislation,** as identified by SMEs. These documents signal proposals that are being considered by the co-legislators and introduce a new annual scoreboard to track progress in the legislative cycle of proposals with significant impact on SMEs.

Finally, the initial outcome of the mapping and screening exercise of the *acquis* under the Regulatory Fitness and Performance programme (COM(2012)746) has now been published (SWD(2013)401). In each area, an overview of the policy and legislative framework is presented and an indication is given of proposals with simplification and/or administrative burden reduction potential that are before the co-legislator.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008582/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE)
(12 Ιουλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Συμβάσεις ΟΠΑΠ ΑΕ και κοινοτικό δίκαιο

Σε συνέχεια των προηγούμενων σχετικών ερωτήσεών μου προς την Επιτροπή, που αφορούν την ΟΠΑΠ ΑΕ, και με δεδομένο ότι σύμφωνα με ανακοίνωση του ελληνικού Υπουργείου Οικονομικών της 31.7.2012: «Με απόφαση του υπουργού Οικονομικών κ. Γιάννη Στουρνάρα, Πρόεδρος και Διευθύνων Σύμβουλος της ΟΠΑΠ ΑΕ αναλαμβάνει ο οικονομολόγος κ. Κωνσταντίνος Λουρόπουλος», ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Πόσο ευσταθεί ο ισχυρισμός της ΟΠΑΠ ΑΕ ότι δεν είναι Δημόσιος Οργανισμός, επικαλούμενη ότι το Διοικητικό Συμβούλιο του Οργανισμού έπαψε να διορίζεται από το κράτος και ότι η εποπτεία που ασκείται σε αυτόν δεν σημαίνει ότι η διαχείριση της ΟΠΑΠ ΑΕ υπόκειται σε έλεγχο ασκούμενο από το κράτος, με βάση τον οποίο θεωρεί εδώ και χρόνια ότι οι συμβάσεις που υπογράφει και οι διαγωνισμοί που διενεργεί ως τώρα δεν υπόκεινται στη σχετική με τους δημόσιους οργανισμούς νομοθεσία, όταν το ίδιο το Υπουργείο των Οικονομικών της Ελλάδος εμπράκτως διαψεύδει αυτούς τους ισχυρισμούς, όπως είχε συμβεί και το 2009, όταν (βλ. ερώτηση E-010766/2010 προς την Επιτροπή) ο τότε Υπουργός Πολιτισμού κ. Γερουλάνος στις 30/12/2009, αφού συναντήθηκε με τα νέα μέλη του ΔΣ του ΟΠΑΠ «ώστε να ενημερωθούν αυτά για το στίγμα του ΟΠΑΠ ο οποίος είναι εποπτευόμενος φορέας του Υπουργείου Πολιτισμού και Τουρισμού», είχε καλέσει μεταξύ άλλων το νέο ΔΣ του ΟΠΑΠ «να επανεξετάσει το οργανόγραμμα, τις αμοιβές και τις δαπάνες του οργανισμού, προκειμένου να προβεί στον απαραίτητο εξορθολογισμό και σε περικοπές υπέρογκων και αδικαιολόγητων αμοιβών»;

Θα συνεχίσει η Επιτροπή να αποδέχεται στην πράξη εξόφθαλμα προσχηματικούς ισχυρισμούς που γίνονται εις βάρος του δημοσίου συμφέροντος στην Ελλάδα και καθιστούν εφικτή την κατά σύστημα παράβαση του κοινοτικού δικαίου, την ώρα που για τις ίδιες υποθέσεις η ελληνική δικαιοσύνη έχει προχωρήσει σε διώξεις και μάλιστα σε βαθμό κακουργήματος;

Αν η Επιτροπή θεωρεί ότι οι σχετικές συμβάσεις υπάγονται στο κοινοτικό δίκαιο, τότε θεωρεί ότι η σύμβαση που πρόσφατα υπέγραψε ο ΟΠΑΠ για τον τεχνολογικό πάροχο, η οποία περιλαμβάνει και ένα παράλληλο «μνημόνιο» ύψους 46 εκ. που υπεγράφη στις 30.11.2011 (χωρίς να προκύπτει από τα δημοσιευμένα μέχρι τώρα στοιχεία ότι αυτό αποτέλεσε αντικείμενο διαγωνιστικής διαδικασίας), είναι σύμφωνη με το κοινοτικό δίκαιο που αφορά τη διενέργεια διαγωνισμών από δημόσιους οργανισμούς;

Απάντηση του κ. Barnier εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(4 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Όπως εξηγείται στις απαντήσεις σε προηγούμενες ερωτήσεις που υπέβαλε το Αξιότιμο Μέλος, με βάση τις διαθέσιμες πληροφορίες, η Επιτροπή έχει καταλήξει στο συμπέρασμα ότι ο ΟΠΑΠ δεν πληροί τα κριτήρια που θεσπίζονται στην οδηγία 2004/18/ΕΚ, ώστε να μπορεί να θεωρηθεί «δημόσια επιχείρηση» κατά την έννοια της εν λόγω οδηγίας (βλ. απάντηση στην P-007159/2013 ([1])).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008582/13
to the Commission
Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: OPAP Ltd contracts and Community law

Further to previous questions put by me to the Commission in connection with OPAP [Greek Organisation of Football Prognostics] Ltd and in view of the fact that, according to an announcement by the Greek Ministry of Finance on 31 July 2012: 'By decision of Minister for Finance Yannis Stournaras, Mr Konstantinos Louropoulos has been appointed as chairman and chief executive officer of OPAP Ltd', will the Commission say:

Is it true, as OPAP Ltd claims, that it is not a public corporation due to the fact that a) the company's board of directors is no longer appointed by the State and b) the supervision exercised over it does not mean that the management of OPAP Ltd is subject to supervision by the State? Correspondingly, the company has behaved for years as if the contracts signed and the competitions conducted by it to date are not subject to legislation governing public corporations, whereas the Greek Ministry of Finance has, to all intents and purposes, given the lie to those claims, as in 2009 (see Question E-010766/2010 to the Commission), when Mr Geroulanos, then Minister for Culture, having met the new members of OPAP's board of directors on 30 June 2009 'in order to bring them up to date about the position of OPAP, a body supervised by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism', called on the new board of directors of OPAP *inter alia*, 'to review the establishment plan, pay and expenses of the organisation so as to carry out the necessary rationalisation and cut excessive and unjustifiable salaries'?

Will the Commission continue to accept these manifestly pernicious claims against the Greek public interest which make it feasible to infringe Community law systematically when, in the same cases, the Greek judiciary has initiated proceedings at criminal level?

If the Commission considers that the contracts in question are subject to Community law, does it consider that the contract recently signed by OPAP with a technology service provider, which includes a parallel 'memorandum' of EUR 46 million signed on 30 November 2011 is in keeping with Community law on competitions to be held by public organisations, given that, according to publications to date, it does not appear to have been the subject of a competition?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(4 September 2013)

As explained in the answers to previous questions raised by the Honourable Member, on the basis of the available information, the Commission has concluded that OPAP does not fulfil the criteria established by the directive 2004/18/EC in order to be considered as a 'public undertaking' in the meaning of this directive (see reply to P-007159/2013 ([1])).

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

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-008583/13
do Komisji
Paweł Zalewski (PPE)
(12 lipca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Indeksacja cen gazu do cen ropy naftowej

Dostęp do energii po przystępnych cenach ma zasadnicze znaczenie. Rynek gazu ziemnego nadal jest daleki od pełnej liberalizacji, a opłaty nakładane na europejskich odbiorców energii są wciąż zbyt wysokie. Obecnie przemysłowi odbiorcy gazu w Europie płacą około cztery razy więcej za gaz ziemny niż ich konkurenci z Ameryki Północnej. Ceny gazu w Europie zależą nie tylko od równowagi między podażą a popytem, ale także, w dużej mierze, w wyniku indeksacji cen – od cen ropy naftowej.

Na przestrzeni lat Komisja wielokrotnie zauważała, że indeksacja cen gazu do cen ropy naftowej jest niekorzystna dla konkurencji i powinna przestać obowiązywać. Już dwanaście lat temu Komisja stwierdziła w zielonej księdze, że w umowach o dostawy gazu indeksacja cen gazu do cen ropy naftowej nie ma uzasadnienia ekonomicznego oraz że powinno się ją ostatecznie zastąpić cenami opartymi na podaży gazu i popycie na gaz. Był to również jeden z głównych wniosków, które wyciągnięto z badania sektora energii przeprowadzonego przez Komisję w latach 2005-2007. W ostatnim czasie również Parlament kilkakrotnie wzywał do zniesienia indeksacji cen gazu do cen ropy naftowej.

Liczni eksperci w dziedzinie przeciwdziałania praktykom monopolistycznym utrzymują, że indeksacja cen gazu do cen ropy naftowej narusza europejskie prawo konkurencji. Ulrich Scholz i Stephan Purps twierdzą w opracowaniu prawnym ([1]), że indeksacja cen gazu do cen ropy naftowej narusza artykuły 101 i 102 Traktatu o funkcjonowaniu Unii Europejskiej, ponieważ, między innymi, stanowi ona nadużywanie dominującej pozycji na rynku, ogranicza konkurencję oraz prowadzi do narzucania wygórowanych i nieuczciwych cen gazu.

W związku z powyższym chciałbym zadać poniższe pytanie.

Jakie działania Komisja zamierza podjąć w celu rozwiązania problemu indeksacji cen gazu do cen ropy naftowej oraz narzucania wygórowanych cen na europejskich rynkach gazu? Ponadto, czy Komisja podziela zdanie, że indeksacja cen gazu do cen ropy naftowej stanowi naruszenie reguł konkurencji określonych w artykułach 101 i 102 Traktatu o funkcjonowaniu Unii Europejskiej?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Joaquina Almunię w imieniu Komisji
(9 września 2013 r.)

Komisja stale monitoruje zmiany zachodzące na rynku gazu w UE. Indeksacja cen gazu do cen ropy naftowej w umowach o dostawy gazu nie jest nielegalna jako taka. Może ona jednak być sprzeczna z unijnymi przepisami dotyczącymi konkurencji, jeżeli dostawca gazu, którego pozycja jest dominująca, narzuca taką metodę ustalania cen swoim odbiorcom, kiedy nie znajduje to odzwierciedlenia w podstawowych zasadach rynkowych.

W dniu 31 sierpnia 2012 r. Komisja wszczęła dochodzenie w sprawie możliwych naruszeń art. 102 Traktatu o funkcjonowaniu Unii Europejskiej przez Gazprom ([2]). Dochodzenie dotyczy głównie państw Europy Środkowej i Wschodniej, w których Gazprom jest dostawcą o dominującej pozycji. Gazpromowi zarzuca się stosowanie praktyk antykonkurencyjnych związanych z trzema potencjalnymi nadużyciami: (i) podziałem rynku, (ii) nieuczciwymi praktykami cenowymi oraz (iii) wykluczeniem konkurencji ze strony innych dostawców gazu. Domniemane nadużycie w zakresie nieuczciwych praktyk cenowych dotyczy polityki cenowej Gazpromu obejmującej indeksację cen gazu do cen ropy naftowej.

Wszczęcie postępowania nie ma wpływu na wynik dochodzenia. Jeżeli jednak Komisja stwierdzi naruszenie reguł konkurencji, może wydać decyzję wzywającą przedsiębiorstwo do zaprzestania naruszania tych reguł oraz, w odpowiednich przypadkach, nałożyć grzywnę ([3]).

([1]) Journal of European Competition Law & Practice, nr 1, tom 4 (2013 r.).
([2]) Zob. IP/12/937 Ochrona konkurencji: Komisja wszczyna postępowanie przeciwko Gazpromowi.
([3]) Artykuł 7 rozporządzenia Rady (WE) nr 1/2003 z dnia 16 grudnia 2002 r. w sprawie wprowadzenia w życie reguł konkurencji ustanowionych w art. 81 i 82 Traktatu.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008583/13
to the Commission
Paweł Zalewski (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Oil indexation

Access to affordable energy is essential. The market for natural gas is still far from fully liberalised, and European energy consumers are still being overcharged. Currently, European industrial gas consumers pay about four times more for natural gas than what their North American competitors do. The price of gas in Europe is determined not only by the balance of supply and demand but also, to a large extent, by the price of oil through price indexation.

Over the years, the Commission has repeatedly noted that oil indexation is harmful for competition and should cease. Already twelve years ago, the Commission declared in a green paper that oil indexation of gas contracts 'has no longer economic justification and should ultimately be replaced by a price based on supply and demand for gas'. This was also one of the main conclusions of the energy sector inquiry that the Commission conducted from 2005 to 2007. Parliament has on several recent occasions also called for the abolition of oil indexation.

Numerous antitrust experts have argued that oil indexation infringes European competition law. In a legal survey ([1]), Ulrich Scholz and Stephan Purps claim that oil indexation constitutes an infringement of Articles 101 and 102 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union as it — *inter alia* — constitutes abuse of market dominance, restricts competition and leads to excessive and unfair pricing of gas.

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

What does the Commission intend to do to remedy the problem of oil- indexation and excessive pricing in European gas markets? Moreover, does the Commission share the conclusion that oil indexation constitutes a violation of the competition rules defined in Articles 101 and 102 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union?

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

The Commission constantly monitors developments on EU gas markets. Oil indexation in gas contracts is not illegal per se. However, it may be contrary to EU competition rules if a dominant gas supplier imposes such a pricing method on its customers when it does not reflect market fundamentals.

On 31 August 2012, the Commission opened an investigation into possible infringements of Article 102 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union by Gazprom ([2]). The investigation focuses on Central and Eastern European Member States where Gazprom is the dominant gas supplier. Gazprom is suspected of anti-competitive practices with regard to three potential abuses (i) market partitioning, (ii) unfair pricing, and (iii) foreclosure of competition from other gas suppliers. The alleged abuse regarding unfair pricing pertains to Gazprom's pricing policy, including oil indexation.

An opening of proceedings does not prejudge the outcome of the investigation. However, in cases in which the Commission finds infringements of the competition rules, it can issue a decision requesting the undertaking to bring such infringements to an end and, as appropriate, impose fines ([3]).

([1]) Journal of European Competition law & Practice, No. 1, Vol. 4 (2013).
([2]) See IP/12/937 Antitrust: Commission opens proceedings against Gazprom.
([3]) Article 7 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2003 of 16 December 2002 on the implementation of the rules on competition laid down in Articles 81 and 82 of the Treaty.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008584/13
aan de Commissie
Ria Oomen-Ruijten (PPE) en Esther de Lange (PPE)
(12 juli 2013)

Betreft: Problemen bij de coördinatie van gezinsuitkeringen

Er doen zich bij de toepassing van de coördinatie van gezinsuitkeringen (Kindergeld) problemen voor tussen Nederland en Duitsland.

1. Is het juist dat er op grond van Verordening (EG) nr. 883/2004 in het geval dat de ouders wettelijk gescheiden zijn (sinds 2001) en:

— de vader in Duitsland woont en op grond van werkzaamheden Duits sociaal verzekerd is,

— de moeder in Nederland woont en op grond van werkzaamheden Nederlands sociaal verzekerd is,

— de kinderen bij de moeder in Nederland wonen, en

— de vader daadwerkelijk voor zijn kinderen alimentatie betaalt aan de moeder, die daarnaast de Nederlandse kinderbijslag ontvangt,

een prioritair recht bestaat op Nederlandse gezinsuitkeringen (kinderbijslag) en dat Duitsland het recht op Duitse gezinsuitkeringen (Kindergeld) kan verminderen met het bedrag dat Nederland aan gezinsuitkeringen uitbetaalt?

2. Duitsland heeft tot 1 mei 2010 aanvullend Kindergeld uitbetaald aan de vader. Vanaf deze datum echter betaalt Duitsland i.v.m. de onduidelijkheid in Verordening (EG) nr. 883/2004 resp. Verordening (EG) nr. 987/2009 aan geen van beide ouders nog aanvullend Kindergeld uit. Aan welke persoon — de moeder, bij wie de kinderen wonen, óf de vader — moet Duitsland de gezinsuitkering (Kindergeld) uitbetalen?

3. Was de coördinatie c.q. de uitbetaling aan de rechthebbende ouder in bovengenoemde situatie volgens de „oude" Verordening (EEG) nr. 1408/71 op een andere wijze geregeld?

4. Op welke wijze is het arrest Slanina (arrest van 26 november 2009, Zaak C-363/08, Slanina/Unabhängiger Finanzsenat, Jurispr. 2008, blz. I-11111) gecodificeerd in de huidige verordeningen dan wel in een administratief besluit?

Antwoord van de heer Andor namens de Commissie
(2 september 2013)

De Commissie kan geen commentaar leveren op individuele gevallen, die onder de nationale rechtbanken ressorteren. De Commissie kan in de door het geachte Parlementslid beschreven situatie bevestigen dat artikel 68 van Verordening (EG) nr. 883/2004 bepaalt dat, wanneer twee lidstaten gezinsuitkeringen verschuldigd zijn op grond van het feit dat in elk van de staten een ouder werkzaamheden in loondienst verricht, de lidstaat waar de kinderen bij de werkende ouder wonen in de eerste plaats bevoegd is voor gezinsuitkeringen. Uitkeringen die door de in tweede plaats bevoegde staat verschuldigd zijn, worden geschorst ter hoogte van het door de in de eerste plaats bevoegde staat betaalde bedrag.

Uitkeringen worden betaald voor gezinsleden, zoals gedefinieerd in de nationale wetgeving, maar artikel 1, onder i), punt 3, van de verordening bepaalt dat, als die wetgeving de definitie van gezinsleden beperkt tot personen die in het huishouden van de verzekerde inwonen, de personen die in hoofdzaak op kosten van de verzekerde worden onderhouden, worden geacht in dat huishouden in te wonen. Dit is een feitelijke vraag waarover de nationale rechtbanken moeten oordelen als er een geschil is. Deze bepalingen zijn niet gewijzigd door de vaststelling van bovengenoemde verordening, en zaak C-363/08 *(Slanina)* heeft gewoon de bestaande rechtstoestand bevestigd, zodat geen tenuitvoerlegging nodig was.

Met betrekking tot de vraag aan wie gezinsuitkeringen moeten worden betaald, bepaalt artikel 68 bis van de verordening dat, als degene aan wie gezinsuitkeringen moeten worden verleend, deze niet voor het onderhoud van het gezin besteedt, de bevoegde staat de uitkeringen moet betalen aan de persoon te wiens laste het gezin in feite komt.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008584/13
to the Commission
Ria Oomen-Ruijten (PPE) and Esther de Lange (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Problems with the coordination of family allowances

Problems arise with the coordination of family allowances (Kindergeld) between the Netherlands and Germany.

1. Is it true that, pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 883/2004, where parents have been divorced (since 2001) and:

— the father lives in Germany and has social insurance cover in Germany because of his work,

— the mother lives in the Netherlands and has social insurance cover in the Netherlands because of her work,

— the children live in the Netherlands with their mother, and

— the father actually pays maintenance to the mother for his children, while in addition the mother receives child benefit from the Netherlands,

there is a priority right to Dutch family allowances (kinderbijslag) and that Germany can reduce the right to German family allowances (Kindergeld) by offsetting the amount which the Netherlands pays in family allowances?

2. Until 1 May 2010, Germany paid supplementary 'Kindergeld' to the father. However, since that date, Germany has not paid supplementary 'Kindergeld' to either parent, because of the lack of clarity in Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 and Regulation (EC) No 987/2009. To which person — the mother, with whom the children live, or the father — should Germany pay the family allowance (Kindergeld)?

3. Was the coordination or the payment to the beneficiary parent in the above situation subject to different rules under the 'old' Regulation (EEC) No 1408/71?

4. How is the Slanina judgment (judgment of 26 November 2009, Case C-363/08, Slanina/Unabhängiger Finanzsenat, ECR [2008] I-11111) codified in the current regulations or in an administrative decision?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(2 September 2013)

The Commission is unable to comment on individual cases, which are a matter for the national court. The Commission can confirm, as described by the Honourable Member, that Article 68 of Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 provides that where family benefits are payable by two Member States on the basis that a parent is employed in each of the States, the Member State where the children reside with the working parent is primarily competent for family benefits. Benefits payable by the secondarily competent State will be suspended up to the amount paid by the primarily competent State.

Benefits will be paid for family members, as defined by national legislation, but where that legislation limits the definition of family members to those living in the household of the insured person, Article 1(i)(3) provides that persons mainly dependent on the insured person are deemed to be living in that household. This will be a question of fact for the national court to determine, where there is a dispute. These rules have not changed with the introduction of the above Regulation, and Case C-363/08 *Slanina* simply confirmed the existing legal position so did not require implementation.

In terms of to whom family benefits should be paid, Article 68a of the regulation provides that where the benefits are not used by the person to whom they should be provided for the maintenance of the family, the Competent State must pay the benefits to the person who is in fact maintaining the family.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-008585/13
à la Commission
Gilles Pargneaux (S&D)
(12 juillet 2013)

Objet: Suites données à l'arrêt du Tribunal de l'Union européenne concernant l'Orphacol

Le Tribunal de l'Union européenne a rendu le 4 juillet 2013 son arrêt concernant l'autorisation de mise sur le marché (AMM) de l'Orphacol, médicament orphelin traitant deux maladies rares du foie. Cet arrêt annule la décision d'exécution de la Commission du 25 mai 2012 refusant l'AMM.

L'AMM aurait dû donc être octroyée dès le deuxième avis positif de l'Agence européenne des médicaments (AEM), en date du 14 avril 2011. Après les multiples retards qu'a connus ce médicament, la Commission peut-elle m'indiquer quand il sera autorisé, alors que des patients européens sont en attente de traitement?

De plus, un médicament similaire et concurrent pouvant également bénéficier d'une exclusivité commerciale en sa qualité de médicament orphelin est actuellement en cours d'autorisation par l'AEM sous l'appellation «Acid Cholic FGK».

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(31 juillet 2013)

La Commission est tout à fait consciente de la situation résultant de l'arrêt du Tribunal dans l'affaire T-301/12.

Une nouvelle décision doit être adoptée conformément à la procédure établie à l'article 10 du règlement (CE) n° 726/2004 ([1]) et la Commission a l'intention de consulter sans tarder le comité permanent.

([1]) Règlement (CE) n° 726/2004 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 31 mars 2004 établissant des procédures communautaires pour l'autorisation et la surveillance en ce qui concerne les médicaments à usage humain et à usage vétérinaire, et instituant une Agence européenne des médicaments: JO L 136 du 30.4.2004, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-008585/13
to the Commission
Gilles Pargneaux (S&D)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Follow-up to the Orphacol ruling of the EU General Court

On 4 July 2013 the General Court of the European Union gave its ruling on the marketing authorisation for Orphacol, an orphan drug used to treat two rare liver conditions. This ruling annuls the Commission's executive decision of 25 May 2012 to refuse marketing authorisation.

The marketing authorisation should have been granted following the second favourable opinion of the European Medicines Agency (EMA) on 14 April 2011. After the repeated delays which have occurred with this drug, can the Commission please state when it will be authorised, given that there are European patients awaiting treatment?

Furthermore, a similar, competing medicine, which could also benefit from market exclusivity as an orphan drug, is currently awaiting authorisation by the EMA under the name of Acid Cholic FGK.

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

The Commission is fully aware of the situation following the judgment of the General Court's ruling in case T-301/12.

A new decision must be adopted in accordance with the procedure established under Article 10 of Regulation 726/2004 ([1]) and the Commission intends to proceed without delay with the necessary consultation of the standing committee.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 726/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 31 March 2004 laying down Community procedures for the authorisation and supervision of medicinal products for human and veterinary use and establishing a European Medicines Agency: OJ L 136, 30.4.2004, p. 1.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-008586/13
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(12 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Incidenti stradali con mezzi pesanti, normativa europea sulle barre paraincastro

È recente il caso di un nuovo gravissimo incidente stradale che ha visto la tragica morte di un uomo alla guida della sua auto. Il veicolo ha accidentalmente tamponato un autocarro e il conducente è morto rimanendo incastrato al di sotto dello stesso a causa dell'assoluta inadeguatezza dell'attuale normativa relativa alle barre paraincastro posteriori dei mezzi pesanti.

Questo incidente è solo l'ultimo di una serie di simili disgrazie che hanno visto la morte di centinaia di cittadini europei, a causa di una norma europea non adeguata alla salvaguardia di numerose persone che si mettono alla guida ogni giorno.

La direttiva in questione, la numero 2006/20/CE della Commissione del 17 febbraio 2006 (che ha modificato la precedente direttiva 70/221/CEE del Consiglio) relativa ai dispositivi di protezione posteriore antincastro dei veicoli a motore e dei loro rimorchi, prevede in particolare l'obbligo di installare le cosiddette barre paraincastro a un'altezza massima di 55 cm dal piano stradale, anziché a 70 cm come era invece previsto in passato. L'inadeguatezza della normativa è stata palesata da numerosi crash test condotti da un istituto di sicurezza americano, nonché da ricerche apparse su articoli di note riviste specializzate nel settore.

I risultati sono stati confermati da un test condotto dall'Università di Pisa, che ha evidenziato come le barre paraincastro conformi all'attuale normativa europea non offrano alcuna protezione, e proposto l'uso di un diverso sistema di protezione che consentirebbe di ridurre in modo significativo il tasso di mortalità, salvando la vita di migliaia di automobilisti.

I vari studi hanno concluso che è sufficiente un tamponamento alla velocità di appena 56 km/h per provocare la morte del conducente e del passeggero di qualunque autovettura.

Tutto ciò premesso, s'interroga la Commissione per sapere:

1. se è a conoscenza degli studi sopracitati, e come intende prendere in considerazione questi risultati, in particolare con un sistema alternativo come quello proposto, ad esempio, dall'Università di Pisa, vis à vis della direttiva attualmente applicabile;

2. se, alla luce di questi ultimi, non ritiene opportuno procedere con estrema urgenza, per la salvaguardia di molte vite umane che potrebbero essere ancora salvate, a una revisione della direttiva 2006/20/CE per adeguarla ai risultati scientifici.

Risposta di Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(13 agosto 2013)

Al fine di evitare che le automobili si incastrino sotto un camion/rimorchio nel caso di una collisione posteriore, la direttiva 70/221/CEE ([1]) prescrive che i camion/rimorchi siano muniti di un dispositivo di protezione posteriore antincastro, il cui bordo inferiore non deve trovarsi, in alcun punto, ad una altezza da terra superiore a 55 cm. La direttiva è stata recentemente modificata dalla direttiva 2006/20/CE per prescrivere che il dispositivo deve poter resistere a un livello di forza superiore.

Con il regolamento (CE) n. 661/2009 sulla sicurezza generale dei veicoli a motore ([2]), modificato, il legislatore ha abrogato la direttiva 70/221/CEE ed ha reso obbligatoria nell'UE l'applicazione del regolamento UNECE ([3]) n. 58 sui dispositivi di protezione posteriore antincastro. Di conseguenza, a decorrere dal 1° novembre 2012 i nuovi modelli di veicoli sono omologati a norma del regolamento UNECE n. 58 e non più a norma della direttiva 70/221/CEE.

([1]) GU L 76 del 6.4.1970, pag. 23.
([2]) GU L 200 del 31.7.2009, pag. 1.
([3]) Commissione economica per l'Europa delle Nazioni Unite.

Il gruppo di lavoro dell'UNECE sulla sicurezza generale dei veicoli, al quale la Commissione e gli Stati membri partecipano attivamente, sta discutendo attualmente una modifica del regolamento UNECE n. 58 per aumentare il livello di sicurezza dei dispositivi di protezione posteriore antincastro. In particolare è stato proposto di diminuire ulteriormente l'altezza di tali dispositivi e di aumentare il livello di forza cui essi possono resistere. La riduzione dell'altezza presenta tuttavia problemi pratici per alcuni autoveicoli pesanti (ad esempio per quanto riguarda la manovrabilità su forti pendenze e i veicoli fuoristrada) e per ora la posizione degli esperti sulle forze da applicare non è unanime. La discussione è quindi in corso a livello di esperti per concordare un progetto definitivo.

Una volta concluso il processo a livello dell'UNECE, si procederà alla modifica ai fini dell'omologazione UE dei veicoli completi.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-008586/13
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Road accidents involving heavy goods vehicles and EU rules on underrun protection bars

Fresh evidence of the total inadequacy of the current EU rules on rear underrun protection was provided recently by a tragic accident in which a car driver accidentally ran into a lorry, under which his car became trapped.

Accidents of this kind have resulted in the deaths of hundreds of car drivers across the EU, which could be avoided if the EU rules afforded car drivers proper protection.

Those rules are laid down in Commission Directive 2006/20/EC of 17 February 2006 amending Council Directive 70/221/EEC concerning fuel tanks and rear underrun protection of motor vehicles and their trailers. They provide for the fitting of underrun protection devices at a height of no more than 55 cm above the road surface, instead of 70 cm as was the case before. The rules have been shown to be inadequate by exhaustive crash testing carried out by a US road safety research institute and by research papers published in leading specialist periodicals.

These findings have been borne out by a test conducted at the University of Pisa, which showed that the underrun protection bars specified by the current EU rules in fact offer no protection at all. The researchers put forward an alternative protection system which would significantly reduce the risk of fatal injury and thus save the lives of thousands of car drivers.

All of the research carried out shows that an impact speed of 56 kph is high enough to kill both the driver and front-seat passenger of any car.

1. Is the Commission aware of the above findings, and how does it intend to respond to them, in particular with regard to the introduction of an alternative system, such as that proposed by the researchers at the University of Pisa, to that provided for in the current directive?

2. Would it not agree that, with a view to saving as many lives as possible, Directive 2006/20/EC should be revised at the earliest possible opportunity, to bring it into line with the latest scientific findings?

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

In order to avoid that cars go under a truck/trailer in case of a rear collision, Directive 70/221/EEC ([1]) requires trucks/trailers to be fitted with a rear under-run protection device, which shall at no point be more than 55 cm above the ground. The directive was most recently amended by Directive 2006/20/EC to require the device to withstand increased force levels.

With Regulation (EC) No 661/2009 on the general safety of motor vehicles ([2]), as amended, the legislator repealed Directive 70/221/EEC and made UNECE ([3]) Regulation No 58 on Rear Underrun Protection Devices apply on a compulsory basis in the EU. Hence, since 1 November 2012, new vehicle models shall only be approved according to UNECE Regulation No 58 and not anymore according to Directive 70/221/EEC.

The UNECE working group on Vehicle General Safety, where the Commission and Member States participate actively, is currently discussing an amendment to UNECE Regulation No 58 to increase the safety level of rear under-run protection devices. It is notably proposed to further decrease the height of such devices and to increase the force level that can withstand such devices. However, the height reduction raises practical problems for some heavy goods vehicles (e.g. manoeuvrability in big slopes, off road vehicles) and the position of the experts is for now not unanimous on the forces to be applied. Thus, the discussion is ongoing at expert level to agree on a final draft.

When the process will be finalised at UNECE level, the amendment will be taken on board for the purpose of the EU whole-vehicle type-approval.

([1]) OJ L 76, 6.4.1970, p. 23.
([2]) OJ L 200, 31.7.2009, p. 1.
([3]) United Nations Economic Commission for Europe.

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor P-008587/13
upućeno Komisiji
Oleg Valjalo (S&D)
(12. srpnja 2013.)

Predmet: Pelješki most (Hrvatska)

U Hrvatskoj postoji suglasnost među političarima i u javnosti da Pelješki most nudi najpovoljnije rješenje za fizičko spajane hrvatskog teritorija — pa time i teritorija Europske unije.

Budući da u Hrvatskoj postoji visok stupanj nesigurnosti u pogledu službenog stajališta Komisije prema izgradnji Pelješkog mosta, može li Komisija pojasniti svoje stajalište o tom pitanju te ukoliko podržava izgradnju Pelješkog mosta navesti točne korake koje poduzima kako bi se ovaj projekt uspješno okončao?

Odgovor g. Hahna u ime Komisije
(26. kolovoza 2013.)

Puno je toga potrebno uskladiti kako bi se pronašlo najbolje rješenje za prelazak granica i slobodu kretanja nakon pristupanja Hrvatske EU-u, između ostaloga i provoz kroz Neum te od Bosne i Hercegovine do luke Ploče.

Osnovan je savjetodavni odbor na visokoj razini čiji su članovi glavni dionici (iz Hrvatske, Bosne i Hercegovine te Komisije) te se s njime redovito održavaju savjetovanja o izradi studije izvedivosti. Cilj je studije izvedivosti ispitati sve dostupne mogućnosti prijevoza kojima bi se Dubrovačka regija povezala s ostatkom Hrvatske i identificirati sve elemente koji su potrebni za potencijalno prijavljivanje projekta u sklopu Europskih strukturnih i investicijskih fondova.

Kako bi se moglo pravilno usporediti sve mogućnosti, uspostavljeni su objektivni i kvantitativni kriteriji za njihovo rangiranje. U obzir treba uzeti financijske troškove i učinke svake mogućnosti te njihovu dugoročnu održivost, utjecaj na gospodarstvo i okoliš ciljnog područja i specifična pravna pitanja u vezi s različitim elementima pravne stečevine i međunarodnog prava.

Razna rješenja i njihovo rangiranje uskoro će biti predstavljeni.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-008587/13
to the Commission
Oleg Valjalo (S&D)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: The Pelješac Bridge (Croatia)

In Croatia, there is a consensus across the political spectrum, as well as among the general public, that the Pelješac Bridge offers the most appropriate solution for the physical integration of Croatian — and thus European Union — territory.

Given that there is a high degree of uncertainty in Croatia as regards the official position of the Commission towards the construction of the Pelješac Bridge, could the Commission clarify its position on this matter and, if it is supportive of the Pelješac Bridge, specify the exact steps it is taking to bring this project to a successful conclusion?

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

A number of issues need to be coordinated for finding the best solution for crossing of the borders and freedom of movement upon Croatia's accession to the EU, including transit through Neum and also of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the port of Ploce.

A high-level advisory committee involving the main stakeholders (from Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Commission) was set up and is regularly consulted on the development of a feasibility study which aims at examining all available transport options to link the Dubrovnik region with the rest of Croatia and to identify all elements needed for a potential project application under the European Structural and Investment Funds.

Objective and quantitative criteria are set to rank these options to allow a proper comparison of each alternative. The financial costs and impacts of each alternative should be taken into account, as well as their long term sustainability, impacts on the economy and environment of the target area and specific legal issues related to different elements of the *acquis* and international law.

The various options and their ranking will be presented in the near future.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008588/13
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin)
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE) und Markus Pieper (PPE)
(12. Juli 2013)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Sicherheitsverträge für EU-Einrichtungen in Afghanistan und Westbank/Gaza

Die Firma Page Protective Services, PPS, war mehrere Jahre in Afghanistan und in der Westbank/Gaza als Sicherheitsfirma für Delegationen der EU tätig. Am 16. April 2013 wurde der Vertrag für Afghanistan wegen gravierender Mängel gekündigt. Der Vertrag in Westbank/Gaza wird dagegen fortgeführt, obwohl auch dort schwerwiegende Mängel aufgetreten sind.

1. Warum wurde die PPS mit Sicherheitsdienstleistungen in Krisengebieten beauftragt, obwohl sie die ursprünglichen Ausschreibungsbedingungen für solche Dienstleistungen nicht erfüllte?

2. Warum wurden die Ausschreibungsbedingungen nachträglich zugunsten der PPS geändert (ursprüngliche Ausschreibungsbedingungen: mindestens 20 Mio. EUR Umsatz, 400 Mitarbeiter — die PPS beschäftigte 8 Mitarbeiter und hatte einen Umsatz von 14 Mio. EUR)?

3. Wer war für die Änderung verantwortlich? Wurden Interessenskonflikte untersucht?

4. Wann begann OLAF mit der Untersuchung der Verträge? Für welche Orte wurden die Dienstleistungen untersucht? Wann wurden die Untersuchungen abgeschlossen?

5. Warum wurde mit der Firma — trotz der OLAF-Untersuchung von Verträgen dieser Firma — ein neuer Vertrag abgeschlossen?

6. Wie ist dies mit den geltenden Regeln vereinbar?

7. Wie viele Verträge bekam die Firma PPS in der Vergangenheit, und welchen Umfang hatten diese Verträge? Für welche Länder wurden diese Verträge abgeschlossen?

8. Wie viele Verträge laufen derzeit mit der Firma PPS, und welchen Umfang haben diese Verträge? Für welche Länder wurden diese Verträge abgeschlossen?

9. Welche Rückforderungen und Sanktionen hat die Kommission gegen PPS ausgesprochen?

10. Welche Mängel haben die Kommission und der EAD in Afghanistan festgestellt? Welche Mängel wurden in Gaza/Westbank festgestellt?

11. Welche disziplinarischen Maßnahmen hat die Kommission/der EAD ergriffen, um gegen die für diese Vergaben auf EU-Seite verantwortlichen Mitarbeiter vorzugehen?

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008589/13
an die Kommission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE) und Markus Pieper (PPE)
(12. Juli 2013)

Betrifft: Sicherheitsverträge für EU-Einrichtungen in Afghanistan und Westbank/Gaza

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

Alle Aufträge über Sicherheitsdienstleistungen werden im Wege von Ausschreibungsverfahren vergeben, die im Einklang mit den Vergabevorschriften der EU stehen. Dies gilt auch für die Aufträge über die Erbringung von Sicherheitsdienstleistungen in Afghanistan sowie im Westjordanland und Gazastreifen, die an den Auftragnehmer PPS vergeben wurden. Kein Vertrag wurde gekündigt. Neue Ausschreibungsverfahren werden regelmäßig im Einklang mit der Haushaltsordnung eingeleitet, um auslaufende Verträge zu ersetzen.

Um den Wettbewerb zu steigern, beschloss die Vergabebehörde im Rahmen der Ausschreibung für die neuen Sicherheitsverträge in Kabul, die Standardkriterien für den Umsatz zu ändern, damit eine größere Anzahl von Unternehmen mitbieten konnte.

Die Untersuchung des Afghanistan-Vertrags schloss OLAF im Januar 2013 mit einer Reihe von Empfehlungen ab, die von der Vergabebehörde umgesetzt werden. Diese Empfehlungen dienen der Verbesserung der Überwachung dieser komplexen Verträge in einem risikoreichen Umfeld. Sie stehen im Einklang mit den 2011 von den internen Auditdiensten der Kommission abgegebenen Empfehlungen, die zu einer Rückzahlung von 317 000 EUR im Jahr 2012 führten. Die Vergabebehörde verfügt über keine rechtliche Grundlage für einen Ausschluss des Auftragnehmers von Ausschreibungsverfahren.

Frühere Verträge über Sicherheitsdienstdienstleistungen (die vom EAD nach seiner Gründung übernommen wurden) hatte die Kommission mit PPS in Sri Lanka über 10,4 Mio. EUR (Januar 2007 bis Dezember 2010), in Haiti über 2,9 Mio. EUR (Februar 2010 bis Januar 2011), in Saudi-Arabien über 11,4 Mio. EUR (Dezember 2004 bis November 2008) und im Westjordanland und Gazastreifen über 8 Mio. EUR (2006 bis 2010) geschlossen.

Derzeit laufen noch zwei Verträge mit PPS: einer in Afghanistan über 38,4 Mio. EUR (seit Juni 2008) und einer im Westjordanland und Gazastreifen über 14,7 Mio. EUR (seit April 2013).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008588/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE) and Markus Pieper (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Security contracts concluded by EU agencies in Afghanistan and on the West Bank/Gaza Strip

The firm Page Protection Services (PPS) for several years provided security services for EU delegations in Afghanistan and in the West Bank/Gaza Strip. On 16 April 2013 the contract for Afghanistan was terminated on the grounds of serious shortcomings in the provision of the services involved. The contract for the West Bank/Gaza Strip has been renewed, even though similar serious shortcomings have come to light there.

1. Why was PPS awarded the contract for the provision of security services in crisis areas even though the company did not meet the criteria laid down in the original invitation to tender?

2. Why were the criteria modified after the event to favour PPS (original criteria: turnover of at least EUR 20 million, 400 staff — at the time PPS had eight employees and a turnover of EUR 14 million)?

3. Who ordered the modifications? Was an investigation carried out into possible conflicts of interest?

4. When did OLAF begin its investigation of the contracts? Which locations for the provision of services did that investigation cover? When was the investigation completed?

5. Why was PPS awarded a new contract even though OLAF has been investigating the previous contracts concluded with that firm?

6. In what way is this consistent with the rules in force?

7. How many contracts have been concluded with PPS, and what was the value of those contracts? For what countries were those contracts concluded?

8. How many contracts does PPS currently have, and what is the value of those contracts? For which countries have these contracts been concluded?

9. Has the Commission tried to recover sums paid to or impose penalties on PPS?

10. What shortcomings did the Commission and the EEAS identify in Afghanistan? What shortcomings did they identify in the West Bank/Gaza Strip?

11. What disciplinary measures has the Commission/the EEAS taken against EU staff responsible for awarding the contracts in question?

Question for written answer E-008589/13
to the Commission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE) and Markus Pieper (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

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

All security contracts are awarded following a tendering procedure in line with EU procurement rules. This is the case for the contracts attributed to the contractor PPS for providing security services in Afghanistan and West Bank and Gaza. No contract has been terminated. However, new tenders are launched on a regular basis in line with the Financial Regulation, to replace contracts that expire.

In the tender procedure for the new security contract in Kabul, in order to increase competition, the contracting authority decided to review the standard turnover criteria thus allowing a greater number of companies to bid.

Regarding investigations, OLAF decided to close its inquiry on the Afghanistan contract in January 2013 with a set of recommendations that are implemented by the contracting authority. These recommendations seek to improve monitoring of such complex contracts in high risk environments. They are in line with those made by the Commission internal audit services in 2011 which led to a repayment in 2012 of EUR 317.000. The contracting authority has no legal grounds to exclude the contractor from tendering procedures.

Regarding previous contracts with PPS, the Commission (taken over by the EEAS at its creation) had contracts for security services in Sri Lanka EUR 10.4 million (Jan 2007 — Dec 2010) and in Haiti EUR 2.9 million (Feb 2010 — Jan 2011) and Saudi Arabia EUR 11.4 million (Dec 2004 — Nov 2008) and West Bank and Gaza EUR 8 million (2006-2010).

There are currently two ongoing contracts with PPS: Afghanistan EUR 38.4 million (since June 2008) and West Bank and Gaza EUR 14.7 million (since April 2013).

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008590/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(12 Ιουλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Εξαγωγές μολυσμένων κρεάτων με το μυκοβακτήριο της φυματίωσης

Σύμφωνα με την εφημερίδα Sunday Times (7 Ιουλίου 2013) 28 000 βοοειδή σφάγια προέλευσης Μ. Βρετανίας και μολυσμένα με το μυκοβακτήριο της φυματίωσης, εξάγονται κάθε χρόνο προς τις αγορές της Γαλλίας, του Βελγίου και της Ολλανδίας. Το μολυσμένο κρέας καταλήγει στις σχολικές καντίνες και στα νοσοκομεία ή υποβάλλεται σε επεξεργασία μετατροπής σε ζωοτροφές.

Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη ότι:

— σουπερμάρκετ και αλυσίδες fast food στη Μ. Βρετανία δεν δέχονται να αγοράσουν βοδινό κρέας που προέρχεται από αγελάδες με φυματίωση,

— η αγροτική συνομοσπονδία (Confederation Paysanne) της Γαλλίας απαίτησε την άμεση διακοπή των εισαγωγών βάσει της αρχής της προφύλαξης,

— εμπειρογνώμονες προειδοποιούν ότι τα αυξανόμενα επίπεδα ΒΤΒ στα βοοειδή αποτελούν σοβαρή απειλή για την υγεία,

ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Γιατί επιτρέπει τις εξαγωγές/εισαγωγές βοδινού κρέατος μολυσμένου με το μυκοβακτήριο της φυματίωσης; Προτίθεται, μετά και το πρόσφατο σκάνδαλο με το κρέας αλόγου, να απαγορεύσει άμεσα τις εξαγωγές αυτών των κρεάτων που προορίζονται μάλιστα και για σχολικές καντίνες και νοσοκομεία, και να λάβει μέτρα ώστε να αποφευχθεί η εισαγωγή μολυσμένων κρεάτων στις αλυσίδες παραγωγής τροφίμων και ζωοτροφών;

2. Με βάση την ιχνηλασιμότητα, σε ποιες αγορές κρατών μελών έχουν καταλήξει τα κρέατα αυτά είτε ως σφάγια, είτε ως επεξεργασμένα τρόφιμα ή ως ζωοτροφές;

3. Θεωρεί η Επιτροπή ότι τέτοιου είδους πρακτικές ενισχύουν την ήδη κλονισμένη από πολλαπλά διατροφικά σκάνδαλα εμπιστοσύνη των καταναλωτών, και τι μέτρα θα λάβει για την αποκατάσταση της εμπιστοσύνης των καταναλωτών;

Απάντηση του κ. Borg εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(30 Αυγούστου 2013)

Σύμφωνα με την οικεία νομοθεσία ([1]) όταν οι δοκιμές που έχουν γίνει σε ζώα είναι θετικές ή χωρίς καταληκτικά αποτελέσματα ή όταν συντρέχουν άλλοι λόγοι για υποψία λοίμωξης, τότε τα ζώα πρέπει να θανατώνονται χωριστά από τα άλλα ζώα και να λαμβάνονται προφυλάξεις για να αποφεύγεται ο κίνδυνος μόλυνσης των άλλων σφαγίων, της αλυσίδας σφαγής και του προσωπικού που εργάζεται στο σφαγείο.

Όταν γίνει διάγνωση της φυματίωσης σε όλο το σφάγιο, τότε πρέπει να απορρίπτεται ολόκληρο και να απομακρύνεται από την τροφική αλυσίδα. Ωστόσο, όταν γίνεται διάγνωση της φυματίωσης σε ένα μόνο μέρος του σφαγίου, τότε απορρίπτεται μόνο το προσβεβλημένο τμήμα, απομακρύνεται από την τροφική αλυσίδα και τα υπόλοιπα μη προσβεβλημένα μέρη του θεωρούνται κατάλληλα για κατανάλωση από τον άνθρωπο.

Τα άρθρα που είδαν πρόσφατα το φως της δημοσιότητας δεν λαμβάνουν υπόψη τους αυτήν την πτυχή της νομοθεσίας.

Η Επιτροπή δεν έχει στοιχεία που να αποδεικνύουν ότι βόειο κρέας που προέρχεται από το Ηνωμένο Βασίλειο και το οποίο δεν συμμορφώνεται με τους κανόνες της ΕΕ για τη φυματίωση έχει διατεθεί στην αγορά της ΕΕ.

([1]) Κανονισμός (ΕΕ) αριθ. 854/2004 του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, της 29ης Απριλίου 2004, για τον καθορισμό ειδικών κανόνων υγιεινής για τα τρόφιμα ζωικής προέλευσης. ΕΕ L 226 της 25.6.2004, σ. 83.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008590/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Exports of meat contaminated with the tuberculosis mycobacterium

According to an article published in the *Sunday Times* on 7 July 2013, 28 000 bovine carcasses from Great Britain contaminated with the tuberculosis mycobacterium are exported every year to markets in France, Belgium and the Netherlands. The contaminated meat is ending up in school canteens and hospitals or being processed for animal feed.

In view of the fact that:

— supermarkets and fast food chains in Great Britain do not buy beef from cows infected with tuberculosis;

— the French agricultural federation (Confédération paysanne) has called for an immediate ban on imports, based on the principle of prevention;

— experts are warning that increased levels of BTN in cattle constitute a serious health risk,

will the Commission say:

1. Why does it permit imports/exports of beef contaminated with the tuberculosis mycobacterium? Does it intend, following the recent horsemeat scandal, to directly prohibit imports of such meat, which is bought by school canteens and hospitals, and to take measures to prevent contaminated meat from entering the food and animal feed production chains?

2. Based on traceability, what meat markets in the Member States has this meat reached, either in carcass form or as processed food or feed?

3. Does the Commission consider that such practices further undermine consumer confidence, which has already been shaken by numerous food scandals, and what measures does it intend to take to restore consumer confidence?

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

The EU legislation concerned ([1]) requires that when animals have reacted positively or inconclusively to tuberculosis testing, or there are other grounds for suspecting infection, they are to be slaughtered separately from other animals, taking precautions to avoid the risk of contamination of other carcases, the slaughter line and staff present in the slaughterhouse.

When tuberculosis is diagnosed throughout the carcass, the entire carcass must be condemned and removed from the food chain. However, when tuberculosis is diagnosed in only one part of the carcass, only this affected part of the carcase is to be condemned and removed from the food chain, and the remaining unaffected parts are considered as fit for human consumption.

The recent articles published in the press do not take into account this aspect of the legislation.

The Commission has no evidence that bovine carcasses originating from the UK and being not in compliance with the EU rules on tuberculosis have been placed on the EU market.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 854/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 laying down specific rules for the organisation of official controls on products of animal origin intended for human consumption. OJ L 226 25.6.2004, p 83.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008591/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(12 Ιουλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ανακεφαλαιοποίηση ελληνικών τραπεζών

Το ελληνικό τραπεζικό σύστημα, πριν από το ξέσπασμα της οικονομικής κρίσης, θεωρείτο ένα από τα ασφαλέστερα της Ευρωζώνης. Αυτό συνέβαινε επειδή οι ελληνικές τράπεζες δεν είχαν στην κατοχή τους τοξικά επενδυτικά προϊόντα στεγαστικών δανείων, όπως οι αντίστοιχες τράπεζες της Γαλλίας, της Γερμανίας, της Ιρλανδίας και της Ισπανίας, καθώς επίσης επειδή το δανειακό τους χαρτοφυλάκιο ήταν ικανοποιητικής ποιότητας, εξαιτίας των υψηλών εγγυήσεων που εξασφάλιζαν για την παροχή δανείων.

Λόγω, όμως, α) της οικονομικής κρίσης, που εκτίναξε στα ύψη τα ποσοστά μη εξυπηρετούμενων δανείων και οδήγησε σε έναν καταστροφικό αποπληθωρισμό των αξιών των ακινήτων, β) της μεγάλης φυγής καταθέσεων και κεφαλαίων από την ελληνική οικονομία και γ) του κουρέματος των ελληνικών κρατικών ομολόγων μέσω του PSI, αποφασίστηκε η ενίσχυση των ελληνικών τραπεζών μέσω της ανακεφαλαιοποίησής τους με κεφάλαια από το EFSF.

Με δεδομένο ότι τα κεφάλαια που έχουν προβλεφθεί για την ανακεφαλαιοποίηση των ελληνικών τραπεζών υπολογίστηκαν με βάση οικονομικές εκτιμήσεις των αρχών του 2012, και είναι καθορισμένα στα 50 δις ευρώ, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1) Ποιο είναι το ύψος των μη εξυπηρετούμενων δανείων στην Ελλάδα σήμερα, σε σχέση με τα προηγούμενα χρόνια; Ποιο είναι το ποσοστό των δανείων που έχουν τύχει αναδιάρθρωσης;

2) Η δυναμική των μη εξυπηρετούμενων δανείων στην Ελλάδα απειλεί την κεφαλαιακή επάρκεια των ελληνικών τραπεζών; Σε μια τέτοια περίπτωση, ποια είναι τα εργαλεία που διαθέτει η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση για τη στήριξη της κεφαλαιακής επάρκειας των τραπεζών;

3) Είναι εφικτή, πολιτικά και οικονομικά, η αύξηση της χρηματοδότησης του ESM; Αν όχι, ποια άλλα μέσα διαθέτει η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση για τη στήριξη και την ενδεχόμενη σωτηρία των τραπεζών;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(28 Αυγούστου 2013)

1. Το ποσοστό των μη εξυπηρετούμενων δανείων κατά το πρώτο τρίμηνο του 2013 ανήλθε σε 29% του συνόλου των δανείων σε μεμονωμένο επίπεδο, έναντι 24,2% στο τέλος του 2012 και 18,7% κατά το πρώτο τρίμηνο του 2012. Τα αναδιαρθρωθέντα δάνεια ανήλθαν σε 5,6% του συνόλου των δανείων για το ίδιο χρονικό διάστημα, ποσοστό που παρέμεινε σταθερό με βάση τα επιτόκια του τέλους 2012 και αυξήθηκε μόνο ελαφρά από 5,1% κατά το πρώτο τρίμηνο του 2012.

2. Το 2012, η Τράπεζα της Ελλάδος προσδιόρισε τις κεφαλαιακές ανάγκες κάθε τράπεζας με βάση ελέγχους της ποιότητας των περιουσιακών στοιχείων και προσομοιώσεις ακραίων καταστάσεων που εκτελέστηκαν με τη βοήθεια εξωτερικών συμβούλων (Blackrock, Bain). Με βάση δυσμενές μακροοικονομικό σενάριο, στις κεφαλαιακές ανάγκες λήφθηκαν υπόψη μελλοντικές ζημίες σε σχέση με μη εξυπηρετούμενα δάνεια έως το 2014. Οι κεφαλαιακές απαιτήσεις και η απαιτούμενη αύξηση κεφαλαίου των τραπεζών έχουν προσδιοριστεί με στόχο να διασφαλιστεί ότι οι τράπεζες εξακολουθούν να διατηρούν επαρκή κεφαλαιοποίηση, ακόμη και εάν οι εν λόγω αναμενόμενες ζημίες μειώσουν το κεφάλαιο των τραπεζών κατά τα επόμενα έτη. Για την ανακεφαλαιοποίηση και την εξυγίανση ελληνικών τραπεζών έχει προβλεφθεί ποσό ύψους 50 δισεκατ. ευρώ στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος οικονομικής προσαρμογής.

3. Δεν φαίνεται να υπάρχει ανάγκη αύξησης του προαναφερθέντος ποσού προκειμένου να διασφαλιστεί ότι οι τράπεζες θα εξακολουθήσουν να διαθέτουν επαρκή κεφαλαιοποίηση. Κατά το δεύτερο εξάμηνο του έτους 2013 θα γίνει νέα προσομοίωση ακραίων καταστάσεων για να επικαιροποιηθεί η κεφαλαιακή κατάσταση των τραπεζών. Το ανωτέρω ποσό περιλαμβάνει εφεδρικά περιθώρια.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008591/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Recapitalisation of Greek banks

Before the economic crisis, the Greek banking system was considered one of the safest in the euro area. That was because Greek banks were not holding any toxic sub-prime mortgages, unlike similar banks in France, Germany, Ireland and Spain, and because their loan portfolio was performing satisfactorily, due to the large guarantees required in order to secure loans.

However, due (a) to the economic crisis which sent the ratio of non-performing loans sky high and resulted in a catastrophic deflation in property values; (b) the massive flight of deposits and capital from the Greek economy and c) the haircut to Greek Government bonds under the PSI, a decision was adopted to support the Greek banks by recapitalising them using EFSF funds.

In view of the fact that the capital ring-fenced for recapitalising the Greek banks was calculated based on economic forecasts made in early 2012 and was set at EUR 50 billion, will the Commission say:

1. What is the level of non-performing loans in Greece today compared with previous years? What percentage of loans has been restructured?

2. Is the growing level of non-performing loans in Greece threatening the capital adequacy of Greek banks? If it is, what tools does the European Union have to support the capital adequacy of the banks?

3. Is it politically and economically feasible to increase financing from the ESM? If not, what other means does the European Union have at its disposal to support and, possibly, save the banks?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(28 August 2013)

1. Non-performing loans (NPLs) in Q1 2013 reached 29% of total loans on a solo level, up from 24.2% at end 2012 and 18.7% at Q1 2012. Restructured loans amounted to 5.6% of total loans for the same period, which remained stable with end-2012 rates and only slightly up from 5.1% at Q1 2012.

2. In 2012, the Bank of Greece determined the capital needs of each banks based on asset quality reviews and stress tests executed with the help of external consultant (Blackrock, Bain). Based on an adverse macroeconomic scenario, the capital needs took into account the future losses on growing NPLs until 2014. The capital requirements and the required increase in banks' capital have been determined with the aim to ensure that banks remain adequately capitalised even if these expected losses reduce banks' capital over the coming years. For the recapitalisation and resolution of Greek banks, an amount of EUR 50 billion has been envisaged under the Economic Adjustment Programme.

3. There does not seem to be a need to increase the abovementioned amount in order to ensure that banks remain adequately capitalised. A new stress test will be executed in the second half of 2013 in order to update the capital situation of banks. Buffers are available in the above envelope.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008592/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Claude Moraes (S&D), Lívia Járóka (PPE), Michael Cashman (S&D), Zita Gurmai (S&D), Emine Bozkurt (S&D) y Kinga Göncz (S&D)
(12 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: Unos organismos de fomento de la igualdad independientes y efectivos para permitir la aplicación y el impacto de la legislación de la UE en materia de igualdad de trato

En cumplimiento de las directivas de igualdad de trato de la UE, existen organismos de fomento de la igualdad en todos los Estados miembros.

Dichos organismos desempeñan un papel fundamental en la aplicación de tales directivas y, como pone de manifiesto el estudio sobre los organismos de fomento de la igualdad elaborado para la Comisión en 2010, albergan un importante potencial para ayudar a las víctimas de la discriminación, dar más poder a la sociedad civil, apoyar las buenas prácticas de empleadores y proveedores de servicios, sensibilizar sobre derechos y obligaciones, contribuir a la elaboración de unas políticas públicas de calidad y apoyar una cultura de derechos e igualdad en los Estados miembros.

No obstante, las directivas no establecen normas ni garantías adecuadas para asegurar la independencia y eficacia de los organismos de igualdad; y algunos Estados miembros, amparándose en la crisis económica, están poniendo trabas y socavando la independencia y eficacia de sus organismos nacionales de fomento de la igualdad.

Estas derivas hacen peligrar el cumplimiento de los objetivos y frenan la efectiva aplicación de las directivas de la UE sobre igualdad de trato en un momento en que es más necesario que nunca proteger a los grupos y personas vulnerables contra la discriminación.

Es necesario, por tanto, introducir algún tipo de normas a escala de la UE, especialmente diseñadas para los organismos de igualdad, que estimulen el desarrollo de estos organismos, garanticen el desarrollo de su pleno potencial y les ofrezcan protección.

¿Qué pasos, medidas e iniciativas tiene previstos la Comisión para establecer unas normas que permitan lograr, proteger y salvaguardar la independencia y eficacia de los organismos nacionales de fomento de la igualdad y por ende la efectiva aplicación de estas directivas?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(26 de agosto de 2013)

La Comisión Europea también considera que los organismos de promoción de la igualdad desempeñan un papel fundamental en la aplicación de las Directivas sobre la igualdad de trato, la lucha contra la discriminación y la prestación de ayuda a las víctimas de esta.

Las Directivas 2000/43/CE sobre la igualdad racial, 2004/113/CE, sobre igualdad entre hombres y mujeres en el acceso a bienes y servicios y su suministro y 2006/54/CE sobre la igualdad entre hombres y mujeres en el empleo y la ocupación, disponen que «cada Estado miembro designará uno o más organismos responsables de la promoción, el análisis, el seguimiento y el apoyo de la igualdad de trato entre todas las personas, sin discriminación» ([1]).

Con arreglo a estas Directivas, los organismos de promoción de la igualdad deben contemplar, como mínimo, los motivos de origen racial o étnico y de género ([2]) y llevar a cabo al menos las siguientes tareas específicas: i) prestar asistencia independiente a las víctimas de discriminación a la hora de tramitar sus reclamaciones por discriminación; ii) realizar estudios independientes sobre la discriminación; iii) publicar informes independientes y formular recomendaciones sobre cualquier cuestión relacionada con dicha discriminación ([3]).

([1]) Véanse el artículo 13 de la Directiva 2000/43/CE del Consejo, el artículo 12 de la Directiva 2004/113/CE del Consejo y el artículo 20 de la Directiva 2006/54/CE.

([2]) La UE no exige a los organismos de promoción de la igualdad que contemplen la religión o las convicciones, ni tampoco la discapacidad, la edad o la orientación sexual en el empleo y la ocupación. En su «propuesta del artículo 19», la Comisión propone que los organismos de promoción de la igualdad se ocupen también de los motivos de discriminación fuera del mercado de trabajo.

([3]) El artículo 20 de la Directiva 2006/54/CE añade la competencia siguiente: «intercambiar, al nivel adecuado, la información disponible con organismos europeos equivalentes, como el futuro Instituto Europeo de Igualdad de Género».

La plena aplicación de estas disposiciones precisa que los Estados miembros garanticen que los organismos que designen para la promoción de la igualdad efectúen de forma independiente y eficaz las tareas confiadas por las Directivas.

La Comisión supervisa la correcta aplicación de las Directivas de la UE en materia de no discriminación y toma las medidas apropiadas, incluida la incoación de procedimientos de infracción ante el Tribunal de Justicia, en caso de incumplimiento por los Estados miembros de sus obligaciones en virtud del Derecho de la UE.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-008592/13
a Bizottság számára
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Claude Moraes (S&D), Járóka Lívia (PPE), Michael Cashman (S&D), Gurmai Zita (S&D), Emine Bozkurt (S&D) és Göncz Kinga (S&D)
(2013. július 12.)

Tárgy: Az egyenlő bánásmódra irányuló uniós jogszabályok végrehajtását és kívánt hatásuk elérését biztosító független és hatékony szervek

Az egyenlő bánásmóddal foglalkozó szerveket az összes uniós tagállamban az egyenlő bánásmódra vonatkozó uniós irányelvekkel összhangban állították fel, és azok kulcsfontosságú szerepet töltenek be ezen irányelvek hatékony végrehajtásában. Amint azt az egyenlő bánásmóddal foglalkozó szervek kapcsán a Bizottság számára 2010-ben készített felmérés megállapította, ezek a szervek fontos szerepet játszhatnak a hátrányos megkülönböztetés áldozatainak támogatását, a civil társadalom szerepének megerősítését, a munkáltatók és szolgáltatók által alkalmazott helyes gyakorlatok ösztönzését, a jogokkal és kötelezettségekkel kapcsolatos tudatosság fokozását, a közrenddel kapcsolatos politikaformálás minőségének javítását és a jogok és egyenlőség légkörének a tagállamokban történő terjesztését illetően.

Az irányelvek azonban nem követelnek meg kielégítő normákat és biztosítékokat az egyenlő bánásmóddal foglalkozó szervek függetlensége és hatékonysága tekintetében, és a gazdasági válság ürügyén sok tagállam támadja és aláássa az egyenlő bánásmóddal foglalkozó nemzeti szervek függetlenségét és hatékonyságát.

E fejlemények veszélyeztetik a kitűzött célok megvalósítását és aláássák az egyenlő bánásmódra irányuló uniós irányelvek hatékony végrehajtását pontosan akkor, amikor a sérülékeny csoportok és egyének diszkriminációval szembeni védelmére a legnagyobb szükség van.

Ezért tehát az egyenlő bánásmóddal foglalkozó szervekre szabott normákat kell uniós szinten előírni valamilyen formában. Ezek a normák ösztönöznék az egyenlő bánásmóddal foglalkozó szervek továbbfejlesztését, és biztosítanák, hogy potenciáljukat teljes mértékben ki tudják használni, valamint védelmet biztosítanának számukra.

Milyen lépéseket és kezdeményezéseket tervez a Bizottság annak érdekében, hogy megfelelő normák biztosítsák az egyenlő bánásmódra irányuló uniós irányelvek értelmében felállított egyenlő bánásmóddal foglalkozó szervek függetlenségének és hatékonyságának megteremtését, előmozdítását és védelmét, valamint hogy ezáltal ezen irányelvek hatékony végrehajtása biztosított legyen?

Viviane Reding válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2013. augusztus 26.)

Az Európai Bizottság is úgy véli, hogy az egyenlő bánásmóddal foglalkozó szervek kulcsfontosságú szerepet játszanak az egyenlő bánásmódról szóló irányelvek végrehajtásában, a megkülönböztetés elleni küzdelemben és a megkülönböztetés áldozatainak történő segítségnyújtásban.

A faji egyenlőségre vonatkozó 2000/43/EK irányelv, a nők és férfiak közötti egyenlő bánásmód elvének az árukhoz és szolgáltatásokhoz való hozzáférés, valamint azok értékesítése, illetve nyújtása tekintetében történő végrehajtásáról szóló 2004/113/EK irányelv, valamint a férfiak és nők közötti esélyegyenlőség és egyenlő bánásmód elvének a foglalkoztatás és munkavégzés területén történő megvalósításáról szóló 2006/54/EK irányelv előírja, hogy a tagállamok olyan testületet vagy testületeket jelöljenek ki, valamint megtegyék a szükséges intézkedéseket, amely testületek minden személy számára elősegítik, elemzik, ellenőrzik és támogatják az egyenlő, megkülönböztetéstől mentes bánásmódot ([1]).

Az említett irányelvek szerint az egyenlő bánásmóddal foglalkozó szervek hatáskörének ki kell terjednie legalább a faji vagy etnikai hovatartozás, valamint a nemi hovatartozás alapján történő megkülönböztetés területére ([2]), továbbá el kell látniuk legalább a következő feladatokat: i. független segítségnyújtás a hátrányos megkülönböztetés áldozatainak a megkülönböztetés miatti panaszaik érvényesítése során; ii. független vizsgálatok folytatása a megkülönböztetés tárgyában; és iii. független jelentések közzététele és ajánlások megfogalmazása az ilyen megkülönböztetéshez kapcsolódó problémákról ([3]).

([1]) Lásd a 2000/43/EK tanácsi irányelv 13. cikkét, a 2004/113/EK tanácsi irányelv 12. cikkét és a 2006/54/EK irányelv 20. cikkét.

([2]) Az Unió nem írja elő, hogy az egyenlő bánásmóddal foglalkozó szervek hatásköre kiterjedjen a foglalkoztatás és a munkavégzés során tapasztalt, a vallás vagy meggyőződés, valamely fogyatékosság, az életkor vagy a szexuális beállítottság alapján történő megkülönböztetés területére. A Szerződés 19. cikke alapján előterjesztendő javaslatában a Bizottság javasolja, hogy az egyenlő bánásmódot elősegítő szerveket kötelezzék arra, hogy foglalkozzanak a munkaerőpiacon kívül megmutatkozó megkülönböztetés okaival is.

([3]) A 2006/54/EK irányelv 20. cikke az említett testületek hatáskörét a következővel egészíti ki: „a rendelkezésre álló információk cseréje a megfelelő szinten a kapcsolódó európai szervekkel, mint például a Nemek Közötti Egyenlőség Európai Intézetével".

E rendelkezések teljes körű végrehajtása megköveteli a tagállamoktól annak biztosítását, hogy az általuk az egyenlő bánásmóddal foglalkozó testületként kijelölt szervek képesek legyenek függetlenül és hatékonyan végrehajtani az irányelvben számukra előírt feladatokat.

A Bizottság figyelemmel kíséri a hátrányos megkülönböztetés elleni uniós irányelvek megfelelő végrehajtását, és megteszi a szükséges lépéseket, köztük a Bíróság előtti kötelezettségszegési eljárások megindítását abban az esetben, ha a tagállamok nem tesznek eleget az uniós kötelezettségeknek.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008592/13
aan de Commissie
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Claude Moraes (S&D), Lívia Járóka (PPE), Michael Cashman (S&D), Zita Gurmai (S&D), Emine Bozkurt (S&D) en Kinga Göncz (S&D)
(12 juli 2013)

Betreft: Onafhankelijke en doeltreffende instanties voor gelijke behandeling die moeten zorgen voor de tenuitvoerlegging en weerslag van EU-wetgeving inzake gelijke behandeling

In alle EU-lidstaten zijn er instanties voor gelijke behandeling uit hoofde van de EU-richtlijnen betreffende gelijke behandeling.

Deze instanties vervullen een sleutelrol bij de doeltreffende tenuitvoerlegging van deze richtlijnen en zij beschikken, zoals blijkt uit het onderzoek naar instanties voor gelijke behandeling dat de Commissie in 2010 heeft laten verrichten, over een groot potentieel voor het bijstaan van slachtoffers van discriminatie, de empowerment van het maatschappelijk middenveld, het ondersteunen van goede praktijken door werkgevers en dienstverleners, het bewust maken van rechten en plichten, het bijdragen tot het uitstippelen van overheidsbeleid van goede kwaliteit en het steunen van een cultuur van rechten en gelijke behandeling in de lidstaten.

De richtlijnen voorzien echter niet in adequate normen en waarborgen voor de onafhankelijkheid en doeltreffendheid van de instanties voor gelijke behandeling, en een aantal lidstaten zijn bezig om, onder het mom van de economische crisis, de onafhankelijkheid en doeltreffendheid van hun nationale instanties voor gelijke behandeling te betwisten en te ondermijnen.

Deze ontwikkelingen vormen een bedreiging voor de verwezenlijking van de doelstellingen en ondermijnen de doeltreffende tenuitvoerlegging van de EU-richtlijnen betreffende gelijke behandeling, juist op een moment waarop de bescherming van kwetsbare groepen en individuen tegen discriminatie het meest nodig is.

Derhalve is het zaak enige vorm van normen op EU-niveau in te voeren, die precies zijn afgestemd op de instanties voor gelijke behandeling. Dergelijke normen bevorderen de verdere ontwikkeling van de instanties voor gelijke behandeling, zorgen ervoor dat zij hun volle potentieel kunnen bereiken en bieden deze instanties bescherming.

Welke stappen, acties en initiatieven wil de Commissie ondernemen om te zorgen voor adequate normen ter verwezenlijking, bevordering en bescherming van de onafhankelijkheid en doeltreffendheid van de nationale instanties voor gelijke behandeling die uit hoofde van de EU-richtlijnen betreffende gelijke behandeling zijn opgezet, en aldus de doeltreffende tenuitvoerlegging van deze richtlijnen te waarborgen?

Antwoord van mevrouw Reding namens de Commissie
(26 augustus 2013)

Ook de Europese Commissie is van mening dat de organen voor gelijke kansen een belangrijke rol spelen bij de uitvoering van de richtlijnen inzake gelijke behandeling, bij de bestrijding van discriminatie en bij de bijstand aan slachtoffers van discriminatie.

Op grond van Richtlijn 2000/43/EG inzake gelijke behandeling van personen ongeacht ras, Richtlijn 2004/113/EG inzake de gelijke behandeling van mannen en vrouwen bij de toegang tot en het aanbod van goederen en diensten en Richtlijn 2006/54/EG inzake gelijke kansen en gelijke behandeling van mannen en vrouwen in arbeid en beroep, moeten de lidstaten een orgaan of organen aanwijzen voor de bevordering, analyse, monitoring en ondersteuning van de gelijke behandeling van alle personen, zonder discriminatie, en daarvoor de nodige maatregelen treffen ([1]).

Overeenkomstig de richtlijnen moeten de organen voor gelijke kansen op zijn minst discriminatie op grond van ras, etnische afkomst en geslacht bestrijken ([2]), en op zijn minst de volgende specifieke taken uitvoeren: (i) onafhankelijke bijstand verlenen aan slachtoffers van discriminatie bij de afwikkeling van hun klachten betreffende discriminatie; (ii) onafhankelijke onderzoeken over discriminatie verrichten; en (iii) onafhankelijke verslagen publiceren en aanbevelingen doen over elk onderwerp dat met dergelijke discriminatie verband houdt ([3]).

([1]) Zie artikel 13 van Richtlijn 2000/43/EG van de Raad, artikel 12 van Richtlijn 2004/113/EG van de Raad en artikel 20 van Richtlijn 2006/54/EG.

([2]) De EU eist niet van de organen voor gelijke kansen dat zij zich bezighouden met discriminatie op grond van godsdienst of overtuiging, handicap, leeftijd en seksuele gerichtheid in arbeid en beroep. In haar „artikel 19-voorstel" stelt de Commissie voor van de organen voor gelijke kansen te eisen dat zij zich tevens bezighouden met deze gronden van discriminatie buiten de arbeidsmarkt.

([3]) Op grond van artikel 20 van Richtlijn 2006/54/EG moeten de organen ook bevoegd zijn om „beschikbare informatie met overeenkomstige Europese organisaties, zoals enig toekomstig Europees instituut voor gendergelijkheid, op het geschikte niveau uit te wisselen.".

Om deze bepalingen ten volle uit te voeren, moeten de lidstaten ervoor zorgen dat de door hen aangewezen organen voor gelijke kansen hun taken uit hoofde van de richtlijnen onafhankelijk en doeltreffend kunnen uitvoeren.

De Commissie houdt toezicht op de correcte uitvoering van de antidiscriminatierichtlijnen van de EU en neemt passende maatregelen, onder meer door bij het Hof van Justitie een inbreukprocedure in te leiden wanneer een lidstaat zijn EU-verplichtingen niet nakomt.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008592/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Claude Moraes (S&D), Lívia Járóka (PPE), Michael Cashman (S&D), Zita Gurmai (S&D), Emine Bozkurt (S&D) and Kinga Göncz (S&D)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Independent and effective equality bodies to ensure the implementation and impact of EU equal treatment legislation

Equality bodies are established in all EU Member States in compliance with the EU equal treatment directives.

They play a key role in the effective implementation of these directives and, as the study on equality bodies prepared for the Commission in 2010 established, equality bodies have significant potential in assisting victims of discrimination, empowering civil society, supporting good practice by employers and service providers, raising awareness of rights and obligations, contributing to quality public policy making, and supporting a culture of rights and equality in the Member States.

However, the directives do not provide adequate standards and guarantees for the independence and effectiveness of equality bodies, and a number of Member States, under the cover of the economic crisis, are challenging and undermining the independence and effectiveness of their national equality bodies.

These developments are threatening the accomplishment of the objectives and undermining the effective implementation of the EU equal treatment directives exactly at a time when protection against discrimination for vulnerable groups and individuals is most needed.

There is therefore a need to introduce some form of standards at EU level, tailored specifically for equality bodies. Such standards will stimulate the further development of equality bodies, will ensure that they can achieve their full potential and will offer them protection.

What steps, actions and initiatives does the Commission plan to take in order to provide adequate standards to achieve, promote and protect the independence and effectiveness of national equality bodies set up pursuant to the EU equal treatment directives and thereby to ensure the effective implementation of those directives?

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

The European Commission also considers that Equality bodies play a key role in the implementation of the equal treatment directives, in the fight against discrimination and in providing assistance to victims of discrimination.

Directives 2000/43/EC on racial equality, 2004/113/EC on gender equality in the access to and supply of goods and services and 2006/54/EC on gender equality in employment and occupation require Member States to 'designate and make the necessary arrangements for a body or bodies for the promotion, analysis, monitoring and support of equal treatment of all persons without discrimination' ([1]).

According to the directives, equality bodies have to cover, as a minimum, the grounds of racial or ethnical origin as well as sex ([2]) and to carry out at least the following specific tasks: (i) providing independent assistance to victims of discrimination in pursuing the complaints of discrimination; (ii) conducting independent surveys concerning discrimination; and (iii) publishing independent reports and making recommendations on any issue related to such discrimination ([3]).

Full implementation of these provisions requires Member States to ensure that the bodies they designate as Equality bodies are able to carry out the tasks given to them in the directives independently and effectively.

([1]) See Article 13 of Council Directive 2000/43/EC Article 12 of Council Directive 2004/113/EC and Article 20 of Directive 2006/54/EC.
([2]) EU does not require Equality bodies to cover religion or belief, disability, age and sexual orientation in employment and occupation. In its 'Article 19 Proposal' the Commission proposes to require Equality Bodies to deal with those discrimination grounds outside the labour market as well.
([3]) Article 20 of the directive 2006/54/EC adds the following competence: 'at the appropriate level exchanging available information with corresponding European bodies such as any future European Institute for Gender Equality'.

The Commission monitors the correct implementation of EU anti-discrimination directives, and takes appropriate action, including initiation of infringement proceedings before the Court of Justice, in cases in which Member States do not comply with EU obligations.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-008593/13
till kommissionen
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(12 juli 2013)

Angående: Upphandling av pass- och id-kortstillverkning

I Sverige utfärdas pass och id-kort officiellt av staten, men de fysiska dokumenten tillverkas av företaget Gemalto (en fransk korttillverkare) ([1]), medan personaliseringen och all kvalitetskontroll sköts av företaget IAI B.V. från Nederländerna ([2]).

Anser kommissionen att de tjänster som Gemalto och IAI B.V. utför i detta avseende upphandlades av den svenska staten som A-tjänster (tjänster som lämpar sig för gränsöverskridande handel) i enlighet med regelverket för offentlig upphandling?

Anser kommissionen att upphandlingen av fysiska pass och id-kort i detta avseende i grunden skiljer sig från tillhandahållande av elektroniska id-kort och autentiseringsmetoder, vilket av Sverige har klassats som B-tjänster (tjänster som inte lämpar sig för gränsöverskridande handel)? ([3])

Svar från Michel Barnier på kommissionens vägnar
(9 september 2013)

När det gäller frågorna från parlamentsledamoten ska en upphandling som omfattas av antingen bilaga II A eller bilaga II B i enlighet med direktiv 2004/18/EG fastställas med beaktande av alla tjänster som kontraktet avser och kan inte göras på grundval av endast en typ av tjänster. I synnerhet bör kontrakt som innehåller tjänster förtecknade såväl i bilaga II A som i bilaga II B tilldelas antingen efter de regler som gäller för A-tjänster eller B-tjänster beroende på värdet på tjänsterna.

På grundval av den information som lämnats av parlamentsledamoten förefaller det som om de kontrakt som den svenska regeringen ingått med Gemalto och IAI B.V. innehåller olika typer av tjänster relaterade till utfärdandet av resedokument. Komplexiteten i dessa avtal skulle kräva en djupgående analys av alla delar av kontrakten. De tillgängliga uppgifterna förefaller otillräckliga för att genomföra en sådan analys. Därför har vi inte möjlighet att ta reda på om de berörda tjänsterna kan anses vara A-tjänster eller B-tjänster.

Mot bakgrund av ovanstående, i det fall att en anbudsgivare anser sig vara förfördelad i ett anbudsförfarande, skulle kommissionen vilja framhålla att det med tanke på de tillgängliga systemen för överprövning skulle vara tillrådligt att använda de nationella rättsmedlen. Detta eftersom det kan medföra fördelar för anbudsgivare, när det gäller att hävda sina rättigheter mer direkt och personligt.

([1]) http://www.gemalto.com/php/pr_view.php?id=973
([2]) http://www.prnewswire.co.uk/news-releases/iai-supplies-passport-personalisation-systems-to-ab-svenska-pass-in-tumba-sweden-152819015.html
([3]) Se även skriftlig fråga E-007029/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008593/13
to the Commission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Procurement of passport and ID-card manufacturing

In Sweden, official passports and ID cards are issued by the government, but the physical cards are manufactured by Gemalto (a French smart card company) ([1]) and the personalisation and all quality verification is performed by the company IAI B.V. from the Netherlands ([2]).

Does the Commission consider that services provided by Gemalto and IAI B.V. in this regard were procured by the Swedish Government as A-services (services suitable for cross-border trade) under the public procurement framework?

Does the Commission consider that procurement of physical passports and ID cards is, in that regard, fundamentally different to the provision of electronic ID cards and means of authentication, which have been classed by the Swedish Government as B-services (services not suitable for cross-border trade) ([3])?

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

As regards the questions of the Honourable Member, the qualification of a services contract as falling under the scope of either Annex II A or Annex II B as stipulated in Directive 2004/18/EC is decided taking into account all services which are the subject matter of the contract and cannot be made on the basis of only one type of services. In particular, contracts having as subject matter services listed both in Annex II A and Annex II B are to be awarded following rules either applicable to A-services or B-services depending on the value of the respective services.

On the basis of the information provided by the Honourable Member, it appears that the contracts, concluded by the Swedish Government with Gemalto and IAI B.V., include different types of services related to the issuance of travel documents. The complexity of these contracts would necessitate an in-depth analysis of all elements of the contracts. The information available appears to be insufficient in order to carry out such an analysis. Therefore, we are not in a position to ascertain whether the concerned services are to be qualified as A-services or B-services.

In the light of the above, in the case that a bidder deems to be aggrieved in a tendering procedure, the Commission would like to stress, in view of the available remedies system, that it would be advisable to use the national means of redress because of the advantages they may offer to bidders, in terms of asserting their rights more directly and personally.

([1]) http://www.gemalto.com/php/pr_view.php?id=973.
([2]) http://www.prnewswire.co.uk/news-releases/iai-supplies-passport-personalisation-systems-to-ab-svenska-pass-in-tumba-sweden-152819015.html
([3]) See also Written Question E-007029-13.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008594/13
aan de Commissie
Patricia van der Kammen (NI)
(12 juli 2013)

Betreft: Bericht over mogelijke verplichting om alleen door de EU goedgekeurd zaaigoed te gebruiken

Op 11 juni 2013 heeft de heer Borg namens de Commissie antwoord gegeven op schriftelijke vraag E-004674/2013. Een van de vragen was of de Commissie kan weerleggen of ontkennen dat de in het artikel geschetste gevolgen — zoals een verbod voor particulieren om met zelfgewonnen zaad hun moestuin te onderhouden of het verbod voor kleine boeren om zaden te ruilen met collega's — consequenties kunnen zijn van de plannen of planvoorbereidingen van de Commissie.

Het antwoord van de Commissie is ronduit tegenstrijdig omdat zij enerzijds stelt dat de beweringen in het bericht ongegrond zijn en tegelijkertijd aanvoert dat de uitwisseling in natura tussen personen die geen professionele exploitanten zijn, zoals die in het voorstel zijn gedefinieerd, buiten het toepassingsgebied van de verordening valt. Met andere woorden, het antwoord op de vraag of de verordening zal leiden tot een verbod voor kleine boeren om zaden te ruilen met collega's is dus eerst „nee" en vervolgens „ja".

1. Vallen volgens de Commissie kleine boeren onder de noemer professionele exploitanten?

2. Kan de Commissie, gezien haar tegenstrijdige antwoord, uitsluitsel geven op de vraag of het ruilen en vervolgens gebruiken van zaden door boeren straks wel of niet onder de verordening gaat vallen?

3. Kan de Commissie aangeven welke rampen de mensheid de afgelopen 100 000 jaar hebben geraakt omdat zaaigoed niet door de Commissie was voorzien van een predikaat „goedgekeurd"?

4. Is de Commissie het met de PVV eens dat er geen regelgeving moet worden opgelegd als er geen enkel probleem bestaat of slechts sprake is van verzonnen problemen?

5. Is het denkbaar dat de Commissie zich verregaand laat meeslepen door de „voorlichting" van de grootindustriëlen in de zaaigoedsector, voor wie de regelgeving van verplichte registratie en verplicht gebruik van door de EU goedgekeurd zaaigoed de comfortabele uitkomst heeft dat elke landbouwer welhaast gedwongen bij hen moet consumeren?

Verder schrijft de heer Borg in het antwoord: „Zoals voor andere beleidsterreinen van de Unie zijn die voorschriften nodig om de werking van de interne markt […] te waarborgen".

6. Is de Commissie het met de PVV eens dat zij de interne markt verregaand verstoort doordat zij het vrije gebruik van zaaigoederen verijdelt?

Antwoord van de heer Borg namens de Commissie
(2 september 2013)

1/2. Overeenkomstig artikel 3, lid 6, van het voorstel betreffende teeltmateriaal ([1]) wordt onder „professionele exploitant", ongeacht de grootte ervan, verstaan elke natuurlijke of rechtspersoon die beroepshalve activiteiten verricht zoals het produceren of op de markt aanbieden van teeltmateriaal. Landbouwers die materiaal voor levensmiddelen of diervoeders produceren en/of op de markt aanbieden, zijn geen „professionele exploitanten" in de zin van het voorstel, omdat het voorstel alleen betrekking heeft op materiaal dat bedoeld is om volledige planten voort te brengen (zie artikel 3, lid 2). Daarom mogen landbouwers die in hoofdzaak materiaal voor levensmiddelen/diervoeders produceren, buiten het toepassingsgebied van dit voorstel in natura teeltmateriaal uitwisselen.

([1]) Verordening van het Europees Parlement en de Raad betreffende de productie en het op de markt aanbieden van teeltmateriaal (teeltmateriaalwetgeving) (COM2013(262) final).

3/4. Met het voorstel worden diverse klassieke problemen in de geschiedenis van de landbouw aangepakt, zoals mislukkingen van oogsten als gevolg van onvoldoende rassendiversiteit of hoe oogstopbrengsten door genetische verbetering kunnen worden vergroot met het oog op het veiligstellen van de voedselvoorziening. Het voorstel heeft dus tot doel ervoor te zorgen dat teeltmateriaal aan de hoogst mogelijke kwaliteitsnormen voldoet en de landbouwers over een ruime rassenkeuze beschikken. De registratie van rassen is een van de middelen om deze doelstellingen te verwezenlijken. Met dat kader worden de belangen van de gebruikers behartigd en worden geïnformeerde keuzen mogelijk gemaakt, en worden de biodiversiteit en de zekerheid van de voedselvoorziening als collectieve goederen bevorderd.

5/6. De werking van de interne markt is in het belang van de Europese samenleving in haar geheel. Gelijke concurrentievoorwaarden moeten worden gewaarborgd door middel van gemeenschappelijke voorschriften voor alle professionele exploitanten; er zijn echter ook diverse bepalingen ter ondersteuning van micro-ondernemingen opgenomen. Die bepalingen dienen ook ter bevordering van traditionele rassen, heterogeen materiaal en materiaal voor nichemarkten, die gewoonlijk worden geproduceerd en op de markt aangeboden door micro-ondernemingen en niet-professionelen (zie bijvoorbeeld artikel 10, lid 3, artikel 14, lid 3, en de artikelen 36, 57, 88, 89 en136 van het voorstel).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008594/13
to the Commission
Patricia van der Kammen (NI)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Report on possible requirement to use only EU-approved seed (follow-up question)

On 11 June 2013, Mr Borg answered Written Question E-004674/2013 on behalf of the Commission. One of the questions was whether the Commission could refute or deny that the Commission's plans or draft plans could result in consequences outlined in the article, such as a ban on individuals sowing their kitchen gardens with seed that they have obtained themselves or a ban on small farmers exchanging seed with their fellow farmers.

The Commission's answer is downright contradictory, because on the one hand it states that the claims in the report have no basis in fact while at the same time indicating that exchange in kind between persons, other than professional operators as defined in the proposal, is outside the regulation's scope. In other words, the answer to the question as to whether the regulation will result in a ban on small famers exchanging seed with their fellow farmers is first 'no' and then 'yes'.

1. Does the Commission consider small farmers to be professional operators?

2. In view of the Commission's contradictory answer, can it say whether or not the exchange and subsequent use of seed by farmers will be subject to the regulation?

3. Can the Commission indicate what disasters have befallen humanity during the past 100 000 years because seed was not 'approved' by the Commission?

4. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that no regulation should be imposed if no problem whatsoever exists, or only imaginary problems?

5. Is it conceivable that the Commission might to a large extent have allowed itself to be swayed by the 'information' provided by large companies in the seed industry, for whom a regulatory requirement to register and use EU-approved seed would have the convenient outcome that every farmer would be virtually compelled to consume their products?

Mr Borg also writes in his answer: 'As in other Union policy areas, those requirements are necessary to ensure the functioning of internal market (…)'.

6. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that the Commission is seriously distorting the internal market by preventing the free use of seed?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(2 September 2013)

1/2. According to Article 3(6) of the proposal on plant reproductive material ([1]), 'professional operator', regardless of its size, means any natural or legal person carrying out, as a profession, activities such as production or marketing of plant reproductive material. Farmers, who produce and/or market material for food or feed purposes, are not 'professional operators' in the sense of the proposal, because the proposal only covers material intended for the production of entire plants (see Article 3(2)). Therefore, farmers who mainly produce food/feed material may exchange in kind plant reproductive material outside the scope of this proposal.

3/4. The proposal addresses several classic problems in the history of agriculture, such as crop failures due to a lack of varietal diversity or how to increase crop yields by genetic improvement for maintaining food security. The proposal thus aims at ensuring that plant reproductive material satisfies the best possible quality standards and that farmers have a wide choice of varieties. Registration of varieties is one tool to achieve these aims. That framework serves users' interests and informed choices, and the public goods of biodiversity and food security.

([1]) Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the production and making available on the market of plant reproductive material (plant reproductive material law) (COM 2013(262)final).

5/6. The functioning of the internal market is in the interest of European society as a whole. A level playing field must be ensured through common rules for all professional operators, however with several provisions aiming at the support of micro-enterprises. Those provisions also support traditional varieties, heterogeneous material and niche market material which are usually produced and marketed by micro-enterprises and non-professionals (see, for instance, Articles 10(3), 14(3), 36, 57, 88, 89 and 136 of the proposal).

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-008595/13
adresată Comisiei
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(12 iulie 2013)

Subiect: Noi posibilități de transport local și regional

Piața transporturilor de pasageri și de marfă în Europa este tot mai dinamică, fiind puternic influențată și de provocările pieței la nivel european și internațional, dar și de concurența lansată de cursele aeriene low-cost.

Cu toate acestea, există încă noi segmente ale pieței care pot fi dezvoltate și exploatate, inclusiv prin parteneriate public-privat în interesul tuturor partenerilor.

Un asemenea segment este transportul turistic și cel care vizează evenimente — conferințe, seminarii, reuniuni profesionale, care poate fi corelat cu programe destinate descoperirii de noi destinații, tradiții și monumente, în strânsă colaborare cu autoritățile locale și regionale care vor să exploateze potențialul cultural și turistic al zonei și să pună în evidență toate aceste tradiții și monumente.

Cum intenționează Comisia să încurajeze și să sprijine eforturile autorităților locale și regionale pentru a lansa noi programe și parteneriate pentru dezvoltarea de noi activități — inclusiv lansarea de noi linii de transport rutier local, regional și transfrontalier, care nu sunt acoperite de alte mijloace de transport, și corelarea transportului de marfă cu cel de călători pentru folosirea la maxim a capacității parcurilor auto publice și private și lansarea de noi servicii în beneficiul cetățenilor europeni și pentru o mai bună mobilitate a acestora?

Răspuns dat de dl Hahnon în numele Comisiei
(4 septembrie 2013)

Comisia este de acord cu opinia distinsului membru al Parlamentului, potrivit căreia infrastructura și serviciile eficiente și durabile din domeniul transportului sunt vitale pentru exploatarea atuurilor economice ale tuturor regiunilor din UE și pentru sprijinirea pieței interne, contribuind la facilitarea coeziunii economice și sociale.

În contextul gestionării partajate a politicii de coeziune, Comisia și statele membre convin asupra strategiei și priorităților de finanțare. Ulterior, statele membre și autoritățile lor selectează și pun în aplicare proiectele cofinanțate, pe baza priorităților stabilite în programele relevante, în concordanță cu strategia și politicile UE asupra cărora s-a convenit. Prin urmare, statele membre pot solicita finanțare din fondurile alocate politicii de coeziune, dacă aceasta este disponibilă pentru prioritățile lor din domeniul transportului.

În perioada 2014-2020, politica de coeziune se va concentra asupra creșterii performanței transporturilor prin ameliorarea calității infrastructurii, folosirea eficientă și atragerea investițiilor private în concordanță cu planurile naționale din domeniul transportului și cu orientările TEN-T.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008595/13
to the Commission
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: New local and regional transport potentials

The passenger and freight transport market in Europe is becoming increasingly dynamic, under the strong influence of the challenges presented to the market at European and international level and also of the competition injected by low-cost air routes.

Despite this, there are still market segments that could be developed and exploited, including through public-private partnerships, in the interests of all the players concerned.

One such segment is tourism and special events (conferences, seminars, trade meetings) transport, which could be linked in with programmes for the discovery of new destinations, traditions and sites, in close cooperation with local and regional authorities wishing to exploit the cultural and tourism potential of their local areas and to turn the spotlight on those traditions and sites.

How does the Commission intend to encourage and support the efforts of local and regional authorities to launch new programmes and partnerships for the development of new activities — including by commissioning new local, regional and cross-border road transport routes not covered by existing means of transport — and to link in goods transport with passenger transport to ensure optimum take-up of public and private vehicle fleet capacities and the launch of new services that benefit the European public and increase their mobility?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(4 September 2013)

The Commission agrees with the Honourable Member that efficient and sustainable transport services and infrastructure are vital to exploiting the economic strengths of all EU regions and supporting the internal market, thereby facilitating economic and social cohesion.

In the framework of the shared management of cohesion policy, the Commission and the Member States agree on the strategy and the priorities for funding. It is then up to the Member States and their authorities to select and implement the co-funded projects, based on the priorities set in the relevant programmes in compliance with the agreed strategy and EU policies. Member States can therefore draw on the funding of cohesion policy if this is available for their transport priorities.

In the 2014-2020 period, cohesion policy will focus on increasing transport performance by improving infrastructure quality, efficient use and attracting private investment in line with national transport plans and TEN-T Guidelines.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008596/13
to the Commission
John Stuart Agnew (EFD)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Commission funding of NORMAPME

In the context of the fact that its still extant website states 'With the Financial Support of the European Commission', how much Commission and/or other EU funding has NORMAPME received — broken down year by year?

Question for written answer E-008597/13
to the Commission
John Stuart Agnew (EFD)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Benefits of NORMAPME

Did NORMAPME perform any useful function during its existence, and, if it did, which organisations will now perform those functions in its absence?

Question for written answer E-008598/13
to the Commission
John Stuart Agnew (EFD)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Closure of NORMAPME

When and why did the Commission withdraw its funding for NORMAPME, and is it aware of the liquidation of NORMAPME?

Joint answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(5 September 2013)

The information about the financial support awarded to NORMAPME aisbl as well as information about the actions is available at: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/market-access/standardisation/normapme/index_en.htm

NORMAPME represented SMEs interests in the European standardisation system. It carried out several actions for the awareness, information on and use of standards by SMEs as well as their participation in the European standardisation process. These actions were evaluated as useful.

The Commission financed NORMAPME aisbl on an ad hoc basis through action grants for many years. The last action grants ended on 31 December 2012 as the regulation on standardisation came into force on 1 January 2013 ([1]).

This regulation takes into account SMEs interests in the standardisation system and includes a call for proposals for a European entity representing SMEs. The call for proposals was published in April 2013 and the result of the process will be disclosed in the autumn.

NORMAPME's Board decided to close down NORMAPME at the end of February 2013 and then informed the Commission.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 1025/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on European standardisation.

(Slovenska različica)

Vprašanje za pisni odgovor E-008599/13
za Komisijo
Romana Jordan (PPE)
(12. julij 2013)

Zadeva: Vpliv na okolje ter emisije, ki nastanejo pridobivanju pri plina iz skrilavca

V zadnjem letu so se cene plina na svetovnem trgu drastično spremenile. Medtem ko so se v Združenih državah znižale, so v Evropi ostale na zelo visoki ravni, kar je negativno vplivalo na njeno konkurenčnost.

Strokovnjaki so ugotovili, da ima Evropa precejšnje zaloge plina iz skrilavca. Sicer ima vsaka država članica pravico, da izbere svojo mešanico energetskih virov, vendar je treba spoštovati okoljsko politiko EU. Kljub vsemu še nobena država članica ne pridobiva plina iz skrilavca, čeprav so se naše cene energije povišale in se je povečala naša odvisnost od uvoza energije.

Z vidika vpliva na okolje znanstveniki opozarjajo na razliko med pridobivanjem konvencionalnega plina in pridobivanjem plina iz skrilavca. Ugotovili so, da pri plinu iz skrilavca v povprečju nastane 4–8 % več emisij kot pri konvencionalnem plinu. Vendar je te emisije mogoče zmanjšati z ustreznim in učinkovitim pridobivanjem.

Ali namerava Komisija spodbujati izkoriščanje plina iz skrilavca, da bi zmanjšali odvisnost EU od uvoza in dosegli lažje vključevanje obnovljivih virov energije v energetski sistem?

Ali meni, da potrebujemo standarde EU za pridobivanje plina iz skrilavca? Katere ukrepe bo sprejela, da bi spodbujala okolju prijazno izkoriščanje plina iz skrilavca v Evropi?

Odgovor g. Oettingerja v imenu Komisije
(29. avgust 2013)

Predvsem države članice so tiste, ki odločajo o svoji mešanici energetskih virov, torej tudi o tem, ali nameravajo spodbujati izkoriščanje plina iz skrilavca na svojem ozemlju. Vendar Komisija natančno preučuje morebitne koristi in tveganja takih novih virov zemeljskega plina ter njihove morebitne posledice za evropsko politiko. V zvezi s tem je Komisija v svoj delovni program za leto 2013 vključila Ocenjevalni okvir za vprašanja v zvezi z okoljem, podnebjem in energijo za zagotovitev varnega pridobivanja nekonvencionalnih ogljikovodikov, katerega cilj je preučiti, kako možnosti izkoriščanja plina iz skrilavca lahko prispevajo k diverzifikaciji naše oskrbe z energijo in izboljšanju naše konkurenčnosti ob hkratnem zagotavljanju ustreznih podnebnih in okoljskih zaščitnih ukrepov ter čim večje pravne jasnosti in predvidljivosti za državljane, pristojne organe in izvajalce. V tem postopku se bodo upoštevale vse možnosti, vključno z morebitnimi regulativnimi ukrepi in standardi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008599/13
to the Commission
Romana Jordan (PPE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Environmental impact and emissions resulting from shale gas extraction

In the last year, gas prices in the world market have changed dramatically. While gas prices in the United States have fallen in the last year, prices in Europe have maintained their higher levels. This has had a negative impact on Europe's competitiveness.

Experts have shown that Europe has a considerable amount of shale gas reserves. Whilst each Member State has the right to choose its own energy mix, the EU's environment policy must be complied with. Nevertheless, shale gas is not yet being developed by any Member State, even though our energy prices have risen and our dependency on energy imports has grown.

In terms of environmental impact, scientists warn that there is a difference between conventional gas and shale gas extraction. They have shown that shale gas on average produces 4-8% more emissions than does conventional gas. These emissions can, however, be reduced with appropriate and efficient extraction.

Does the Commission intend to promote the development of shale gas to strive towards diminishing EU import dependency and achieving easier integration of renewable energy sources into the energy system?

Does the Commission think that EU standards for shale gas extraction are needed? What specific steps will the Commission take in order to promote environmentally safe development of shale gas in Europe?

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

It is primarily for Member States to decide on their energy mix, and therefore on whether they intend to promote the development of shale gas on their territory. However, the Commission is carefully studying the possible benefits and risks of such new sources of natural gas as well as their possible implications for European policy. In this context, the Commission included in its 2013 Work Programme an 'Environmental, Climate and Energy Assessment Framework to Enable Safe and Secure Unconventional Hydrocarbon Extraction' with the aim to investigate how the possibilities offered by shale gas developments can contribute to diversifying our energy supplies and improving our competitiveness ensuring at the same time that proper climate and environmental safeguards and maximum legal clarity and predictability for citizens, competent authorities and operators. In this process all options, including possible regulatory measures and standards, will be taken into consideration.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008600/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: EU Erasmus programme

Figures recently released by the Commission have shown that 3 million students have benefitted from EU Erasmus grants since the programme was launched in 1987. The statistics, covering the 2011-2012 academic year, show that more than 250 000 Erasmus students — a new record — spent part of their higher education abroad. What plans does the Commission have to build upon this success and encourage even more students in the academic year starting in September 2013 to apply for the programme?

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

The popularity of the Erasmus programme has been confirmed over the past years, with the number of mobile students growing rapidly in most of the participating countries and demand continuing to exceed the overall availability of Erasmus grants.

The increase in annual budget dedicated to student and staff mobility in higher education reflects the weight of the action. While in 2011-2012, EUR 474 million were used to support student and staff mobility, in the academic year 2013-2014 it will be EUR 547 million which translates in an increase of 15%.

Erasmus+, the new EU programme for education, training, youth and sport, starting in January 2014, will build on the success of current mobility programmes by offering opportunities for around four million people to study, train, teach or volunteer abroad by 2020.

Promoting the new programme will require a joint effort at European, national and institutional levels. The Commission will continue its fruitful cooperation with national agencies in order to ensure best implementation of the Erasmus student exchange. National agencies and higher education institutions are encouraged to promote the opportunities offered by the new programme and to raise awareness of its benefits. For the same purpose, the Commission continues to participate in many promotional events with key stakeholders across Europe.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008601/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Aid to Pakistan

The Commission has recently provided an additional EUR 10 million to finance urgently needed humanitarian assistance to hundreds of thousands of people recently displaced by violence and armed conflict in the north-west of Pakistan. How is the Commission supporting the region in order for an end to be brought to this violence? How much aid has the Commission given to the region in the past three years?

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

Over the last three years, the EU has provided EUR 367.5 million from its humanitarian assistance budget for Pakistan. This assistance had been allocated in line with the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence with the aim of saving lives, preventing and alleviating human suffering and safeguarding the integrity and human dignity of people affected by both conflict and natural disasters.

The Commission provides support to stability, conflict resolution and an end to violence in the region through its development aid programmes. Reducing poverty and promoting good governance are essential components of the EU strategy to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The Commission focuses its development assistance to Pakistan in the sectors of rural development, education, governance, and trade related assistance. Geographically the north-west of Pakistan is the main area of support. The Commission is helping to address the root causes of violence and conflict by supporting poverty reduction, economic and social reform, and social cohesion. In addition, through the Instrument for Stability, specific actions are funded to promote stabilisation and peace building, counter terrorism and countering violent extremism as well as support to democratic transition. In the last three years (2011-2013) development aid to Pakistan amounts to EUR 218.8 million (EUR 210 million under the Development Cooperation Instrument and EUR 8.8 million from the Instrument for Stability), additional to the humanitarian assistance mentioned above.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008602/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: State building contract and aid to Mali

Given that the Commission has just paid out EUR 90 million to Mali under the state building contract, can the Commission confirm whether Mali has received any other form of EU money over the past five years? In addition, how much aid has the Commission given to Mali in each of the past five years?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(21 August 2013)

The EU has always been one of the largest development partners of Mali. The total allocation for Mali under the 10th European Development Fund (EDF) for the period 2008-2013 amounts to EUR 727.8 million (including EUR 144.8 million allocated to Mali in 2013).

In the last five years (2009-2013) the Commission paid out a total of EUR 414.2 million for development cooperation in Mali including the EDF, thematic instruments, the Instrument for Stability, as well as EUR 111.6 million for humanitarian actions.

The amount paid in each year of the period is respectively:

— 2009: EUR 70.8 million for development aid + EUR 7.3 million for humanitarian aid

— 2010: EUR 70.5 million for development aid + EUR 3.8 million for humanitarian aid

— 2011: EUR 94.5 million for development aid + EUR 6.5 million for humanitarian aid

— 2012: EUR 42.1 million for development aid + EUR 58 million for humanitarian aid

— 2013 (until July): EUR 136.3 million for development aid + EUR 36 million for humanitarian aid

In addition, following the 2012 military coup, the EU restricted its intervention to humanitarian assistance, activities in direct support of the population such as the provision of basic services and elections. After the adoption by the National Assembly of Mali of the Roadmap for transition in January 2013, the EU has responded swiftly, developing a coherent aid package of EUR 523 million in order to meet the challenges of Mali during the transition phase of 2013 and 2014 with the use of the different tools at the EU disposal.

This package has been presented at the Donors' Conference 'Together for a New Mali' held in Brussels on 15 May 2013 and jointly organised by the European Union, France and Mali.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008603/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Structural funding to the Outermost Regions

The Commission recently received the growth plans for the EU's eight Outermost Regions. This is the first time the Outermost Regions have been asked to present this kind of individual strategy, which sets out how they plan to make the best use of EU Structural Funds. Can the Commission confirm whether this structural funding is distributed from the allocation given to the Member States that consider these outermost regions as sovereign territories? How much structural funding has each region received in the last three years?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(6 September 2013)

The Commission confirms that the structural funding is distributed to the outermost regions (ORs) from the allocation given to three Member States concerned. The Commission notes that these regions, regardless of their different degree of autonomy, are not sovereign territories and that these action plans go beyond the use of structural funding (both in policy areas covered and the timeframe, which stretches beyond the next programming period) as they are intended to reflect a development strategy for each OR.

Structural funding paid to each OR in the last three years is set out in the table sent to the Member.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008604/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: EU broadband speeds

According to a recent Commission report, European consumers are not getting the broadband download speeds for which they pay. On average, they receive only 74% of the advertised headline speed. What plans does the Commission have to address this issue and to ensure consumers receive from broadband providers the speed for which they have paid?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(30 August 2013)

The Commission agrees with the Honourable Member that the divergence between advertised and real broadband speeds enjoyed by EU consumers is a problem. The Commission's recent in-depth study on the functioning of this market from a consumer perspective in the EU uncovered that Internet speeds are 41% slower than they should be. In this respect, the current EU Regulatory Framework for Electronic Communications requires that the contracts concluded between consumers and providers of electronic communications services specify in a clear, comprehensive and easily accessible form the minimum service quality levels offered. It also provides national regulators with powers to improve transparency for end-users on the quality of services they receive.

However, this is not sufficient to fully address the problem identified. This is why, as part of the proposal for a Single Telecoms Market to be presented in September following the call of the European Council ([1]), the Commission will come forward with measures to achieve further transparency and enable consumers to make informed choices and choose offers that best suit them, as well as to switch providers when it is in their interests ([2]). These measures will specifically require operators to supply information on the average speeds they actually provide to their customers during normal and peak times.

Following the report mentioned by the Honourable Member, the Commission is about to carry out a second measurement of broadband speeds, in collaboration with the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC), aiming to improve the reliability of the results through bigger samples and the use of market information.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/136151.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/news/background-paper-public-information-session-telecoms-single-market.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008605/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: EU budget 2014 and cuts in administration

The Commission has adopted the draft EU budget for 2014, amounting to EUR 142.01 billion in commitment appropriations and EUR 135.9 billion in payment appropriations, a 6% cut on the 2013 budget. Within this cut does the Commission have any plans to reduce the huge amount that it spends on administration each year?

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

The request for administrative appropriations under heading 5 both in 2013 and 2014 for all Institutions, pensions and European Schools represents about 6% of the total EU budget. In 2014, it amounts to EUR 8.59 billion.

After a budget for 2012 representing a freeze in nominal terms, and a budget for 2013 well below forecasted inflation, the Commission has again thoroughly assessed its budget request for its functioning under heading 5 for 2014.

As far as staff expenditure is concerned, the following savings are incorporated in the DB2014:

— second instalment of the 5% reduction in all types of staff (i.e. establishment plan posts and external personnel) committed to by the Commission starting as from 2013, leading to economies of about EUR 20 million

— EUR 39.6 million relating to the suspension of the 'method' for adjusting salaries and pensions for the years 2013 and 2014

— savings of EUR 3.8 million from the changes to the Staff Regulations that the Commission proposed.

In addition, a particular effort has been made in containing all non-salary related expenditure (e.g. IT, buildings expenditure, missions, conferences, etc.) below the level of the 2013 budget (- 1.7% excluding additional administrative expenditure related to Croatia's accession) by significantly reducing administrative expenditure related to non-contractual obligations.

As a result, the total Commission administrative expenditure (excluding Pensions and European schools) is frozen in nominal terms at the level of 2013 (+ 0.1% excluding additional administrative expenditure related to Croatia's accession).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008606/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Tap pipeline

The Commission has announced it is satisfied with the recent announcement by Azerbaijan whereby it will pump gas to Italy via the Tap pipeline instead of Austria via Nabucco. While this reduces reliance on individual countries, it still does not address the deficit of EU energy supplies. What steps is the Commission taking to ensure the EU is less dependent on foreign imports of energy supplies?

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

The import dependency of the European Union can be reduced by the promotion of energy efficiency, increasing the EU indigenous energy production (e.g. renewables) and making better use of the available energy supplies (e.g. through energy market integration). The efforts of the Commission in these areas will continue in line with the policy documents such as 2050 Energy Roadmap.

The Union continues to be dependent on fossil fuel imports to meet its energy needs. Diversification of supply countries and routes (including through the creation of the Southern corridor) and strengthened political and regulatory dialogues with the Union's main energy partners are the main policy measures for enhancing the security of energy imports ([1]).

For additional information, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-007278/2013.

([1]) See the Commission's Communication 'The EU Energy Policy: Engaging with Partners beyond Our Borders', COM(2011) 539 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008607/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Older generations within the EU

The Commission has recently rewarded 32 cities across Member States for their implementation of innovative technological, social or organisation-related solutions to enhance the efficiency of health and social care systems. This is in addition to 2012 being the EU Year of Active Ageing. What has the Commission put in place to ensure that commitments and progress made in the Year of Active Ageing are continued? What lessons does the Commission intend to draw from the 32 cities that were recently recognised for finding new ways of helping older people?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(28 August 2013)

The European Year of Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations (EY 2012) has helped the Commission raise awareness of the demographic ageing challenge and the need to revise health and care systems, enabling people to live active, healthy and independent lives for longer. The Commission keeps supporting these efforts through initiatives like the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing (EIP AHA). It aims to improve the quality of life of older people, the sustainability of care systems and European competitiveness, by improved multi-stakeholder cooperation. Over 3000 partners from 1000 regions and municipalities cooperate in six Action Groups on innovative solutions for medication adherence; fall prevention; frailty and malnutrition; integrated care; independent living; and age-friendly environments. Moreover active and healthy ageing is covered by e.g. the Second Public Health Programme, the FP7, CIF and the AAL JP. In Horizon 2020 as well as the Structural Funds, active and healthy ageing is a priority. Following up on EY 2012, the Commission, together with WHO, AGE Platform and networks of European regions and cities, will adapt the WHO Global Age-friendly Cities Guide to the European context.

The main lessons the Commission draws from the 32 awarded cities is that concrete proof and examples for a successful transformation of health and care are there, and that crucial success factors are political leadership, a multi stakeholder approach and user involvement. To spread these lessons, the 32 awarded cities (or EIP AHA Reference Sites) are engaged in sharing and transferring their best practices with other cities, regions and communities.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008608/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: European Alliance for Apprenticeships

The Commission recently launched the European Alliance for Apprenticeships. The aims of the Alliance include helping to identify the most successful apprenticeship schemes in the EU. Given the high level of youth unemployment across many Member States, would the Commission consider funding these most successful apprenticeship schemes on an EU-wide basis once they have been identified? Or does it have any plans to fund them in future?

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

For the time being there is no specific budget line that would allow the Commission to directly fund apprenticeship schemes. However, one aim of the European Alliance for Apprenticeships is indeed to promote the strategic utilisation of the available EU funds to set up more and better apprenticeship positions. The Commission aims to assist Member State to set up new apprenticeship schemes or improve existing ones — since it is also key for the implementation of the Youth Guarantee — including with EU resources, in particular the European Social Fund, the Youth Employment Initiative and the future Erasmus Plus Programme.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008609/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Crime fighting in the EU

The head of Europol, Rob Wainwright, has recently stated that the financial crisis has fuelled a huge expansion of organised crime in Europe, with 3 600 criminal syndicates now active across the continent, profiting from products as prosaic as household detergents. What is the Commission doing to ensure a coordinated approach across Member States to reduce this level of crime and ensure that many, if not all, of these 3 600 criminal syndicates are brought to justice?

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

From a horizontal and strategic point of view, the Commission is implementing the Internal Security Strategy and the Stockholm programme, both framing the EU relevant actions.

From an operational point of view, the EU policy cycle 2011-2013 and 2014-2017 for organised and serious international crime aims to tackle priority areas characterised from strong organised crime presence notably in its cross-border dimension. The priorities retained in June 2013 notably concern trafficking in human beings, drug trafficking, firearms, excise fraud and Missing Trader Intra Community fraud, counterfeit and substandard goods dangerous to health and safety or cybercrimes ([1]).

The Commission subsequently chaired the expert meetings with Member States in view of the definition of the corresponding strategic goals. They will be translated in Operational Action Plans, to be drawn in October 2013, for implementation starting in 2014.

The Commission provides support and funding of relevant actions while ensuring coherence with other policies.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/jha/137401.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008610/13
to the Commission
Julie Girling (ECR)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Implementing regulation for GM food and feed

An implementing regulation for GM food and feed applications was adopted by the Commission on 3 April 2013. This new piece of legislation transfers European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) guidance for risk assessment of food and feed from GM plants into a legally binding document. The regulation covers general requirements for the risk assessment of GM food and feed and imposes new regulatory requirements on the applicants — including a 90-day rat study — that are not considered necessary by EFSA.

WTO trading partners, EFSA, animal rights groups and many others have raised a number of concerns about this implementing regulation.

What is the Commission's rationale for making 90-day rodent feeding studies mandatory for all applications, given repeated EFSA advice that these are only scientifically justified in certain cases?

How many rodents does the Commission expect to be subject to these feeding studies and does this not contradict the EU's intensive efforts to minimise animal testing?

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

1. To improve consumer confidence, and to take account of the opinion of some Member State risk assessment bodies it is considered necessary that such studies should be, for the time being, requested in all applications related to genetically modified plants with single transformation events and, where appropriate, on genetically modified plants containing stacked transformation events.

The current uncertainties in relation to the need and design of 90-day feeding trials will be addressed by a large Commission research project titled 'GMO risk assessment and communication of evidence' (GRACE). The requirements regarding animal feeding trials in the context of GMO risk assessments will be reviewed in the light of the outcome of this project expected to be available by the end of 2015 at the latest.

2. EFSA has published guiding principles for two year whole food studies on the 31 July ([1]).

This report recommends a number of principles that should be taken into account when planning a two-year animal study with whole food. The number of animals used will depend on the statistical confidence level required, and will be decided in the planning phase of the study design.

([1]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/3347.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008611/13
to the Commission
Julie Girling (ECR)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: Backlog on GM authorisation

The EU has one of the strictest legal frameworks in terms of approving products for trade.

Can the Commission comment on the extent of the backlog regarding authorisation for GM products in the EU?

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

The EU GMO legislation foresees a number of steps in the authorisation procedure which the Commission follows and will continue to follow in the future. The Commission will maintain this policy and will continue, as in the recent past, to pay particular attention to authorisations which can have major impact on trade.

The Commission believes that the EU approval regime continues to operate normally despite the lack of support of the Member States. In 2012, the Commission authorised five GMOs and renewed the authorisation of a sixth one. One GMO was authorised on 25 June 2013. Three GMOs are in the final stage of the decision making process after the Appeal Committee reached no opinion on 11 July 2013.

The Commission also believes that the implementing Regulation (EC) No 503/2013 ([1]) on authorisation of GM food and feed, published on 8 June 2013, will streamline the risk assessment and risk management of the products by asking applicants to include different GMOs (stacks and sub-combinations) in one single application. It is expected that this clear procedure will contribute to reduce the asynchronicity of authorisations between the EU and exporting third countries.

Regulation (EC) No 619/2011 ([2]) laying down the methods of sampling and analysis for the official control of feed, allows the EU to maintain its policy of 'zero tolerance', while providing more legal certainty to operators importing crops from third countries.

([1]) OJ L 157 8.6.13.
([2]) OJ L 166/9 25.6.2011.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008612/13
à Comissão
Rui Tavares (Verts/ALE)
(12 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: PRISM, Tempora e outros programas de vigilância

Nas últimas semanas, surgiram revelações importantes acerca de importantes sistemas de vigilância internacionais utilizados pelos Estados Unidos, pelo Reino Unido e por França, bem como de vigilância orientada contra serviços da UE. Programas como o PRISM e o Tempora minam os direitos fundamentais dos cidadãos da Europa e do resto do mundo.

Na sua resolução de 4 de julho de 2013 sobre o programa de vigilância da agência de segurança nacional dos Estados Unidos, os órgãos de vigilância de diversos Estados-Membros e o seu impacto na privacidade dos cidadãos da UE, o Parlamento condenou a espionagem e apelou à adoção de medidas urgentes em vários domínios. A Comissão manifestou igualmente a sua preocupação relativamente aos sistemas de vigilância em massa anteriormente desconhecidos.

1. Informações obtidas pelo PRISM e/ou pelo Tempora foram tratadas ou incluídas de alguma outra forma em análises da Europol e/ou da Eurojust?

2. Informações obtidas pelo PRISM e/ou pelo Tempora foram tratadas ou incluídas de alguma outra forma em análises do Centro de Análise de Informações da UE (Intcen)?

3. Que salvaguardas existem, ou estão previstas, nos regulamentos da Europol ou da Eurojust para impedir o tratamento de dados obtidos de forma ilícita?

Resposta dada por Viviane Reding em nome da Comissão
(13 de setembro de 2013)

A Comissão remete o Senhor Deputado para as respostas dadas às perguntas escritas E-007934/13 e E-006783/13.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008612/13
to the Commission
Rui Tavares (Verts/ALE)
(12 July 2013)

Subject: PRISM, TEMPORA and other surveillance programmes

Important revelations have emerged in recent weeks of massive international surveillance systems in use by the United States, the United Kingdom and France, as well as of targeted surveillance against EU offices. Programmes like PRISM and TEMPORA undermine the fundamental rights of European citizens and of people around the world.

In its resolution of 4 July 2013 on the US National Security Agency surveillance programme, surveillance bodies in various Member States and their impact on EU citizens' privacy, Parliament condemned the spying and called for urgent action on a number of fronts. The Commission has also expressed concern over the previously undisclosed mass-surveillance systems.

1. Has any information obtained by PRISM and/or TEMPORA been processed or otherwise included in analyses by Europol and/or Eurojust?

2. Has any information obtained by PRISM and/or TEMPORA been processed or otherwise included in analyses by the EU Intelligence Analysis Centre (INTCEN)?

3 What safeguards are in place, or will be put in place, in the Europol or Eurojust regulations to prevent the processing of data obtained illegally?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(13 September 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to written questions E-007934/13 and E-006783/13.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008613/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(15. Juli 2013)

Betrifft: Hilfe für die Einrichtung eines Emissionshandelssystems im chinesischen Shenzhen

Am 18. Juni 2013 startete die Volksrepublik China ein Emissionshandelssystem für Industriebetriebe der Großstadt Shenzhen. Der staatlichen Nachrichtenagentur Xinhua zufolge soll das System bis 2014 auf insgesamt sieben Regionen ausgeweitet werden.

1. Hat die Kommission oder eine ihrer Agenturen die chinesische Regierung bei der Definition und Einrichtung des Systems beraten oder Erfahrungen mit den zuständigen chinesischen Agenturen ausgetauscht?

2. Plant die Kommission, den zuständigen chinesischen Agenturen zukünftig einen Erfahrungsaustausch oder sonstigen Rat anzubieten?

Antwort von Frau Hedegaard im Namen der Kommission
(12. September 2013)

Die EU arbeitet seit mehreren Jahren bei einer Reihe von Maßnahmen zur Emissionsreduktion eng mit chinesischen Kollegen zusammen. Ebenso unterhalten Kommissionsbedienstete regelmäßige direkte Kontakte mit Experten, die an der Entwicklung des Emissionshandels auf Pilotebene (auch in Shenzhen) sowie auf nationaler Ebene beteiligt sind. Dies beinhaltet auch den regelmäßigen Empfang von Expertengruppen in Brüssel sowie die Veranstaltung von Workshops in China.

Eine sehr gute Zusammenarbeit besteht auch mit der Klimaschutzabteilung der National Development Reform Commission (NDRC), die für die Entwicklung des nationalen chinesischen Emissionshandelssystems (EHS) zuständig ist. Zu nennen ist insbesondere ein über drei Jahre laufendes und mit 5 Mio. EUR ausgestattetes Projekt zur Zusammenarbeit beim Kapazitätsaufbau für das EHS auf regionaler und nationaler Ebene in China, das Ende dieses Jahres einsatzbereit sein soll. Ferner arbeitet die Kommission über das Partnership for Market Readiness-Programm (PMR, Partnerschaft für die Marktreife) der Weltbank mit China an der Entwicklung des EHS und leistet hierzu auch finanzielle Unterstützung.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008613/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Help with establishing an emissions trading system in Shenzhen in China

On 18 June 2013 the People's Republic of China began operating an emissions trading system for industrial firms in the city of Shenzhen. According to the Xinhua state news agency, the system will be extended to a total of seven regions by 2014.

1. Did the Commission or any of its agencies advise the Chinese government on the makeup and installation of the system or exchange experiences with the competent Chinese agencies?

2. Does the Commission plan to propose an exchange of experiences or the provision of advice to the competent Chinese agencies in the future?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(12 September 2013)

The EU has since several years a close cooperation with Chinese colleagues on a range of domestic emissions reduction tools. Commission staff has also been maintaining regular direct contacts with experts involved in the development of Emissions Trading at pilot level, including Shenzhen, and at the national level. This includes hosting regular visits to Brussels by expert groups and organising workshops in China.

There is a very good cooperation with the Climate Change Department of the National Development Reform Commission (NDRC) which is in charge of the development of the Chinese national Emissions Trading System (ETS). In particular, a three-year 5 million Euro technical cooperation project to cooperate on capacity building for ETS at regional and national level in China is planned to be operational by the end of the year. The Commission is also working and financially supporting ETS development with China via the World Bank Partnership for Market Readiness (PMR) programme.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008614/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(15. Juli 2013)

Betrifft: Einführung eines Emissionshandelssystems im chinesischen Shenzhen

Am 18. Juni 2013 startete die Volksrepublik China ein Emissionshandelssystem für Industriebetriebe der Großstadt Shenzhen. Der staatlichen Nachrichtenagentur Xinhua zufolge soll das System bis 2014 auf insgesamt sieben Regionen ausgeweitet werden.

1. Wie bewertet die Kommission das eingeführte System, insbesondere im Vergleich mit dem bestehenden Emissionszertifikathandel in der EU?

2. Gibt es Möglichkeiten der Zusammenarbeit?

3. Ist die Kommission der Ansicht, dass das in Shenzhen eingeführte System in seiner jetzigen Form den Emissionsausstoß der Stadt wesentlich beeinflussen wird?

Antwort von Frau Hedegaard im Namen der Kommission
(18. September 2013)

Das am 18. Juli 2013 in Shenzhen gestartete Emissionshandelssystem (EHS) ist eines von sieben Pilot-EHS, die in diesem oder im nächsten Jahr in China einsatzfähig sein müssen. Diese Initiativen sind zur Erprobung für den Aufbau eines nationalen chinesischen EHS, das schon 2016 provisorisch eingeführt werden könnte, von großer Bedeutung. Es ist noch zu früh, um die Wirksamkeit des EHS in Shenzhen zu beurteilen, aber die grundlegende Entwicklung ist in dieselben Phasen unterteilt und wendet dieselben allgemeinen Grundsätze an wie beim EHS der EU.

Die EU arbeitet seit mehreren Jahren auf einigen Gebieten eng mit den chinesischen Behörden zusammen, um den Aufbau eines CO_2-Markts in China zu unterstützen. Die Kommissionsbediensteten unterhalten auch regelmäßige direkte Kontakte mit Experten, die am Aufbau des EHS auf Pilotebene auch in Shenzhen und landesweit mitwirken. Dies umfasst auch den Empfang regelmäßiger Besuche von Expertengruppen in Brüssel sowie die Veranstaltung von Workshops in China.

Die Kommission erwartet von dem Pilotprojekt in Shenzhen, dass es sich positiv auf die Emissionen der Stadt auswirkt und Daten für die Entscheidungsfindung zum EHS auf nationaler Ebene liefert.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008614/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Establishment of an emissions trading system in Shenzhen in China

On 18 July 2103 the People's Republic of China began operating an emissions trading system for industrial firms in the city of Shenzhen. According to the Xinhua state news agency, the system will be extended to a total of seven regions by 2014.

1. What is the Commission's assessment of this system, in particular when compared with the existing trade in emission allowances in the EU?

2. Is there a possibility for cooperation?

3. Does the Commission believe that the system set up in Shenzhen will, in its current form, have a significant impact on the city's emissions?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(18 September 2013)

The emissions trading system (ETS) launched on 18 July 2013 in the city of Shenzhen is one out of seven pilot ETS that will have to be operational in China this year or next. These initiatives are very important in exploring the making of a national Chinese ETS that could already start on a preliminary basis on 2016. It is very early to judge on the effectiveness of the Shenzhen ETS, however in its basic development is following the same stages and applying the same broad lines of the EU ETS.

The EU has since several years a close cooperation with Chinese authorities on a range of issues aimed at facilitating the establishment of a domestic carbon market. Commission staff has also been maintaining regular direct contacts with experts involved in the development of ETS at pilot level, including Shenzhen, and at the national level. This includes hosting regular visits to Brussels by expert groups and organising workshops in China.

The Commission expects the pilot in Shenzhen to positively impact the city's emissions, in addition to informing choices for ETS design at national level.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008615/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(15. Juli 2013)

Betrifft: Anwendung geltenden Patentrechts bei Computerprogrammen

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". In diesem Antrag findet sich die folgende Passage:

„Das deutsche Patentgesetz (PatG) und das Europäische Patentübereinkommen (EPÜ) tragen der Schutzregelung von Software über das Urheberrecht Rechnung, indem sie Computerprogramme ‚als solche' vom Patentschutz ausnehmen. Gleichwohl wurden in der Praxis — insbesondere vom Europäischen Patentamt (EPA) — Patente mit Wirkung auf Computerprogramme erteilt, bei denen die Patentierung von Lehren zur reinen Datenverarbeitung in einer nur formalen Einkleidung als ‚technische Verfahren' oder ‚technische Vorrichtungen' erfolgte und Ansprüche auch explizit auf diese Verfahren bzw. Vorrichtungen realisierenden Computerprogramme erhoben werden."

Kann die Kommission die Rechtsdarstellung der Antragsautoren, dass nach europäischem Patentrecht Computerprogramme „als solche" vom Patentschutz ausgenommen sind, bestätigen?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(22. Oktober 2013)

Wie bereits in der Antwort auf die Anfrage E-007385/2013 dargelegt, können auf der Grundlage des Europäischen Patentübereinkommens (EPÜ) Computerprogramme als solche in Europa in der Tat nicht patentiert werden, da sie nicht über den erforderlichen technischen Charakter verfügen. Dies wird durch Artikel 52 Absatz 2 EPÜ bestätigt, dem zufolge Programme für Datenverarbeitungsanlagen keine patentierbaren Erfindungen darstellen.

Computerprogramme sind von der Patentierbarkeit nur insoweit ausgenommen, als sie nicht die allgemeinen Patentierbarkeitskriterien erfüllen. Erfindungen, die diese Anforderungen erfüllen, sind dagegen nicht automatisch von der Patentierbarkeit ausgeschlossen, nur weil sie von einem Computer implementiert werden. So genannte „computerimplementierte Erfindungen", d. h. Erfindungen, die die Verwendung eines Computers erfordern, können in vielen Bereichen, z. B. Smartphones, Sicherheitsvorrichtungen in Autos usw., eine Rolle spielen.

Die Qualität der vom EPA erteilten europäischen Patente wird generell als sehr hoch eingestuft. ([1]) Die Gültigkeit von Patenten kann selbstverständlich im Wege des Beschwerdeverfahrens vor den Beschwerdekammern des EPA oder vor einem nationalen Gericht angefochten werden.

([1]) Siehe z. B. die im Auftrag der GD MARKT durchgeführte Studie zur Qualität des Patentsystems in Europa: http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/indprop/docs/patent/patqual02032011_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008615/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Application of patent law to computer programs

On 7 June 2013 the German Bundestag adopted by a large majority a cross-party motion entitled 'Securing Competition and Innovation Dynamics in the Software Sector — Effectively Limiting the Granting of Patents on Computer Programs'. This motion contains the following passage:

'The German Patent Act (PatG) and the European Patent Convention (EPC) acknowledge the precedence of copyright law for regulating the protection of computer software by excluding computer programs "as such" from patent protection. Nevertheless, in actual practice — especially that of the European Patent Office (EPO) — patents have been granted which impact computer programs in that teachings related to pure data processing clothed as a mere formality in the guise of "technical procedure" or "technical equipment" have been patented and claims have been explicitly directed to computer programs realising these procedures or equipment.'

Can the Commission confirm the authors' portrayal of the legal position, namely that under European patent law computer programs 'as such' are excluded from patent protection?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(22 October 2013)

As set out in the answer to Question E-007385/2013, on the basis of the European Patent Convention (EPC) computer programmes as such can indeed not be patented in Europe because they do not have the required technical character. This is confirmed by Art. 52(2) EPC, which provides that programmes for computers do not constitute a patentable invention.

It remains that computer programmes are excluded from patentability only to the extent that 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. Therefore, 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.

It should also be pointed out that the quality of European patents granted by the EPO is generally considered as very high ([1]). The validity of patents can of course be challenged in the appeal procedure before the EPO's Boards of Appeal as well as in national courts.

([1]) See for instance the Study on the quality of patent system in Europe carried out for DG MARKT: http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/indprop/docs/patent/patqual02032011_en.pdf

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008616/13
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin)
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(15. Juli 2013)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Beteiligung von EU-Projekten an der Einrichtung des Emissionshandelssystems im chinesischen Shenzhen

Am 18. Juni 2013 startete die Volksrepublik China ein Emissionshandelssystem für Industriebetriebe der Großstadt Shenzhen. Der staatlichen Nachrichtenagentur Xinhua zufolge soll das System bis 2014 auf insgesamt sieben Regionen ausgeweitet werden.

Waren ein oder mehrere durch die Förderprogramme des EAD geförderte Projekte, wie beispielsweise das China-Europe Public Administration Project, das EU-China Clean Energy Centre, das EU-China Institute for Clean and Renewable Energy (ICARE) oder das EU-China Environmental Governance Programme direkt oder indirekt an der Einrichtung des Emissionshandelssystems in Shenzhener beteiligt?

Antwort von Herrn Piebalgs im Namen der Kommission
(1. Oktober 2013)

Im Dezember 2011 genehmigte die Kommission im Bereich des Emissionshandels ein mit 5 Mio. EUR ausgestattetes Projekt für die Entwicklungszusammenarbeit zwischen der EU und China („Unterstützung der Konzeption und Umsetzung von Emissionshandelssystemen in China"). Das Projekt soll Anfang 2014 anlaufen.

Das spezifische Projektziel besteht darin, China dabei zu unterstützen, seine Emissionsreduktionsziele zu erreichen und eine emissionsarme Entwicklung zu fördern, indem wirkungsvolle Pilotprojekte für den Emissionshandel konzipiert und durchgeführt werden, die längerfristig erfolgreich landesweit in die Praxis umgesetzt werden. Der Schwerpunkt der Zusammenarbeit wird darauf liegen, den Aufbau von institutionellen Kapazitäten in China und die Weitergabe von europäischem Fachwissen, von Handlungsansätzen für die Politikgestaltung, von Regulierungs- und Monitoringsystemen sowie generell die Weitergabe einschlägiger Erfahrungen zu fördern.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008616/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Involvement of EU projects in setting up the emissions trading system in Shenzhen in China

On 18 June 2013 the People's Republic of China began operating an emissions trading system for industrial firms in the city of Shenzhen. According to the Xinhua state news agency, the system will be extended to a total of seven regions by 2014.

Were any projects funded by the funding programmes of the EEAS, such as the China-Europe Public Administration Project, the EU-China Clean Energy Centre, the EU-China Institute for Clean and Renewable Energy (ICARE) or the EU-China Environmental Governance Programme, involved, either directly or indirectly, in establishing the emissions trading system in Shenzhen?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(1 October 2013)

In December 2011, the Commission adopted a EUR 5 million EU-China development cooperation project dedicated to emissions trading entitled 'Supporting the design and implementation of emissions trading systems in China'. The project is expected to start in early 2014.

The specific objective of the project is to assist China in its efforts to meet its emission reduction targets and low carbon development by designing and implementing successful emissions trading pilot schemes that lead over time to successful nationwide action. The focus of the cooperation will be on enhancing Chinese institutional capacity and sharing of European expertise, policy know-how, regulatory systems, monitoring and relevant experience more generally.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008617/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: European Health Insurance Card scam websites

A constituent in Scotland has recently brought to my attention the existence of scam websites on the Internet, which are designed to appear official and which require a monetary charge for the European Health Insurance Card application process.

Given that the application process to obtain the card is free to constituents in Scotland via the NHS, is the Commission aware of unofficial websites that charge a premium rate for processing European Health Insurance Cards?

What can the Commission do to prevent unofficial scam websites offering European Health Insurance Cards from operating and misleading consumers?

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

The European Commission is aware of websites which are charging fees for checking and submitting applications for the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC). The Unfair Commercial Practices Directive (UCPD) ([1]), which prevents misleading or aggressive commercial practices towards consumers, may apply to this kind of practice. In order for there to be a breach of the UCPD, the practice must be misleading or otherwise unfair. It is not the practice of charging consumers in itself which would be unfair, but the fact the consumer is deceived into thinking that he has to pay when the card can be obtained for free from the national healthcare institution, or the fact that the website falsely presents itself as endorsed or approved by the EU (e.g. by using the EU emblem). It is for the national authorities to decide if websites offering EHIC application services infringe the national laws transposing the UCPD.

The European Commission has taken action against websites in the UK and Spain requesting the withdrawal of the EU emblem and has also informed all Member States in the Administrative Commission for the Coordination of Social Security Schemes about the above observations.

The European Commission continuously works to inform about the EHIC through campaigns and its web pages and has also recently launched a smartphone application about the EHIC.

([1]) Directive 2005/29/EC — OJ L 149/22 — 11.6.2005.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-008618/13
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(15 iulie 2013)

Subiect: Creșterea prețurilor la energie și gaze afectează populația UE

Conform Eurostat, în Uniunea Europeană prețurile la electricitate pentru consumatorii casnici au crescut cu 6,6% și prețurile la gaze au crescut cu 10,3% în a doua jumătate a anului 2012, comparativ cu a doua jumătate a anului 2011. De asemenea, în 2011, 119,6 milioane de persoane (24,2% din populația Uniunii Europene) erau expuse riscului sărăciei sau excluziunii sociale, acestea fiind expuse și riscului sărăciei energetice.

Aș dori să întreb Comisia dacă a efectuat vreun studiu asupra impactului creșterii prețurilor la energie și gaze asupra bunăstării cetățenilor europeni și ce măsuri intenționează să ia pentru a limita expunerea cetățenilor europeni la sărăcie energetică.

Răspuns dat de dl. Oettinger în numele Comisiei
(2 septembrie 2013)

1. În conformitate cu concluziile Consiliului European din 22 mai 2013, Comisia intenționează să prezinte, înainte de sfârșitul anului 2013, o analiză a structurii și a factorilor care influențează prețurile și costurile energiei în statele membre, punând accentul în mod deosebit pe impactul asupra gospodăriilor, asupra întreprinderilor mici și mijlocii și asupra industriilor energointensive.

2. Comisia încurajează puternic transpunerea legislației relevante ([1]) care ar duce la crearea unei piețe interne a energiei funcționale, facilitând concurența transfrontalieră. Comisia reunește experți din statele membre pentru a combate vulnerabilitatea, organizează evenimente pentru consumatori în statele membre pentru a sensibiliza consumatorii și încurajează dezvoltarea unor instrumente de comparare a prețurilor, pentru a le permite consumatorilor să aleagă cele mai bune oferte disponibile.

În ceea ce privește etapele detaliate, Comisia îl invită pe distinsul membru să consulte răspunsurile sale la întrebările scrise E-006290/2013 și E-002411/2013 pentru o descriere a măsurilor pentru a asigura, la un preț rezonabil, furnizarea de electricitate și gaze naturale consumatorilor europeni și la întrebarea scrisă E-004799/2013 (răspunsul 1) în special în ceea ce privește sărăcia energetică.

([1]) Directiva 2009/72/CE, JO L 211, 14.8.2009; Directiva 2009/72/CE, JO L 211, 14.8.2009; Directiva 2012/27/UE, JO L 315.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008618/13
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Increase in electricity and gas prices and their impact on the European public

According to Eurostat, electricity prices for domestic consumers increased by 6.6%, and gas prices by 10.3%, in the second half of 2012 as against the second half of 2011. At the same time, 119.6 million people (24.2% of the EU population) were at risk of falling into poverty and of social exclusion in 2011, and were also at risk of falling into energy poverty.

Can the Commission state whether it has conducted any research into the impact of the increase in electricity and gas prices on the well-being of the European public? What steps will it take to limit the risk of members of the European public falling into energy poverty?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(2 September 2013)

1. In line with the conclusions of the European Council of 22 May 2013, the Commission intends to present before the end of 2013 an analysis of the composition and drivers of energy prices and costs in Member States with a particular focus on the impact on households, Small and Medium Enterprises and energy intensive industries.

2. The Commission strongly enforces the transposition of relevant legislation ([1]) that would lead to creation of a well functioning Internal Energy Market facilitating competition across the boarders. Besides that the Commission convenes Member State experts to combat vulnerability, organises consumer events in Member States to increase consumer awarness, and encourages the development of price comparison tools to allow consumers choose the best offers available.

As regards the detailed steps the Commission would refer the Honourable member to its replies to written questions E-006290/2013 and E-002411/2013 for a description of measures to ensure affordable supplies of electricity and natural gas to the European consumers and to Written Question E-004799/2013 (subquestion 1) regarding energy poverty in particular.

([1]) Directive 2009/72/EC, OJ L 211, 14.8.2009; Directive 2009/72/EC, OJ L 211, 14.8.2009; Directive 2012/27/EU, OJ L315,.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-008619/13
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(15 iulie 2013)

Subiect: Sistem de certificare comun voluntar al Uniunii Europene pentru performanța energetică a clădirilor nerezidențiale

Conform articolul 11 alineatul (9) din Directiva 2010/31/UE privind performanța energetică a clădirilor, Comisia, în consultare cu sectoarele relevante, adoptă un sistem de certificare comun voluntar al Uniunii Europene pentru performanța energetică a clădirilor nerezidențiale, până în 2011. Această măsură se adoptă în conformitate cu procedura consultativă menționată la articolul 26 alineatul (2). Statele membre sunt încurajate să recunoască sau să utilizeze acest sistem sau o parte a acestuia, adaptându-l la caracteristicile naționale.

Aș dori să întreb Comisia care este stadiul adoptării sistemului de certificare comun voluntar al Uniunii Europene și care este gradul în care acesta este deja implementat în statele membre.

Răspuns dat de dl Oettinger în numele Comisiei
(20 august 2013)

În urma consultărilor cu statele membre și cu părțile interesate relevante, s-a convenit să se amâne lansarea sistemului de certificare. De asemenea, s-a decis ca metoda de calcul comună a Uniunii Europene să se bazeze pe un nou set de standarde, acestea fiind în prezent în curs de elaborare în cadrul mandatului 480 al Comitetului European de Standardizare (CEN). Parlamentul a fost informat prin procesul-verbal sumar al reuniunii Comitetului de implementare a directivei privind performanța energetică a clădirilor (EDMC) din 6 iulie 2012.

Având în vedere că, în final, sistemul ar trebui să fie orientat către piață, Comisia a decis să adopte o abordare în două etape:

1. Un studiu extern, care va oferi o analiză privind nevoile pieței și utilizarea sistemului. Studiul a fost lansat la începutul lunii iulie 2013 și se va derula pe o perioadă de circa 12 luni.

2. Dezvoltarea tehnică a sistemului (un al doilea studiu).

Se estimează că sistemul de certificare va fi gata în același timp cu standardele CEN (la sfârșitul anului 2015). Comisia consideră că este preferabil ca noul sistem de certificare să se bazeze pe cunoștințe solide, chiar dacă acest lucru necesită timp.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008619/13
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Voluntary common European Union certification scheme for the energy performance of non-residential buildings

According to Article 11(9) of Directive 2010/31/EU on the energy performance of buildings, the Commission, in consultation with the relevant sectors, was to adopt a voluntary common European Union certification scheme for the energy performance of non-residential buildings by 2011. This measure was to be adopted according to the consultation procedure mentioned in Article 26(2). Member States are encouraged to recognise or use this scheme or part of it by adapting it to national conditions.

Can the Commission confirm what stage the adoption of the voluntary common European Union certification scheme is at and to what extent it has already been implemented in Member States?

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

In consultations with Member States as well as with relevant stakeholders it was agreed to postpone the launch of the certification scheme and to base the common European Union calculation method on a new set of standards, which are currently being developed under the European Committee for Standardisation (CEN) Mandate 480. The Parliament was informed through the summary record of the European Demand and Management Committee (EDMC) meeting of 6 July 2012.

Given that the scheme should ultimately be market-driven, the Commission decided to continue with a two-stage approach:

1. An outsourced study that will provide an analysis of the market needs and the intended use of the scheme. The study was launched at the beginning of July 2013 with a timeframe of around 12 months.

2. The technical development of the scheme (a second study).

The certification scheme is expected to be ready at the same time as the CEN standards (end of 2015). The Commission considers it preferable to establish the new certification scheme on a solid evidence base even if this implies a certain delay.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-008620/13
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(15 iulie 2013)

Subiect: Punerea în aplicare a Directivei 2010/31/UE privind performanța energetică a clădirilor

Conform articolul 12 alineatul (2) din Directiva 2010/31/UE privind performanța energetică a clădirilor, statele membre impun ca, la construcția, vânzarea sau închirierea unei clădiri sau a unei unități de clădire, certificatul de performanță energetică sau o copie a acestuia să fie prezentat potențialului nou locatar sau cumpărător și o copie să fie înmânată acestuia. De asemenea, la articolul 12 alineatul (3) din aceeași directivă se prevede că, în cazul în care o clădire este vândută sau închiriată înainte de a fi construită, statele membre pot solicita vânzătorului să furnizeze o evaluare a viitoarelor performanțe energetice ale acesteia, prin derogare de la alineatele (1) și (2); în acest caz, certificatul de performanță energetică este eliberat cel târziu odată ce clădirea este construită.

Aș dori să întreb Comisia dacă toate statele membre s-au conformat prevederilor articolului 12 alineatele (2) și (3) din Directiva 2010/31/UE și ce măsuri intenționează Comisia să ia pentru o mai bună aplicare a acestor prevederi.

Răspuns dat de dl Oettinger în numele Comisiei
(20 august 2013)

Termenul de transpunere a articolului 12 alineatele (2) şi (3) din Directiva 2010/31/UE era 9 iulie 2012.

În septembrie 2012, Comisia a inițiat proceduri de constatare a neîndeplinirii obligațiilor pentru necomunicarea măsurilor naționale de transpunere a directivei în legislația națională împotriva a 24 de state membre.

Aceste cazuri sunt în curs de prelucrare; până în prezent, 8 state membre au primit un aviz motivat, iar 1 stat membru a fost trimis în fața instanței (conform comunicatului de presă IP/13/579).

Comisia va analiza dacă actele legislative naționale adoptate de statele membre transpun corect directiva şi va iniția, dacă este necesar, proceduri de constatare a neîndeplinirii obligațiilor de conformitate, la momentul oportun.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008620/13
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Implementing Directive 2010/31/EU on the energy performance of buildings

According to Article 12(2) of Directive 2010/31/EU on the energy performance of buildings, Member States must, when buildings or building units are constructed, sold or rented out, present the energy performance certificate or a copy of it to the prospective new tenant or buyer and supply a copy of it to them. In addition, Article 12(3) of the same directive stipulates that, where a building is sold or rented out prior to construction, Member States may request the seller to provide an assessment of its future energy performance, as a derogation from paragraphs 1 and 2. In this case, the energy performance certificate will be issued at the latest once the building has been constructed.

Can the Commission confirm whether all Member States have complied with the provisions of Article 12(2) and (3) of Directive 2010/31/EU and what measures it intends to take to ensure more effective implementation of these provisions?

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

The transposition deadline for Articles 12(2) and 12(3) of Directive 2010/31/EU was 9 July 2012.

In September 2012 the Commission started infringement procedures for non-communication of national measures transposing the directive into national law against 24 Member States.

These cases are being processed and, to date, 8 Member States have received a reasoned opinion and 1 Member State has been referred to Court (Cf. press-release IP/13/579).

The Commission will examine whether the national laws adopted by the Member States correctly transpose the directive, and will follow up, if necessary, with conformity cases in due course.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-008621/13
adresată Consiliului
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(15 iulie 2013)

Subiect: Redresarea producției industriale pe întreg teritoriul UE

Conform statisticilor Eurostat, în ianuarie 2013, comparativ cu ianuarie 2012, producția de bunuri de folosință îndelungată a scăzut cu 5,5% în zona euro și cu 4,3% în UE 27. De asemenea, producția de energie a scăzut în aceeași perioadă cu 0,9% în UE 27.

Patru dintre cele 27 de state membre — Germania (27,29%), Italia (12,44%), Marea Britanie (11,93%) și Franța (11,65%) — au realizat peste 60% din producția industrială a UE în 2010. De asemenea, 10 state membre au realizat împreună sub 4% din producția industrială a UE în 2010.

Având în vedere că scăderea producției industriale înseamnă creșterea posibilă a importurilor, scăderea competitivității UE și pierderea de locuri de muncă pe teritoriul UE, aș dori să întreb Consiliul ce măsuri are în vedere pentru redresarea producției industriale a UE, pentru păstrarea competitivității UE și pentru păstrarea locurilor de muncă pe teritoriul UE.

Care sunt măsurile pe care Consiliul le are în vedere pentru a dezvolta producția industrială în toate statele membre ale UE și în special în cele a căror producție industrială reprezintă sub 1% din producția industriala a UE?

Răspuns
(25 noiembrie 2013)

Competitivitatea industrială, creșterea economică și crearea locurilor de muncă în Europa se află în fruntea listei de priorități a Consiliului și au fost incluse pe majoritatea ordinilor de zi ale Consiliului Concurență în ultimii doi ani.

În 2012, în urma adoptării comunicării Comisiei privind „O industrie europeană mai puternică pentru creșterea și redresarea economiei”, Consiliul a recunoscut în concluziile sale ([1]) importanța consolidării competitivității industriale în cadrul UE, în vederea promovării creșterii economice și creării locurilor de muncă și a recunoscut contribuția majoră pe care industriile din UE o pot avea în redresarea în urma crizei economice. În mod special, Consiliul a subliniat necesitatea urgentă de noi investiții în industria UE, ținând seama în mod deosebit de cele șase domenii în creștere rapidă care fac obiectul acțiunilor prioritare identificate în comunicarea Comisiei. Consiliul a recunoscut necesitatea creării unui mediu de reglementare mai bun pentru societățile din UE, a subliniat că este necesară transformarea cercetării din cadrul UE într-un avantaj industrial care să cuprindă întregul lanț de valori și a subliniat rolul grupurilor de nivel mondial și al activităților de interconectare intense la nivelul UE drept componente-cheie ale competitivității industriale din cadrul UE. De asemenea, Consiliul consideră că existența unor mai bune sinergii și consecvența între toate politicile relevante ale UE (în special, industrie, energie, mediu, ajutoare de stat și comerț) sunt elemente importante pentru dezvoltarea industriei UE.

Președintele Consiliului European a anunțat că reuniunea Consiliului European din februarie 2014 se va axa pe competitivitatea industrială. În acest scop, Consiliul intenționează să adopte concluzii privind politica industrială în cadrul reuniunii sale din decembrie 2013.

Politica industrială este, până la urmă, de competența statelor membre, iar Uniunea Europeană poate doar sprijini și coordona acțiunile acestora. Consiliul a invitat Comisia să identifice și să propună măsuri și strategii cu valoare adăugată la nivel european, pe bază de evaluări corespunzătoare ale impactului și ținând cont de factorul competitivității, pentru a stimula potențialul ridicat de creștere a inovării și a productivității al industriei UE, precum și să colaboreze cu statele membre pentru a se asigura că acestea sunt aplicabile unor situații naționale în mare măsură diferite. În cadrul Consiliului, Grupul la nivel înalt pentru competitivitate și creștere economică asigură consiliere cu privire la chestiunile interdisciplinare structurale/microeconomice legate de semestrul european, în vederea dezvoltării unei abordări coordonate a competitivității și creșterii economice pentru întreprinderi și industrie.

([1]) 17566/12.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008621/13
to the Council
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Recovery of industrial production across the EU

According to Eurostat statistics, production of durable consumer goods fell by 5.5% in the euro area and by 4.3% in the EU-27 in January 2013, compared to January 2012. During the same period, energy production also fell by 0.9% in the EU-27.

Four of the 27 Member States accounted for more than 60% of the EU's industrial production in 2010: Germany (27.29%), Italy (12.44%), UK (11.93%) and France (11.65%). At the same time, 10 Member States accounted together for less than 4% of the EU's industrial production in 2010.

Given that a fall in industrial production may result in an increase in imports, a decline in the EU's competitiveness and job losses across the EU, can the Council say what measures it intends to take to achieve a recovery in the EU's industrial production, maintain the EU's competitiveness and preserve jobs in the EU?

What measures does the Council intend to take to develop industrial production in all EU Member States and, in particular, in those where industrial production accounts for less than 1% of the EU's industrial production?

Reply
(25 November 2013)

Industrial competitiveness, economic growth and job creation in Europe are high on the Council's list of priorities and have featured on most Competitiveness Council agendas over the last two years.

In 2012, following the adoption of the Commission Communication on 'A Stronger European Industry for Growth and Economic Recovery', the Council acknowledged in its conclusions ([1]) the importance of strengthening the EU's industrial competitiveness in order to promote growth and jobs and recognised the major contribution of EU industries can make to recover from the economic crisis. In particular, the Council emphasised the urgent need for new investments in EU industry, taking into particular account the six fast growing areas for priority actions identified in the Commission Communication. It acknowledged the need to create a better regulatory environment for EU companies, underlined the need to translate EU research into industrial advantage to cover the entire value-chain, and stressed the role of world-class clusters and strong EU networking activities as key components of EU industrial competitiveness. The Council also considered that better synergies and consistency between all relevant EU policies (in particular industry, energy, environment, state aid and trade) were important elements for the development of EU industry.

The President of the European Council has announced that the European Council meeting in February 2014 will focus on industrial competitiveness. To this end, the Council is planning to adopt conclusions on industrial policy at its meeting in December 2013.

Industrial policy falls, *in fine,* within the competence of the Member States, and the European Union can only support and coordinate their actions. The Council has invited the Commission to identify and propose measures and strategies with European added value, based on appropriate impact assessments and taking into account the competitiveness factor, in order to boost the high innovation and productivity growth potential of EU industry and to work with the Member States to ensure these are applicable to largely different national situations. Within the Council, the High Level Group on Competitiveness and Growth provides advice on structural/microeconomic cross-cutting issues related to the 'European Semester' with a view to developing a coordinated approach to competitiveness and growth for enterprises and industry.

([1]) 17566/12.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-008622/13
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(15 iulie 2013)

Subiect: Raport privind progresele înregistrate de statele membre în ceea ce privește creșterea numărului de clădiri al căror consum de energie este aproape egal cu zero

Conform articolului 9 alineatul (5) din Directiva 2010/31/UE privind performanța energetică a clădirilor, până la 31 decembrie 2012 și ulterior o dată la trei ani, Comisia publică un raport privind progresele înregistrate de statele membre în ceea ce privește creșterea numărului de clădiri al căror consum de energie este aproape egal cu zero. Pe baza acestui raport, Comisia elaborează un plan de acțiune și, dacă este cazul, propune măsuri de creștere a numărului de clădiri de acest tip și încurajează utilizarea celor mai bune practici referitoare la transformarea eficientă — din punctul de vedere al costurilor — a clădirilor existente în clădiri al căror consum de energie este aproape egal cu zero.

Aș dori să întreb Comisia când va publica raportul mai sus menționat și care sunt măsurile pe care Comisia intenționează să le propună pentru creșterea numărului de clădiri al căror consum de energie este aproape egal cu zero.

Răspuns dat de dl Oettinger în numele Comisiei
(20 august 2013)

Raportul Comisiei către Parlamentul European şi Consiliu privind progresele înregistrate de statele membre cu privire la clădirile al căror consum de energie este aproape egal cu zero a fost adoptat de către Comisie la data de 28.6.2013.

Acest raport este disponibil la adresa:
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0483:FIN:RO:PDF

Raportul concluzionează că statele membre nu au înregistrat suficiente progrese în pregătirile pentru realizarea obiectivelor privind clădirile al căror consum de energie este aproape egal cu zero până în 2020. În prezent, Comisia urmăreşte această chestiune la nivelul statelor membre, pentru a obține rapoartele lipsă sau, acolo unde este cazul, informații mai detaliate. După ce toate informațiile vor fi disponibile, Comisia va evalua dacă sunt necesare măsuri suplimentare.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008622/13
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Report on the Member States' progress in increasing the number of nearly zero-energy buildings

Under Article 9(5) of Directive 2010/31/EU on the energy performance of buildings, by 31 December 2012 and every three years thereafter the Commission is to publish a report on the progress of Member States in increasing the number of nearly zero-energy buildings. On the basis of that report, the Commission is to develop an action plan and, if necessary, propose measures to increase the number of those buildings and encourage best practices as regards the cost-effective conversion of existing buildings into nearly zero-energy buildings.

When will the Commission publish that report, and what measures will it propose to increase the number of nearly zero-energy buildings?

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

The report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council regarding the progress by Member States for increasing the number of nearly zero-energy buildings was adopted by the Commission on 28/06/2013.

This report is available at: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0483:FIN:EN:PDF

The report concludes that too little progress has been made by the Member States in their preparations towards nearly-zero energy buildings by 2020. Currently the Commission is following up with individual Member States to obtain the missing reports or more detailed information where necessary. Once all information is available the Commission will assess whether further measures are necessary.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008623/13
aan de Commissie
Philippe De Backer (ALDE)
(15 juli 2013)

Betreft: Maatregelen ter ondersteuning van havens en reders bij het naleven van Richtlijn 2012/33/EU inzake zwavelemissies

Op 1 januari 2015 zal Richtlijn 2012/33/EU in werking treden. Deze richtlijn legt strikte regels op voor de zwaveluitstoot in de SECA-zones.

Verschillende studies wezen al op het gevaar voor een „modal backshift", waarbij goederen niet meer via de zee, maar via de weg vervoerd zullen worden. Dit gevaar is er vooral door het gebrek aan ondersteuningsmaatregelen voor Europese havens en reders.

Op dit moment zijn er onvoldoende betaalbare alternatieven op de markt die de zwaveluitstoot van schepen afdoende kunnen verminderen. Voor reders zullen de financiële gevolgen van de nieuwe richtlijn dan ook bijzonder zwaar zijn. Ook Europese havens zullen van de wetgeving negatieve invloed ondervinden. Door de strenge milieueisen zal het vervoer via de zee duurder worden, wat het wegvervoer opnieuw aantrekkelijker zal maken. Daarom is het van groot belang dat er voldoende ondersteuning is voor reders om hun schepen aan te passen aan de nieuwe emissienormen.

Vandaar volgende vragen aan de Commissie:

1. Is de Commissie ervan overtuigd dat het voor de Europese scheepvaart mogelijk is om de deadline van 1 januari 2015 te halen?

2. Kan de Commissie een overzicht geven van de verschillende maatregelen die werden getroffen om reders te ondersteunen bij de overgang naar alternatieven met lagere zwavelemissies?

3. Plant de Commissie nieuwe initiatieven die de overgang naar alternatieven voor reders kunnen faciliteren? Zo ja, welke?

Antwoord van de heer Potočnik namens de Commissie
(18 september 2013)

Momenteel is er voor de Commissie geen reden om aan te nemen dat de termijnen (18 juni 2014 voor de omzetting van Richtlijn 2012/33/EU ([1]) en 1 januari 2015 voor de inwerkingtreding van de SECA-norm van 0,1 %) niet zullen worden nageleefd, of dat de tenuitvoerlegging van die richtlijn een „modal back shift" tot gevolg zou hebben.

Overeenkomstig artikel 4 septies van de richtlijn kunnen de lidstaten financiële maatregelen nemen ten behoeve van de marktdeelnemers die de gevolgen van deze richtlijn ondervinden, mits deze in overeenstemming zijn met de op dit gebied geldende regels inzake staatssteun. Bovendien moeten de lidstaten alternatieve emissiereductiemethoden toelaten die voldoen aan de vereisten van artikel 4 quater. De richtlijn ging gepaard met een effectbeoordeling, die kan worden geraadpleegd op de website van de Commissie ([2]), en van een reeks ondersteunende maatregelen — die ook bekend staan als het duurzaam instrumentarium voor vervoer over water ([3]).

Het onlangs gepubliceerde voortgangsverslag over de tenuitvoerlegging van het instrumentarium ([4]) schetst maatregelen die reeds zijn genomen en geeft een overzicht van de beschikbare financiële steun door de huidige financiële instrumenten van de EU, waarvan een aantal belanghebbenden reeds goed gebruik hebben gemaakt. In de komende weken zullen de activiteiten van het European Sustainable Shipping Forum (ESSF) van start gaan en lidstaten en belanghebbenden van de scheepvaartindustrie bij elkaar brengen voor een structurele dialoog, de uitwisseling van beste praktijken en coördinatie, met name met het oog op de deadline van 2015.

([1]) Voor het zwavelgehalte van scheepsbrandstoffen: PB L 327 van 27.11.2012.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/air/transport/pdf/ships/sec_2011_918_en.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/air/transport/pdf/ships/sec_2011_1052.pdf
([4]) COM(2013) 475 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008623/13
to the Commission
Philippe De Backer (ALDE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Measures to help ports and shipping lines to comply with Directive 2012/33/EU on sulphur emissions

On 1 January 2015, Directive 2012/33/EU, imposing strict rules on sulphur emissions in SECA zones, will enter into force.

Various studies have already pointed to the risk of a 'modal back shift', such that goods would no longer be transported by sea but would be conveyed by road instead. This risk is particularly attributable to the lack of support measures for European ports and shipping lines.

At present, there are insufficient affordable alternatives on the market which can adequately reduce sulphur emissions from ships. For shipping lines, the financial impact of the new directive will therefore be extremely strong. European ports will also be adversely affected by the legislation. Because of the strict environmental requirements, sea transport will become more expensive, which could again make road haulage more attractive. It is therefore very important to provide adequate support to help shipping lines to bring their vessels into line with the new emission standards.

1. Is the Commission convinced that it will be possible for European shipping to meet the deadline of 1 January 2015?

2. Can the Commission provide an overview of the various measures which have been taken to support shipping lines in making the switch to alternatives with lower sulphur emissions?

3. Is the Commission planning any new initiatives to facilitate the switch to alternatives for the benefit of shipping lines? If so, what?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(18 September 2013)

For the time being, the Commission has no reason to believe that the deadlines (18 June 2014 for transposition of the directive 2012/33/EU ([1]) and 1st January 2015 for the entry into force of the 0.1% SECA standard) will not be met, or that the implementation of the directive would produce a 'modal back shift'.

In accordance with Article 4f of the directive, Member States may adopt financial measures in favor of operators affected by this directive where such financial measures are in accordance with the relevant state aid rules. Moreover, Member States shall allow alternative emission abatement methods under the conditions laid down in Article 4c. The directive was accompanied by an impact assessment which can be consulted on the Commission's website ([2]) and a set of supporting measures — also known as the Sustainable Waterborne Transport Toolbox ([3]).

The recently published progress report on the Toolbox implementation ([4]) outlines measures taken and available financial support through the current EU financial instruments, of which a number of stakeholders have already made good use. In the forthcoming weeks, the European Sustainable Shipping Forum (ESSF)'s activities will be launched to bring together Member States and maritime industry stakeholders for a structural dialogue, exchange of best practices and coordination, in particular in preparation of the 2015 deadline.

([1]) as regards the sulphur content of marine fuels, OJ L 327, 27.11.2012.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/air/transport/pdf/ships/sec_2011_918_en.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/air/transport/pdf/ships/sec_2011_1052.pdf
([4]) COM(2013) 475 final.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-008624/13
a Bizottság számára
Tabajdi Csaba Sándor (S&D)
(2013. július 15.)

Tárgy: Egységes vámkezelési rendszer az Európai Unióban

A tagállamok a saját vámhatárukon beszedett vámokból származó 25%-os visszatérítést nemcsak a vám beszedési költségeinek megtérítésére, hanem ezenfelül más költségvetési célokra is használhatják. Érdekük ezért, hogy saját vámhatárukon minél több vámkezelés történjen, mivel az Európai Unióba beérkező áruk vámkezelése bármely tagállamban megtörténhet. A vámszabályok az Európai Unió területén közösek, azonosak. A Lisszaboni Szerződés megerősítette az Európai Unió fennhatóságát a vámpolitika és a kereskedelempolitika mint közös politika terén. A gyakorlatban azonban a vámeljárások rendje továbbra is töredezett. Az ellenőrzési rendszer további elemei, így a kockázatkezelés, a folyamatba épített ellenőrzés, az utólagos ellenőrzés szabályozása, szervezeti felépítése és jogi háttere ugyanis tagállamonként eltérő lehet. Ennek következtében egészségtelen versenyhelyzet alakulhat ki a tagállamok között azon törekvésük révén, hogy maximalizálják a saját vámhatárukon kezelt áruk értékét, így a náluk megjelenő vámbevételeket és a visszatérítés értékét.

A Bizottság szerint elég hatékony-e az ellenőrzés jelenlegi rendszere, amelyben esetleg 28 féle is lehet az irányítás, a jogszabályi háttér, a jogorvoslati rend és a szervezeti felépítés?

A Bizottság szerint hatékony, illetve költségtakarékos-e, hogy a tagállamokban más-más vámkezelési rendszereket alkalmaznak és fejlesztenek külön-külön fejlesztő apparátusok segítségével?

Nem lenne-e hatékonyabb és olcsóbb egyetlen vámkezelési rendszert alkalmazni az összes tagállamban?

Tervez-e a Bizottság jogalkotási javaslatot tenni a helyzet javítása érdekében?

Algirdas Šemeta biztos válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2013. szeptember 12.)

A Bizottság hivatkozik a tisztelt képviselő úr ugyanezen témában 2013. június 20-án írt levelére adott válaszára és tájékoztatja a képviselő urat, hogy számos kezdeményezést tett a helyzet kezelése érdekében.

A vámunió helyzetéről szóló bizottsági közlemény ([1]) – amely a legátfogóbb kezdeményezés – a vámunió által elért eredmények és az előtte álló kihívások alapján a további lépéseket felvázolva három fő területet határoz meg: a jogi aktusok modernizálásának lezárása, illetve az Uniós Vámkódex véglegesítése és elfogadása; a hiányosságok felmérése, továbbá a prioritások rögzítése több meghatározott területen, mint például a kockázatkezelés; valamint az eredményesség- és hatékonyságnövelés a tagállamoknak és a Bizottságnak a vámunió teljes operatív irányításában betöltött szerepének újraértékelését szolgáló irányítási reform révén.

Az utóbb említett kérdéskörre vonatkozó reformtervezet várhatóan 2014-re készül el.

Az Uniós Vámkódex erősíti a szabályok és eljárások „közösségiesítését", továbbá hozzájárul a vámellenőrzésekkel kapcsolatos kockázatkezelés közös keretének kifejlesztéséhez, és létrehozza a vámeljárások számítógépes feldolgozásának elvét.

A Bizottság már közzé is tette a feltárt hiányosságok egyikére – a kockázatkezelésre – vonatkozó első tematikus közleményét ([2]), amelyben felvetődik az irányítás, illetve az operatív tevékenységek különböző szintjeinek kérdése, mely kérdésekkel foglalkozni kell. Ezen közleményt illetően a Tanács már közzétette megállapításait ([3]), és fokozatos megközelítést kért.

Végezetül, a Bizottság emlékeztetni kíván arra, hogy a sajátforrás-határozat rendelkezik a tradicionális saját forrásokra (főként vámok) vonatkozó egységes kulcs megtartásáról, amelynek hátterében az uniós költségvetés tagállami hozzájárulásokkal történő finanszírozásáról szóló politikai határozatok állnak.

([1]) COM(2012) 791 final.
([2]) COM(2012) 793 final.
([3]) Dokumentum 8761/3/13, 2013. június 18.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008624/13
to the Commission
Csaba Sándor Tabajdi (S&D)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Common EU customs system

Member States are permitted to use the 25% refund from customs duties collected at their customs frontiers to cover the costs of collection and also for other budgetary purposes. It is therefore in their interest to conduct as many customs controls as they can at their borders, as goods arriving in the EU can be checked in any Member State. The EU has common customs rules which are the same throughout its territory. The Lisbon Treaty strengthened the authority of the EU in customs policy and trade policy as joint policies. In practice, however, customs procedures remain fragmented. Other parts of the monitoring system, such as the regulation, organisational structure and legal background of risk management, embedded auditing and *ex-post* checks, can differ between the Member States. This can result in unhealthy competition between Member States as they endeavour to maximise the value of goods controlled at their borders and thus also their customs revenues and the amount of refunds.

In the Commission's view, is the current system of customs checks effective enough, given that there may be 28 different kinds of management, legislative background, system for legal redress and organisational structure?

Does the Commission consider it effective and economical for the Member States to apply and develop different customs control systems with the aid of different development mechanisms?

Would it not be more effective and less expensive if there were a single customs control system in all the Member States?

Is the Commission planning to draw up a legislative proposal to improve this state of affairs?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(12 September 2013)

The Commission refers to the reply to the Honourable Member's letter of 20 June 2013 on the same subject and has taken several initiatives to address the situation.

The most comprehensive initiative, the Commission Communication on the State of the Customs Union ([1]) based on the Customs Union's achievements and its challenges outlines the way forward identifying three main areas: completing the modernisation of the legal instruments, with the finalisation and adoption of the Union Customs Code; assessing the gaps and setting priorities in a number of identified areas such as for example risk management and improving efficiency and effectiveness by a governance reform reassessing the roles of Member States and the Commission regarding the overall operational management of the customs union.

On this last aspect a blue print for the reform is foreseen by 2014.

The Union Customs Code will reinforce the 'communautarisation' of rules and procedures, further supporting the development of the common framework for risk management for customs controls and by establishing the principle of computerisation of customs procedures.

The Commission has already issued a first thematic Communication on one of the gaps identified, risk management ([2]), where the issues of governance and of the different layers of operational activities are raised and will need to be addressed. On this communication, the Council has already issued its conclusions ([3]) and requested a step by step approach.

Finally the Commission recalls that the retention of the flat rate share of traditional own resources (mainly customs duties) is laid down in the Own Resources Decision and influenced by political decisions over the Member States' contributions to the financing of the EU budget.

([1]) COM(2012) 791 final.
([2]) COM(2012) 793 final.
([3]) Doc. 8761/3/13, 18.6.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-008625/13
to the Council
Chris Davies (ALDE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Common fisheries policy and multi-annual plans

Will the Council outline the steps it intends to take to promote the achievement of an intra-institutional solution regarding the multi-annual plans of stock management as proposed in the programme of the Lithuanian Presidency?

Reply
(16 September 2013)

Multi-annual plans are a 'success story' of the common fisheries policy (CFP). Wherever they are in force, stocks have recovered over the years. They are a crucial and important tool in achieving sustainable fisheries in EU waters.

Early this year, the Council almost unanimously acknowledged that long-term management plans were a key element in the sustainable management of fisheries and would continue to be so. While discussing the CFP reform, the Council has also pledged that it would work with the Parliament and the Commission to find a solution to facilitate multi-annual plans on a priority basis in the new post-CFP reform context. An interinstitutional taskforce could look into this issue further.

In that context, the Council welcomes the positive reaction of the Chairman of the Parliament's Fisheries Committee to the proposal to set up such a taskforce. The Council will soon be taking the first steps to launch a collaborative process between all the institutions. Finding an interinstitutional solution is a task incumbent on all of the institutions, each of which has to take up its responsibilities. The Council looks forward to working with the Parliament and the Commission to this end in order to implement the new CFP reform and to achieve sustainable fisheries.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-008626/13
to the Commission
Brian Simpson (S&D)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Contravention of EU sanctions on Syria

Is the Commission aware of the serious allegations being made against Amadeus over its business dealings with Syrian Arab Airlines, which if true would be in contravention of EU sanctions imposed on Syria? If this allegation is true what is the Commission going to do about it?

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

The Commission is aware of these allegations and has been in contact with the Spanish authorities on the issue. Implementation of restrictive measures is a competence of Member States.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008627/13
a la Comisión
María Muñiz De Urquiza (S&D), Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto (S&D), Josefa Andrés Barea (S&D), Antonio Masip Hidalgo (S&D), Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D), Eider Gardiazábal Rubial (S&D) y Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(15 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: Tax lease

En 2009, la Comisaria responsable de Competencia, Neelie Kroes, confirmó por escrito que sus servicios no consideraban necesaria ninguna actuación respecto al sistema español de *tax lease*. Sin embargo, en este momento, la Comisión está considerando pedir a los inversores en los astilleros españoles que devuelvan el importe de la financiación recibida desde abril de 2005 conforme a este sistema.

Ante la apertura del expediente contra España y a fin de garantizar tanto la seguridad jurídica como la confianza legítima y la no discriminación negativa entre Estados miembros, en caso de anulación del sistema español de *tax lease* por disconformidad con el Derecho comunitario ¿no considera la Comisión, a la vista de los precedentes existentes, que se debe tomar como referencia para la devolución de la financiación habida la fecha de la notificación del inicio de las investigaciones en 2011?

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

El 17 de julio de 2013, la Comisión adoptó una decisión final ([1]) sobre el sistema español de *tax lease*, en la que concluía que dicho sistema constituye una ayuda estatal parcialmente incompatible con el mercado interior. Aunque el sistema se ha utilizado como un mecanismo de ayuda a la compra de buques, la Comisión no exige la devolución de las ayudas por los astilleros ni por las compañías navieras, sino por los miembros de las agrupaciones de interés económico que se han beneficiado de una reducción indebida de sus bases imponibles.

Hay dos principios fundamentales de control de las ayudas estatales de la UE: toda nueva ayuda debe notificarse a la Comisión y las ayudas incompatibles deben ser devueltas.

La Decisión de 17 de julio de 2013 limita el importe de la ayuda que deben reembolsar los beneficiarios porque la Comisión consideró que se había creado una situación de inseguridad jurídica como consecuencia de una declaración recogida en una decisión de 2001 sobre el régimen francés de *tax lease* ([2]). Este régimen era muy similar al sistema español de *tax lease*, por lo que la declaración efectuada en 2001 podría haber inducido a error a los beneficiarios del sistema español en cuanto a la legalidad de este. Pero la Comisión puso fin a esta incertidumbre el 30 de abril de 2007 al publicar una decisión definitiva que concluía que el régimen francés constituía una ayuda estatal ([3]). Por lo tanto, la Comisión considera que la inseguridad jurídica en cuanto a la legalidad del sistema español de *tax lease* no se mantuvo hasta la fecha de publicación de su decisión de 2011 ([4]).

En relación con la carta de la Sra. Kroes ([5]), su propósito era constatar que, según las autoridades españolas, el sistema de *tax lease* no discriminaba a los astilleros no españoles. Esta carta no podía generar expectativas legítimas ni inseguridad jurídica en lo que respecta a las ventajas recibidas por los miembros de las agrupaciones de interés económico.

([1]) Pendiente de publicación en el Diario Oficial.
([2]) Decisión de la Comisión de 8 de mayo de 2001, DO L 12 de 15.1.2002, p. 33.
([3]) Decisión de la Comisión de 20 de diciembre de 2006, DO L 112 de 30.4.2007, p. 43.
([4]) Decisión de incoar el procedimiento de investigación formal respecto del sistema español, publicada en el DO C 276, 21.09.2011, p. 5.
([5]) Carta enviada por la Sra. Kroes a la Ministra noruega de Comercio e Industria en 2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008627/13
to the Commission
María Muñiz De Urquiza (S&D), Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto (S&D), Josefa Andrés Barea (S&D), Antonio Masip Hidalgo (S&D), Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D), Eider Gardiazábal Rubial (S&D) and Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Tax lease

In 2009, the Commissioner with responsibility for competition, Neelie Kroes, stated in writing that her department saw no need for any action regarding the Spanish tax lease system. However, the Commission is now considering asking investors in the Spanish shipbuilding industry to repay all aid received under this system since April 2005.

In light of the proceedings opened against Spain and so as to that the principles of legal certainty, legitimate expectations and non-discrimination are upheld, if the Spanish tax lease system is abolished on the grounds that it is not consistent with EC law, does the Commission not think that, on the basis of existing precedents, only aid received since the opening of the investigations was notified in 2011 should be repaid?

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

On 17 July 2013, the Commission adopted a final decision ([1]) with respect to the Spanish Tax Lease system, concluding that it constitutes state aid that is partly incompatible with the internal market. Even if it has been used as a support mechanism for the purchase of ships, the Commission does not order the recovery of the aid either from the shipyards or from the shipping companies, but from the members of Economic Interest Groupings which have benefited from an undue reduction of their income tax base.

Two fundamental principles of EU state aid control are that new aid must be notified to the Commission and that incompatible aid must be recovered.

The decision of 17 July 2013 limits the amount of aid to be recovered from its beneficiaries because the Commission considered that a situation of legal uncertainty had been created by a statement made in a 2001 decision concerning the French Tax Lease scheme ([2]). Since that scheme was very similar to the Spanish Tax Lease system, the statement made in 2001 could have misled the beneficiaries of the similar Spanish scheme as to its lawfulness. But the Commission put an end to that uncertainty on 30 April 2007, when it published a final decision finding that the French scheme constituted state aid ([3]). Therefore, the Commission considers that any legal uncertainty as to the lawfulness of the Spanish Tax Lease system did not persist until the date of publication of its 2011 decision ([4]).

As for the letter of Ms Kroes ([5]), its scope was limited to stating that, according to the Spanish authorities, the Tax Lease system did not discriminate against non-Spanish shipyards. This letter could not have generated any legitimate expectations or legal uncertainty as regards the advantages received by members of Economic Interest Groupings.

([1]) Not yet published in the Official Journal.
([2]) Commission decision of 8 May 2001, OJ L 12, 15.1.2002, p. 33.
([3]) Commission decision of 20 December 2006, OJ L 112, 30.4.2007, p. 43.
([4]) Decision to open the formal investigation procedure in respect of the Spanish scheme, published in OJ C 276, 21.9.2011, p. 5.
([5]) Letter sent by Ms Kroes to the Norwegian Minister for Trade and Industry in 2009.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008628/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(15 Ιουλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Απόληψη μπάζων από μεταλλευτικό μνημείο για την κατασκευή Μαρίνας, στα Λιμενάρια Θάσου

Μαρίνα χωρητικότητας 280 τουριστικών σκαφών βρίσκεται υπό κατασκευή στα Λιμενάρια της νήσου Θάσου ([1]). Το έργο «Καταφύγιο Τουριστικών Σκαφών» Λιμεναρίων Θάσου έχει ενταχθεί στο πρόγραμμα «Επιχειρηματικότητα και Ανταγωνιστικότητα» του Υπουργείου Ανάπτυξης, Ανταγωνιστικότητας και Ναυτιλίας ([2]) ([3]) με συνολικό προϋπολογισμό 7,5 εκατομμύρια ευρώ (85% από ΕΣΠΑ, 15% εθνική χρηματοδότηση) και προβλέπει, μεταξύ άλλων, εκβάθυνση του λιμανιού και άλλα συνοδευτικά έργα.

Σύμφωνα με πληροφορίες κατοίκων της Θάσου ([4]), φορτηγά μετέφεραν υλικό στον υπό κατασκευή λιμενοβραχίονα της Μαρίνας από την περιοχή «Βούβες» ([5]), η οποία είναι χαρακτηρισμένη ως «ιστορικός τόπος» ([6]) και εντάσσεται στο πλαίσιο του ευρύτερου μεταλλευτικού μνημείου «Παλατάκι — Μεταλλευτικό Συγκρότημα Θάσου» που έχει χαρακτηρισθεί ως Μνημείο Νεότερων Χρόνων ([7]) και έργο τέχνης που χρειάζεται ειδική κρατική προστασία ([8]). Στην ίδια περιοχή εντοπίστηκαν ευρήματα αρχαίας μεταλλευτικής δραστηριότητας. Παρά την αξία της, η περιοχή «Βούβες» κατά το παρελθόν έχει κακοποιηθεί, καθώς λειτουργούσε εκεί χωματερή, η οποία δεν έχει απορρυπανθεί.

Το γεγονός δημιουργεί εύλογες ανησυχίες σχετικά με την αλλοίωση του ανάγλυφου του ιστορικού τόπου, λόγω των εκτεταμένων εκχωματώσεων και με τη χρήση μεταλλευτικών σκωριών, μεταλλευτικών σωρών από υπολείμματα παλιότερης μεταλλευτικής δραστηριότητας, που περιλάμβαναν ψευδάργυρο, μόλυβδο κ.α., με συνέπεια να απειλείται η δημόσια υγεία.

Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη και το γεγονός ότι το έργο είναι συγχρηματοδοτούμενο, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Έχει σχετική πληροφόρηση από τις αρμόδιες αρχές σχετικά με το αν η Μελέτη Περιβαλλοντικών Επιπτώσεων προβλέπει την απόληψη υλικού από το ιστορικό και πολιτιστικό μνημείο και τη χρήση μεταλλευτικών υπολειμμάτων για την κατασκευή του λιμενοβραχίονα; Υπάρχουν αναλύσεις της σύστασής τους; Τι μέτρα έχουν ληφθεί για την προστασία του θαλάσσιου περιβάλλοντος, αλλά και της υγείας των κατοίκων;

2. Εφόσον διαπιστωθεί παραβίαση της ελληνικής και ευρωπαϊκής νομοθεσίας, τι μέτρα προτίθεται να λάβει;

Απάντηση του κ. Potočnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(4 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Σύμφωνα με την αρχή της επιμερισμένης διαχείρισης, η επιλογή, η υλοποίηση και η παρακολούθηση των συγχρηματοδοτούμενων δράσεων των διαρθρωτικών ταμείων αποτελούν αρμοδιότητα των κρατών μελών, στο καταλληλότερο εδαφικό επίπεδο και σύμφωνα με το θεσμικό σύστημα κάθε κράτους μέλους, υπό την προϋπόθεση ότι οι επιλογές τους συνάδουν με τις αρχές που θεσπίζονται στα έγγραφα προγραμματισμού (επιχειρησιακά προγράμματα) που έχουν εγκριθεί σε διαβούλευση με την Επιτροπή. Με εξαίρεση τα «μείζονα» έργα (δηλ. έργα άνω των 50 εκατ. ευρώ), τα κράτη μέλη δεν είναι υποχρεωμένα να διαβιβάζουν στην Επιτροπή πληροφορίες, μεταξύ των οποίων η μελέτη περιβαλλοντικών επιπτώσεων. Θα πρέπει να σημειωθεί ότι τα έργα που συγχρηματοδοτούνται στο πλαίσιο των διαρθρωτικών ταμείων πρέπει να συμμορφώνονται με τη νομοθεσία της ΕΕ· ταυτό πρέπει κατ'αρχήν να διασφαλίζεται από τις αρμόδιες αρχές των κρατών μελών. Η διαπίστωση παραβίασης του δικαίου της ΕΕ μπορεί να οδηγήσει σε αναστολή ή ανάκληση της συγχρηματοδότησης της ΕΕ.

([1]) http://www.investingreece.gov.gr/default.asp?pid=36&sectorID=44&la=2
([2]) http://goo.gl/rOCxk
([3]) http://goo.gl/IO34D
([4]) Κοντογεωργίου Ε. «Υπάρχει κάτι σάπιο στο βασίλειο της Δανιμαρκίας;». Εφ. Θασιακή, φ. 23ης Ιουνίου 2013.
([5]) http://www.mmoth.gr/istorika-stoixeia/18-vouves.html
([6]) ΥΠΠΟ/ΔΝΣΑΚ/77766/219/6-10-2006 και http://www.mmoth.gr/
([7]) Περιλαμβάνεται στη σχετική λίστα του Υπ. Πολιτισμού, http://odysseus.culture.gr/h/2/gh23.jsp?letter=16
([8]) ΥΠΠΕ/ΔΙΛΑΠ/Γ896/20565/30-4-82 & ΦΕΚ713/τβ/27-9-82.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008628/13
to the Commission
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Use of spoils from mining monument to construct a marina in Limenaria (Thassos)

A marina with space for 280 tourist vessels is being constructed in Limenaria on the island of Thassos ([1]). The project, which is entitled 'Refuge for Tourist Vessels in Limenaria (Thassos)' has been included in the 'Entrepreneurship and Competitiveness' programme of the Ministry of Development, Competitiveness and Shipping ([2]), ([3]) It has a total budget of EUR 7.5 million (85% from the NSRF and 15% national financing) and makes provision, among other things, for a deeper port and other flanking works.

According to information from inhabitants of Thassos ([4]), lorries have been transporting material to the mole being constructed in the marina from the area of Vouves ([5]), which is an 'historic site' ([6])and forms part of the 'Palataki — Thassos Mining Complex' mining monument, which is a listed modern monument ([7]) and work of art requiring special protection by the state ([8]). Traces of ancient mining works have been found in the same area. Despite its value, the area of Vouves has been misused in the past (as a landfill which has not been decontaminated).

This development is giving rise to reasonable concern about the changes to the relief of the historic site being caused by the extensive earthworks and the use of piles of mining spoils from previous mining activity, which contain zinc, lead and so forth and thus represent a risk to public health.

In view of the fact that the project is being co-financed, will the Commission say:

1. Does it have information from the competent authorities as to whether the environmental impact study makes provision for material to be taken from the historic and cultural site and for mining spoils to be used in the construction of the mole? Has their composition been analysed? What measures have been taken to protect the marine environment and the health of local residents?

2. If Greek and European legislation are found to have been infringed, what measures does it intend to take?

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

In line with the shared management principle, the selection, implementation and monitoring of Structural Funds' co-financed actions are the responsibility of the Member States, at the most appropriate territorial level and according to the institutional system of each Member State, provided that their choices are in line with the principles laid down in the programming documents (Operational Programmes) adopted in consultation with the Commission. With the exception of 'major' projects (i.e. projects over EUR 50 million), Member States are not obliged to communicate to the Commission information, including the environmental impact study. It should be noted that co-financed projects under the Structural Funds have to comply with EC law; this has to be primarily ensured by the competent authorities of the Member States. If a breach of EC law is established, this can lead to suspension or withdrawal of EU co-financing.

([1]) http://www.investingreece.gov.gr/default.asp?pid=36&sectorID=44&la=1
([2]) http://goo.gl/rOCxk
([3]) http://goo.gl/IO34D
([4]) E. Kontogeorgiou 'Is there something rotten in the state of Denmark?' E. Thasiaki, 23 June 2013.
([5]) http://www.mmoth.gr/istorika-stoixeia/18-vouves.html
([6]) ΥΠΠΟ/ΔΝΣΑΚ/77766/219/6-10-2006 και http://www.mmoth.gr/
([7]) Includes a Ministry of Culture list: http://odysseus.culture.gr/h/2/gh23.jsp?letter=16
([8]) ΥΠΠΕ/ΔΙΛΑΠ/Γ896/20565/30-4-82 & ΦΕΚ713/τβ/27-9-82

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008630/13
à la Commission
Constance Le Grip (PPE)
(15 juillet 2013)

Objet: Évolution de la réglementation face au développement du financement participatif

Avec une augmentation de 81 % des fonds récoltés en 2011 et 2012, portant le montant à 2,07 milliards d'euros au niveau mondial, le financement participatif est en pleine expansion. Il constitue une nouvelle solution de financement dont beaucoup d'acteurs souhaitent profiter.

Cette nouvelle possibilité est en effet une occasion dont les porteurs de projets doivent pouvoir profiter au mieux, mais le cadre réglementaire européen ne semble aujourd'hui pas adapté pour apporter une protection suffisante aux investisseurs, tout comme il n'existe pas de règles spécifiques encadrant la création des plates-formes de financement participatif, qui, faute de statut spécifique, sont obligées de se déclarer sous des statuts qui ne correspondent pas à leur activité réelle.

1. La Commission a-t-elle pu se procurer une étude qui évalue le potentiel du financement participatif et qui analyse le mode de réglementation utilisé dans d'autres pays dans le monde?

2. La Commission envisage-t-elle de réfléchir à un statut spécifique qui pourrait être accordé aux plates-formes de financement participatif, afin d'harmoniser leur statut au niveau européen?

3. Si tel est le cas, la Commission envisage-t-elle de préciser des règles de fonctionnement de ces plates-formes, notamment en ce qui concerne le démarchage et les pratiques commerciales de ces sociétés, et ce en vue de protéger au mieux les investisseurs?

Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission
(10 septembre 2013)

La Commission suit de près l'évolution du marché du «crowdfunding» (financement participatif) constaté par l'Honorable Parlementaire et s'accorde sur la nécessité de saisir pleinement le potentiel du crowdfunding comme source alternative de financement, tout en contenant les risques pour les contributeurs. Un atelier spécial ([1]) a exploré les possibilités et les risques de différents modèles de crowdfunding. En outre, le livre vert sur les moyens de financement à long terme ([2]) mentionnait spécifiquement le crowdfunding comme un mode de financement alternatif.

Les services de la Commission mènent actuellement des études préliminaires qui s'intéressent principalement au fonctionnement de différents types de crowdfunding et aux expériences de ceux qui l'utilisent pour développer leurs projets. Ces études visent à évaluer l'impact potentiel du crowdfunding sur l'emploi. Une autre étude a été programmée pour 2014 et devrait donner une image plus complète de la mesure dans laquelle business angels et investisseurs par crowdfunding actifs dans la recherche et l'innovation pourraient améliorer l'accès au capital-risque des entreprises de l'Union, en particulier les PME.

En outre, les services de la Commission vont aussi lancer une consultation publique en octobre 2013 pour recueillir l'avis des parties intéressées sur ces questions et apprécier l'éventuelle valeur ajoutée apportée par l'action de l'UE.

Le crowdfunding a un potentiel intéressant pour financer la croissance, favoriser l'esprit d'entreprise et encourager l'innovation sociale, culturelle et technique dans toute l'Europe, mais il pourrait également augmenter certains risques. C'est pourquoi il convient de garantir une véritable protection de l'investisseur et de clarifier quel environnement juridique serait le plus apte à encadrer l'évolution de ces pratiques, des questions essentielles que les services de la Commission comptent aussi aborder durant la consultation publique d'octobre.

([1]) «Crowdfunding: exploiter son potentiel, réduire les risques» DG MARKT 03.06.2013.
([2]) Livre vert sur le «financement à long terme de l'économie européenne», COM(2013)150 final, 25.03.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008630/13
to the Commission
Constance Le Grip (PPE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Devising rules on crowdfunding

Crowdfunding is booming: the volume of funding raised worldwide increased by 81% between 2011 and 2012, bringing the total to EUR 2.07 billion. Many individuals and bodies hope to take advantage of this revolutionary financing opportunity.

Organisers of projects of all kinds should be able to tap into this new source of funding. The European regulatory framework does not appear to provide sufficient protection for investors, however, nor are there specific rules governing the creation of crowdfunding platforms, which are being forced to operate under arrangements which in no way reflect the actual nature of their activities.

1. Has the Commission had a study drawn up evaluating the potential of crowdfunding and analysing the regulatory methods employed in other countries?

2. Will it consider drawing up a specific set of rules to govern crowdfunding platforms in an effort to harmonise their status at EU level?

3. If so, does it intend to clarify the rules governing the operation of these platforms, in particular as regards the solicitation of funding and commercial practices, with a view to protecting investors as effectively as possible?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(10 September 2013)

The Commission is following closely the market developments in crowdfunding noted by the Honourable Member and agree on the need to ensure crowdfunding reaches its full potential as an alternative source of finance while risks to contributors are contained. A dedicated workshop ([1]) explored the potential and risks of various crowdfunding models. Also, the Green Paper on Long term financing ([2]) contained a specific reference to crowdfunding as an alternative financing mode.

The Commission services are currently running preliminary studies primarily exploring the operations of different types of crowdfunding and the experiences of individuals using crowdfunding to develop their projects. These studies aim to identify the potential implications of crowdfunding for employment. A further study has been programmed for 2014 and should deliver a more comprehensive picture of the potential for angel and crowdfunding investors active in research and innovation to improve access to risk finance for EU companies, SMEs in particular.

Moreover, the Commission services will examine the potential value added of EU action also through a public consultation which should be launched in October 2013 to gather stakeholders' views on these issues.

Crowdfunding has a promising potential to finance growth, promote entrepreneurship and foster social, cultural and technical innovation across Europe. However, crowdfunding might raise certain risks too. Ensuring effective investor protection and clarifying what legal environment would suit these evolving practices best are among the key issues that the Commission services intend to address in the October public consultation.

([1]) 'Crowdfunding: Untapping its potential, reducing the risks' DG MARKT 3.6.2013.
([2]) Green Paper 'Long-term financing of the European economy', COM(2013) 150 final, 25.3.2013.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008631/13
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(15 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Commestibilità dei cani

È un nuovo allarme che viene lanciato dai magazine contro il rischio di possibili malattie — rabbia e colera — causate da partite di carne di cane, che ha un mercato floridissimo in Thailandia, dove i profitti valutati sono intorno ai due milioni di euro. Il consumo è libero, mentre è vietato il commercio all'ingrosso. Il Sud-Est asiatico è il paradiso dei piatti in cui il cane è l'ingrediente principale. Varie organizzazioni e fondazioni si stanno strutturando per combattere il commercio clandestino di questa carne che è gestito dalla criminalità organizzata. Dagli Stati Uniti alla Gran Bretagna, intanto, gli appelli per far fronte al rischio di malattie si moltiplicano e fanno leva sull'impegno degli Stati dell'area a debellare entro il 2020 i focolai di rabbia. L'APCA, l'Alleanza per la protezione dei cani in Asia, terrà un vertice ad Hanoi in agosto per invitare i governi a discutere del fenomeno e intervenire una volta per tutte. In Europa invece il traffico clandestino di cani, attraverso la copertura delle adozioni internazionali e la raccolta dei randagi — dall'Italia alla Germania, ad esempio — non serve ad incrementare i menu dei ristoranti, ma piuttosto ad alimentare l'industria alimentare per i cani ed i gatti. «Cane mangia cane» titolano i magazine. Ed anche in questo caso il rischio di possibili malattie è reale. Oltre a questo aspetto, già di per sé abbastanza grave, va stroncato il traffico illegale che è all'origine del fenomeno criminoso.

Può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. può garantire che il commercio thailandese di carne di cane non raggiunge l'Europa?

2. È al corrente del traffico, in regola con le procedure regolamentari, di tanti cani partiti dall'Italia per la Germania, spariti poi, a seguito di inchieste rimaste senza risultati, sullo sfondo di loschi movimenti di denaro?

3. Non ritiene che sarebbe necessario stabilire nell'UE regole secondo cui gli animali non siano considerati merce?

4. Non ritiene che sarebbe il caso di perfezionare la normativa in modo da punire in modo severo chi fa business con gli animali?

5. Sarà rappresentata al vertice di Hanoi dell'APCA?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(9 ottobre 2013)

1. L'importazione di carne di cane non è specificamente disciplinata da norme UE. È tuttavia in vigore una normativa volta ad impedire a passeggeri provenienti da paesi come la Tailandia di introdurre carne e altri prodotti animali nell'UE. La Commissione raccoglie e pubblica su internet ([1]) informazioni sui risultati dei controlli effettuati a tale scopo. La Commissione continua a monitorare l'attuazione di queste disposizioni da parte degli Stati membri.

2. La Commissione non ha ricevuto informazioni concrete che confermino la macellazione di cani per utilizzarne la carne in prodotti alimentari, né movimenti di cani non conformi alla normativa UE applicabile in rapporto con questa pratica.

3. La legislazione dell'UE sul benessere degli animali si è sviluppata nell'ambito delle competenze attribuite dai trattati e prevede la tutela di varie categorie di animali, in particolare quelli soggetti ad essere commercializzati come beni. La particolare qualità degli animali in quanto esseri senzienti è non di meno sottolineata nell'articolo 13 del trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/resources/wd_imports_meat_2008-2011_en.pdf

4. La normativa UE sul benessere degli animali comprende già disposizioni sulle sanzioni che gli Stati membri devono erogare in caso di mancato rispetto. Una recente proposta della Commissione per un nuovo regolamento sui «controlli ufficiali» ([2]) si propone tra l'altro di rafforzare le disposizioni giuridiche vigenti in materia.

5. La Commissione non ha ricevuto alcun invito a partecipare alla riunione APCA tenutasi ad Hanoi nei giorni 22 e 23 agosto 2013.

([2]) Proposta di regolamento del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, relativa ai controlli ufficiali e alle altre attività ufficiali effettuati per garantire l'applicazione di una legislazione sugli alimenti e sui mangimi, sulla salute e sul benessere degli animali, sulla sanità delle piante, sul materiale riproduttivo vegetale, sui prodotti fitosanitari e recante modifica dei regolamenti (CE) nn. 999/2001, 1829/2003, 1831/2003, 1/2005, 396/2005, 834/2007, 1099/2009, 1069/2009, 1107/2009, dei regolamenti (UE) nn. 1151/2012, [….]/2013, e delle direttive 98/58/CE, 1999/74/CE, 2007/43/CE, 2008/119/CE, 2008/120/CE e 2009/128/CE (regolamento sui controlli ufficiali). COM(2013)265 def. — 2013/0140(COD).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008631/13
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Edibility of dogs

Magazines have recently drawn attention to the risk of diseases — rabies and cholera — caused by consignments of dogmeat, for which there is a flourishing market in Thailand, where the profits are estimated at around two million euros. There are no legal restrictions on eating it, although its wholesale marketing is banned. South-East Asia is the main centre of cookery using dogmeat as its principal ingredient. Various organisations and foundations are taking measures to combat trafficking in this meat, which is managed by organised criminals. From the United States to Britain, meanwhile, more and more calls are being heard for action to be taken to control the risk of diseases, bringing pressure to bear on States in the region to honour their commitment to eradicate rabies by 2020. The APCA (Alliance for the Protection of Dogs in Asia) is to hold a summit in Hanoi in August to call on governments to debate the phenomenon and take action once and for all. In Europe, for its part, trafficking in dogs, under the cover of international adoptions and the rounding-up of strays — from Italy to Germany, for example — is aimed not at supplementing restaurant menus but rather at providing raw material for dog food and cat food. 'Dog eats dog' is the magazine headline. In this case too, there is a genuine risk of disease. Apart from this aspect, which is serious enough in itself, the trafficking which keeps criminals in business ought to be stopped.

1. Can the Commission guarantee that dogmeat traded from Thailand is not reaching Europe?

2. Is the Commission aware of the prevalence of trafficking, in apparent compliance with regulatory procedures, in dogs leaving Italy for Germany which then disappear, because investigations into suspect financial transfers have failed to produce results?

3. Ought not rules to be adopted in the EU to prevent these animals from being regarded as goods?

4. Would it not be desirable to improve legislation so as to punish severely any person who deals in these animals?

5. Will the Commission be represented at the APCA summit in Hanoi?

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

1. Import of dog meat is not specifically covered by EU rules. However, legislation is in place to prevent passengers from countries such as Thailand bringing meat and other animal products into the EU. Information on the outcome of the controls carried out to prevent such introductions is gathered by the Commission and made public on the web ([1]). The Commission continues to monitor the implementation of such provisions by the Member States.

2. The Commission has not received any factual information confirming that dogs are killed in the EU and their meat used for pet food production nor that movements of dogs not in conformity with applicable EU legislation takes place in relation to this practice.

3. Animal welfare legislation in, European Union has developed within the competences conferred by the Treaties and provides protection to various animals but principally to those subject to being traded as goods. The particular quality of animals being sentient beings is nonetheless underscored in Article 13 of the Treaty on the functioning of the European Union.

4. EU legislation on animal welfare already includes provisions on the sanctions that Member States have to apply in case of non-compliance. A recent Commission proposal for a new 'Official controls Regulation' ([2]) intends *inter alia* to strengthen the legal provisions in place in this regard.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/resources/wd_imports_meat_2008-2011_en.pdf

([2]) Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on official controls and other official activities performed to ensure the application of food and feed law, rules on animal health and welfare, plant health, plant reproductive material, plant protection products and amending Regulations (EC) No 999/2001, 1829/2003, 1831/2003, 1/2005, 396/2005, 834/2007, 1099/2009, 1069/2009, 1107/2009, Regulations (EU) No 1151/2012, [….]/2013, and Directives 98/58/EC, 1999/74/EC, 2007/43/EC, 2008/119/EC, 2008/120/EC and 2009/128/EC (Official controls Regulation). COM(2013) 265 final — 2013/0140 (COD).

5. The Commission did not receive any invitation to attend the APCA meeting that took place in Hanoi on 22 and 23 August 2013.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008632/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(15 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Vicini a un vaccino «totale» contro la malaria? Nuove linee per la strategia europea nella lotta contro la malattia

La malaria è la più diffusa fra le malattie causate da parassiti, con circa 250 milioni di casi e quasi un milione di morti ogni anno, soprattutto tra i bambini, e circa 10 000-30 000 viaggiatori europei e americani che si ammalano. Per il controllo della malaria è necessario capire la biologia dei parassiti che la trasmettono, soprattutto perché i tentativi di trovare un rimedio finora sono stati ostacolati dalla capacità del parassita di sviluppare velocemente una resistenza ai farmaci. Il problema emerso è che una piccola differenza in una qualsiasi delle proteine è sufficiente per far sì che la risposta immunitaria che riconosce un ceppo non ne riconosca un altro. Gli studi clinici e le ricerche finora si sono concentrati sullo sviluppo di vaccini che puntano su proteine individuali nella speranza di indurre una più ampia risposta immunitaria. Recentemente però gli studiosi sono riusciti a far scattare una risposta immunitaria contro tutto il parassita della malattia, grazie a un nuovo vaccino che «acceca il DNA», lasciando strutturalmente intatto il parassita per impedirgli di moltiplicarsi; l'organismo reagisce al vaccino come se fosse un vero parassita vivente e produce una risposta immunitaria per ucciderlo così che quando poi riceve un parassita integro, il sistema immunitario è in grado di neutralizzarlo.

Considerato che:

— la malaria è la più importante parassitosi e la seconda malattia infettiva al mondo per morbilità e mortalità dopo la tubercolosi, con 500 milioni di nuovi casi clinici e un milione di morti ogni anno (di cui il 90 % nell'Africa tropicale, dove la resistenza ai farmaci negli anni '90 del secolo scorso ha contribuito a un aumento del tasso di mortalità della malattia);

— molti farmaci per curare la malaria sono ritenuti inefficaci, soprattutto nell'Africa rurale;

— l'UE ha finanziato diversi progetti per la lotta contro la malaria;

— i tentativi di debellare la malaria sono messi a rischio anche dalla resistenza ai farmaci di combinazione;

— gli studi citati hanno dimostrato che l'organismo reagisce al nuovo vaccino come se fosse un vero parassita vivente e produce una risposta immunitaria più completa ed efficace;

si chiede alla Commissione se intenda valutare e inserire i risultati del citato studio nell'ambito di una nuova strategia contro la malaria, individuando anche nuove aree in cui devono essere presi provvedimenti, come ad esempio sostenere la ricerca di nuovi vaccini e nuovi antibiotici, promuovere la produzione locale di farmaci nei paesi terzi e controllare la trasparenza dei prezzi delle medicine.

Risposta di Andris Piebalgs a nome della Commissione
(17 settembre 2013)

In linea con la propria strategia di cooperazione nel campo della sanità la Commissione mira a rafforzare i sistemi sanitari nei paesi in via di sviluppo per far sì che i servizi sanitari di base raggiungano le fasce più vulnerabili della popolazione, spesso le più colpite dalla malaria. Si sono dimostrate efficaci le attività di diagnosi e trattamento precoce, l'uso di zanzariere trattate con insetticidi e il trattamento degli interni con spray insetticida. Un vaccino contro la malaria, non appena sarà messo sul mercato tra pochi anni, sarà uno strumento supplementare d'importanza decisiva.

La Commissione è a conoscenza del nuovo vaccino contro la malaria sviluppato da scienziati australiani, che viene iniettato direttamente nel sangue e si basa su un ceppo chimicamente modificato del parassita. Il vaccino si trova tuttavia in una fase precoce di sviluppo e non è ancora stato testato sull'uomo. Restano inoltre da affrontare aspetti importanti di sicurezza.

L'Unione europea assegna ingenti risorse finanziarie attraverso il Fondo europeo di sviluppo e il bilancio per la lotta contro le malattie nel quadro di programmi per paese, attraverso il Fondo mondiale per la lotta contro l'HIV/AIDS, la tubercolosi e la malaria (GFATM), la GAVI (*Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisations*) e l'Organizzazione mondiale della sanità. L'UE sostiene la ricerca mirata al miglioramento del trattamento, della diagnosi e della prevenzione della malaria. Nell'ambito del 6° e del 7° Programma quadro di azioni di ricerca, sviluppo tecnologico e dimostrazione sono stati concessi oltre 200 milioni di euro a favore di 86 progetti di ricerca sulla malaria e il Partenariato per le sperimentazioni cliniche tra paesi europei e paesi in via di sviluppo (*European Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership — EDCTP*) ha allocato 49,4 milioni di euro alla ricerca sulla malaria.

Lo scopo di questo sostegno è garantire lo sviluppo di vaccini moderni e di moderne tecniche di diagnosi e trattamento, che siano accessibili ai poveri e che siano in definitiva usati efficacemente per contenere la malaria in tutto il mondo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008632/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Nearing a comprehensive malaria vaccine: a new departure in the European strategy for combating malaria?

Malaria is the most widespread of the diseases caused by parasites. Every year, around 250 million cases and almost a million deaths are recorded, in large part among children, while between 10 000 and 30 000 visitors from Europe and America contract the disease. Bringing malaria under control requires an understanding of the biology of the parasite that is the vector for it, especially since all the attempts made so far to find a cure have been hindered by the parasite's ability to swiftly develop a resistance to the drugs used. The problem is that just a small difference in any of the proteins concerned is enough to ensure that the immune response which recognises one strain will not recognise another. Clinical trials and research have so far concentrated on the development of vaccines that target individual proteins, in the hope of inducing a broader immune response. Recently, however, scientists have managed to trigger an immune response against the malaria parasite as a whole, thanks to a new DNA 'blinding' vaccine, which leaves the parasite intact and prevents its multiplication. The body reacts to the vaccine as it would to a real living parasite and generates an immune response against it, meaning that when the real parasite enters the bloodstream, the immune system is able to neutralise it.

Malaria is the most prevalent parasitic disease in the world and the second most common contagious disease, after tuberculosis, in terms of sickness and mortality, with 500 million new clinical cases and one million deaths every year (90% of these are in tropical Africa, where drug resistance in the 1990s resulted in an increase in the numbers of deaths from the disease).

Many of the drugs used to treat malaria have proved to be ineffective, especially in rural areas of Africa. While the EU has financed several anti-malaria programmes, attempts to eradicate malaria have also been undermined by the developing of resistance to combination drugs.

The studies in question have shown that the body reacts to the new vaccine as if it were a real living parasite and generates a more comprehensive and effective immune response.

In the light of the above, can the Commission state whether it plans to include the findings of this study in a new strategy against malaria, and also to pinpoint new areas in which measures should be adopted, such as, for example, support for research into new vaccines and new antibiotics, promoting local drug production in third countries and monitoring transparency in the pricing of medicines?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(17 September 2013)

In line with its strategy for cooperation on health, the Commission aims to help strengthen national health systems in developing countries so that basic health services reach the most vulnerable members of the population who are often particularly affected by malaria. Activities with proven effectiveness include early diagnosis and treatment, insecticide-treated bed nets, and indoor-residual spraying. A malaria vaccine will be an important additional tool once it reaches the market in a few years' time.

The Commission is aware of the new blood-stage malaria vaccine developed by Australian scientists based on a chemically-modified strain of the parasite. However, this development is currently at an early stage and has not been tested in humans yet. There are still important safety concerns to be addressed.

The EU provides substantial financial resources from the European Development Fund and the budget to fight diseases through country programmes, via the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisations and to the WHO. The EU supports research to improve the treatment, diagnosis and prevention of malaria. Through the 6th and 7th Framework Programmes for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities, more than EUR 200 million has been granted to 86 malaria research projects, and the European Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP) has dedicated EUR 49.4 million to malaria research.

The aim of this support is to ensure that modern diagnostics, treatments and vaccines are developed; that they are accessible to the poor; and eventually used effectively to control malaria globally.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008633/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(15 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: È emergenza idrica in Europa: sovrafruttamento dell'acqua, bene primario e limitato

In Europa è emergenza idrica a causa di uno sfruttamento eccessivo dell'acqua, bene primario che sta scarseggiando. Le zone più a rischio sono le regioni del Mediterraneo e del Sud Europa, dato che la loro economia si basa principalmente sull'agricoltura. Si pensi che l'attività agricola in Europa utilizza circa un quarto dell'acqua che dovrebbe servire all'ambiente naturale, un dato che può raggiungere l'80 % nell'Europa meridionale. Inoltre, un quinto dell'acqua utilizzata in Europa è destinata alla rete di pubblica fornitura.

Anche altri fattori, come la crescita demografica, l'inquinamento, le mutate condizioni climatiche, l'uso spropositato dell'acqua nell'industria e nella produzione di energia, stanno mettendo a dura prova le limitate risorse idriche. Risorse che sono sempre più scarse, fino ad avere effetti distruttivi sui sistemi naturali: la diminuzione della portata dei fiumi, l'abbassamento del livello dell'acqua nei laghi e nelle falde acquifere, la scomparsa di aree paludose, con potenziali effetti distruttivi sui sistemi naturali, e la riduzione della disponibilità di acqua potabile.

Inoltre, la competizione per l'approvvigionamento idrico in continua crescita e i cambiamenti climatici hanno reso più difficile prevedere la disponibilità futura di acqua. È bene quindi che tutti i paesi europei utilizzino tale risorsa in modo più efficiente e tenendo conto del benessere di tutti i suoi utenti.

Considerato che:

— l'acqua è una risorsa limitata;

— il trattamento dei reflui, l'irrigazione e l'acqua potabile sono importanti a livello ambientale;

— una cooperazione fra gli Stati membri è indispensabile per prevenire il pericolo della carenza idrica; e

— la competizione per l'approvvigionamento è in continua crescita;

si chiede alla Commissione:

1. che posizione e quali misure intenda adottare per far fronte a tale emergenza idrica;

2. come intenda garantire una maggiore cooperazione fra i paesi europei per un utilizzo migliore ed efficiente dell'acqua.

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(3 settembre 2013)

La politica dell'UE offre un quadro esaustivo per la protezione delle risorse idriche. Nel novembre 2012 la Commissione ha pubblicato un Piano per la salvaguardia delle risorse idriche europee ([1]) contenente una serie di proposte per migliorare l'applicazione e accelerare il raggiungimento degli obiettivi in materia di politica idrica. Tali proposte comprendono misure intese ad affrontare il problema dello sfruttamento delle risorse idriche per l'agricoltura e dell'impatto di quest'ultima su tali risorse.

Poiché l'agricoltura è un utilizzatore importante di acqua, la politica di sviluppo rurale dell'UE per il periodo 2014-2020 considera una sottopriorità il miglioramento della gestione di questa risorsa (sotto il profilo qualitativo e quantitativo). Gli Stati membri possono disporre di un ampio spettro di misure per ridurre al minimo l'impatto dell'agricoltura sulle risorse idriche. La Commissione esaminerà i programmi preliminari di sviluppo rurale degli Stati membri per valutare se le questioni idriche siano adeguatamente considerate, secondo le specifiche pressioni sulle risorse idriche nelle diverse regioni. Esiste anche la possibilità da parte degli Stati membri di scegliere politiche più «verdi» all'interno del primo pilastro della PAC recentemente concordata, predisponendo, al di là degli obblighi imposti dalla condizionalità, anche misure volte a proteggere le acque.

([1]) Documenti disponibili presso http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/blueprint/index_en.htm

La cooperazione internazionale è uno dei pilastri della direttiva quadro sulle acque, tenendo conto del fatto che oltre il 60 % dei bacini idrografici dell'UE hanno un carattere transfrontaliero. La cooperazione tra gli Stati membri è stata notevolmente potenziata dall'attuazione della direttiva in questione, ma sono attesi ulteriori miglioramenti grazie al secondo processo di pianificazione previsto per il 2015 ([2]).

([2]) Per maggiori informazioni sulla cooperazione internazionale cfr. punto 8.1.7 del documento di lavoro dei servizi della Commissione, http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-framework/pdf/CWD-2012-379_EN-Vol1.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008633/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Water emergency in Europe — over-exploitation of water, a vital but limited resource

In Europe there is a water emergency due to the over-exploitation of water, a primary resource that is becoming scarce. The areas most at risk are the Mediterranean and Southern Europe, since their economy is based mainly on agriculture. Agriculture in Europe uses around a quarter of the water that should be used by the natural environment — and this figure can reach 80% in southern Europe. Furthermore, a fifth of the water used in Europe is destined for the public water supply.

Other factors, too, such as population growth, pollution, climate change and the disproportionate use of water in industry and energy production, are putting a strain on the limited water resources. These resources are increasingly scarce, which is having a destructive impact on nature and leading to a decrease in river flow, a lowering of the water level in lakes and water tables, the loss of wetlands, with its potentially destructive effects on natural systems, and the reduction of the availability of drinking water.

In addition, competition for water supply continues to grow and climate change has made it more difficult to predict the future availability of water. All European countries should therefore use this resource more efficiently, taking into account the welfare of all its users.

Given that:

— water is a limited resource;

— the treatment of wastewater, irrigation and drinking water is important for the environment;

— cooperation between Member States is essential to prevent the risk of water shortages, and

— competition for the supply continues to grow,

can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. What position and action does it intend to take to deal with this water emergency?

2. How will it ensure greater cooperation among EU countries for a better, more efficient use of water?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(3 September 2013)

EU policy provides a comprehensive framework for the protection of water resources. The Commission published in November 2012 a Blueprint ([1]) to Safeguard Europe's Water Resources with a range of proposals to improve implementation and to speed up the achievement of water policy goals. These include measures to address agriculture's impact on, and use of, water.

Because agriculture is a significant user of water resources, the EU rural development policy for the period 2014-2020 identifies the improvement in water management (both quality and quantity) as one of the sub-priorities. Member States can avail of a large spectrum of measures that can help minimise agriculture's impact on the water environment. The EC will review Member State preliminary Rural Development Programmes to assess whether water issues are adequately covered according to the specific pressures on water in the regions. There is also scope within greening under Pillar 1 of the newly agreed CAP for member states to put in place measures that will protect water on top of Cross Compliance.

([1]) Documents available at: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/blueprint/index_en.htm

International cooperation is one of the pillars of the WFD, bearing in mind that more than 60% of river basins in the EU are transboundary. The implementation of the WFD has improved significantly the cooperation among Member States but further improvements are expected for the second planning process due in 2015 ([2]).

([2]) For more details about international cooperation see Section 8.1.7 of Commission Staff Working Document SWD(2012)379 http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-framework/pdf/CWD-2012-379_EN-Vol1.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008634/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(15 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Instabilità in Mali: interventi rapidi e concreti da parte dell'UE

Il Mali sta vivendo una situazione estremamente precaria a causa di un duplice fattore di instabilità: il conflitto armato nella parte settentrionale del paese e la crisi politica e militare provocata dal colpo di Stato che ha portato alla deposizione del Presidente Dioncounda Touré il 22 marzo 2012.

Dall'inizio della crisi, l'UE si è schierata al fianco del Mali, offrendo sostegno alle organizzazioni internazionali e regionali impegnate a facilitare la ricerca di una rapida soluzione al conflitto. Inoltre è stato fornito supporto logistico e finanziario per EUR 50 milioni alla Missione internazionale di sostegno al Mali (AFISMA) a guida africana mediante l'African Peace Facility (APF), strumento nato nel 2004 per finanziare operazioni di forze africane per la prevenzione dei conflitti e la stabilizzazione post-conflitto.

Già a gennaio 2013 i ministri degli esteri dell'Unione hanno deciso di accelerare lo spiegamento della Missione militare di addestramento in Mali (EUTM Mali), concepita in risposta alla richiesta di aiuto delle autorità maliane e alla risoluzione 2071 del Consiglio di sicurezza dell'ONU. L'obiettivo della missione consiste nel fornire addestramento e consulenza alle forze maliane, in materia di comando e controllo, logistica, diritto internazionale e umanitario, protezione dei civili e diritti umani, al fine di aiutarle a ripristinare l'integrità territoriale del paese e non prevede l'autorizzazione a partecipare a operazioni di combattimento. Nonostante il Nord del paese sia stato liberato dall'intervento delle sole truppe militari francesi, i gruppi islamisti rimangono una minaccia sia per le popolazioni del Mali che per l'Unione europea e i suoi cittadini, compromettendo la pace e la sicurezza anche internazionale. Sebbene le relazioni fra UE e Mali siano attualmente sospese, l'Unione si è impegnata a riaprire i canali di cooperazione con le autorità maliane non appena saranno fatti passi avanti verso il ristabilimento dell'ordine costituzionale.

Considerato che:

— UE e Mali disponevano di una fitta rete di rapporti reciproci in virtù dell'attuazione dell'Accordo di Cotonou e della negoziazione del Country Strategy Paper 2008-2013, che delinea il quadro strategico della cooperazione tra Commissione e Mali sulla base del decimo Fondo Europeo di Sviluppo (FED 2008-2013) nell'ambito del quale l'UE ha erogato finanziamenti per 583 milioni di euro;

— la situazione continua ad essere allarmante a causa dello scarso coordinamento fra tutti gli attori coinvolti;

può l'Alto Rappresentante riferire se ritiene urgente che l'UE si attivi per dotarsi di una politica di sicurezza comune in aggiunta agli strumenti di cooperazione a sua disposizione?

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

Dopo che a fine gennaio il governo e l'assemblea generale del Mali hanno adottato una tabella di marcia per la transizione, il Consiglio «Affari esteri» del 31 gennaio ha deciso di riattivare gradualmente gli aiuti europei allo sviluppo. Inoltre, il 18 febbraio il Consiglio ha deciso di riavviare il dialogo politico fra il Mali e l'UE ai sensi dell'articolo 8 dell'accordo di Cotonou.

Da allora l'UE ha rafforzato sensibilmente il sostegno al Mali in tutti i settori politici, nell'ambito della sicurezza e dello sviluppo. L'Unione europea è il primo partner del Mali per lo sviluppo. Nell'ambito della conferenza dei donatori del 15 maggio, l'UE ha promesso, individualmente e collettivamente, 1,28 miliardi di euro per il biennio 2013-2014. Lo stanziamento riveduto nell'ambito del 10° FES ammonta a 727,8 milioni di euro (incluso uno stanziamento integrativo di 144,8 milioni di euro nel 2013). In preparazione alla conferenza dei donatori ma anche dopo la stessa, il coordinamento dei donatori è migliorato, anche con la missione di stabilizzazione integrata e multidimensionale dell'ONU in Mali (MINUSMA), soprattutto nel settore della sicurezza.

La politica dell'UE e l'approccio integrato verso il Mali sono stati definiti seguendo gli orientamenti della strategia dell'UE del 2011 per la sicurezza e lo sviluppo nel Sahel. In questo contesto, l'UE resta determinata a migliorare i progetti di sviluppo e per la sicurezza nella regione, come illustra l'avvio di due missioni civili CSDP nell'ultimo anno (EUBAM in Libia ed EUCAP SAHEL in Niger). A integrazione della missione militare e di consulenza in Mali, l'UE sta attualmente considerando le opzioni disponibili per sostenere le forze di sicurezza interne del paese. Tuttavia, per ritornare a un ordine costituzionale e allo Stato di diritto, è fondamentale anche una riforma più ampia del settore della sicurezza guidata direttamente dalle autorità del Mali.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008634/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Instability in Mali: swift, practical action by the EU

The situation in Mali is extremely precarious as a result of instability caused by a combination of armed conflict in the north of the country and a political and military crisis sparked off by the coup which deposed President Amadou Toumani Touré on 22 March 2012.

Since the outbreak of the crisis the EU has stood by Mali, providing support for efforts by international and regional organisations to find a solution to the conflict. Logistical and financial support worth EUR 50 million has also been provided to the African-led International Support Mission to Mali (AFISMA) through the African Peace Facility (APF), which was set up in 2004 to fund conflict prevention and post-conflict stabilisation operations conducted by African forces.

In January 2013 the EU foreign ministers decided to speed up the deployment of the European Union Training Mission in Mali (EUTM Mali), set up in response to a request for assistance from the Malian authorities and to UN Security Council Resolution 2071. The mission's remit is to provide training and advice to Malian forces on command and control, logistics, international humanitarian law, civilian protection and human rights, in order to help them restore the country's territorial integrity. It does not include involvement in combat operations. Despite the fact that the north of the country has been liberated by French troops, Islamist groups continue to pose a threat to the Malian population and to the European Union and its citizens, and are thus a threat to peace and security both within and outside Mali. Although EU-Mali relations are currently suspended, the Union has agreed to resume cooperation with the Malian authorities once sufficient progress has been made in re-establishing the rule of law in the country.

Given the close links between the EU and Mali under the Cotonou Agreement and the Country Strategy Paper 2008-2013, which set out a strategic framework for cooperation between the Commission and Mali on the basis of the tenth European Development Fund (EDF 2008-2013), under which the EU has provided EUR 583 million in funding, and given that the situation remains alarming owing to a lack of proper coordination between all of the parties involved, would the High Representative not agree that there is an urgent need for the EU to establish a common security policy alongside the cooperation instruments currently available to it?

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

Following the adoption of a Transition Road Map by the Government and the National Assembly of Mali in late January, the Foreign Affairs Council decided to resume gradually European development aid on 31 January. The Council further decided to resume full political dialogue between Mali and the EU under Article 8 of the Cotonou Agreement on 18 February.

Since then, the EU has enhanced considerably its level of support to Mali on all political, security and development sides. The EU is Mali's first development partner. In the framework of the 15 May donors' conference, the EU individually and collectively made a pledge worth EUR 1.28 billion for 2013-2014. The revised allocation under the 10th EDF amounts to EUR 727.8 million (including an additional allocation of EUR 144.8 in 2013). In advance of the donors' conference but also to follow-up on it, donors' coordination has improved, including with the UN multidimensional integrated stabilisation mission in Mali (MINUSMA) in the security sector in particular.

The EU policy and integrated approach towards Mali was largely defined along the lines of the 2011 EU Strategy for Security and Development in the Sahel. Under this framework, the EU remains determined to enhance development and security projects in the region, as illustrated notably by the launch of two CSDP civilian missions over the last year (EUBAM Libya, EUCAP SAHEL Niger). As a complement to the EU military training and advisory mission in Mali, the EU is currently considering options to support internal security forces in Mali. But a broader Malian-led Security Sector Reform is also crucial for the full return to constitutional order and the rule of law in Mali.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008635/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(15 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Tutela della qualità delle produzioni italiane e comunitarie

Le produzioni italiane sono da lungo tempo sinonimo di qualità e affidabilità; nel comparto manifatturiero, uno dei settori trainanti, soprattutto se si considerano le voci delle esportazioni di beni nella bilancia dei pagamenti italiana, è quello della moda. Capi di abbigliamento, calzature e accessori prodotti da qualificati artigiani italiani hanno un ottimo mercato in tutto il mondo proprio grazie alla loro ottima fattura. Tuttavia lo stesso settore, che già deve scontare diversi cronici difetti di competitività come ad esempio l'alta pressione fiscale o il costo dell'energia elettrica, è minacciato da alcune circostanze che potrebbero alterare il funzionamento tanto del mercato interno quanto di quello estero. Il riferimento è ai sempre più diffusi fenomeni di delocalizzazione della manifattura in paesi con un costo della manodopera minore e di proliferazione di nuove imprese impieganti personale extra-comunitario e, in generale, non adeguatamente qualificato. Tali minacce divengono sempre più difficili da fronteggiare per le piccole e medie imprese italiane se si tiene conto dell'elevato grado di interdipendenza e globalizzazione che è stato raggiunto negli ultimi anni nei mercati di beni e servizi e della crisi economica che ha inciso pesantemente pressoché su tutti i settori produttivi.

La situazione descritta in precedenza può causare un grave danno di immagine alle industrie dell'abbigliamento e delle calzature di qualità italiane, danno dovuto a un uso improprio del marchio non convenzionale *made in Italy* da parte di imprese che non impiegano processi e personale adeguati, le quali, a loro volta, lavorano spesso su commissione per le grandi aziende internazionali per produrre beni a costo ridotto.

Va inoltre considerato che il settore in questione impiega decine di migliaia di lavoratori specializzati, di cui molti artigiani, e ha un peso economico rilevante sia nel computo delle esportazioni che in termini di PIL e di contribuzione al bilancio dello Stato per mezzo delle imposte versate.

Quanto sopra esposto, benché sia riferito al caso italiano, può trovare applicazione anche in comparti strategici di altri Stati membri.

Alla luce di tutto ciò, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. può indicare qual è lo stato dell'arte della normativa sull'etichettatura europea e precisare se, e in che modo, intende migliorare la tutela dell'elevata qualità delle produzioni italiane e comunitarie?

2. È disposta a valutare l'adozione di sanzioni contro le grandi aziende che commissionano prodotti a basso costo a imprese non qualitativamente idonee al fine di sfruttare marchi non convenzionali, qual è il *made in Italy*?

Risposta di Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(29 agosto 2013)

L'obbligo di indicare l'origine dei prodotti di consumo è previsto dalla proposta di regolamento relativa alla sicurezza dei prodotti di consumo [COM(2013)78], in cui si specifica che i

fabbricanti e gli importatori devono garantire che tutti i prodotti di consumo immessi o resi disponibili sul mercato dell'Unione rechino un'indicazione del paese d'origine del prodotto o, se le dimensioni o la natura del prodotto non lo consentono, che tale indicazione sia apposta sull'imballaggio o su un documento di accompagnamento del prodotto. Se il paese d'origine è uno Stato membro dell'Unione, la proposta specifica che i fabbricanti e gli importatori possono fare riferimento all'Unione o a un determinato Stato membro. La Commissione presenterà inoltre, tra breve, una relazione al Parlamento europeo e al Consiglio relativa a possibili nuovi requisiti di etichettatura da introdurre a livello dell'Unione, al fine di fornire ai consumatori informazioni accurate, pertinenti, comprensibili e comparabili sulle caratteristiche dei prodotti tessili, come stabilito dal regolamento (UE) n. 1007/2011 relativo alle denominazioni delle fibre tessili e all'etichettatura e al contrassegno della composizione fibrosa dei prodotti tessili.

Secondo la sopramenzionata proposta di regolamento relativa alla sicurezza dei prodotti di consumo, gli Stati membri devono stabilire le sanzioni da irrogare in caso di violazione del regolamento e assicurarne l'esecuzione. Tali sanzioni devono essere efficaci, proporzionate e dissuasive.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008635/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Protection of the quality of Italian and EU products

Italian products have long been synonymous with quality and reliability. As far as manufacturing is concerned, one of the leading sectors — especially in terms of the role played by exports in the Italian balance of payments — is the fashion industry. Clothing, footwear and accessories manufactured by skilled Italian craftsmen have an excellent market all over the world because of their excellent workmanship. However, that same sector, which is already suffering a number of chronic competitiveness problems, such as the high tax burden and the cost of electricity, is also being threatened by circumstances that could affect the functioning of both the internal and the overseas market — namely, the increasingly widespread custom of outsourcing production to countries with lower labour costs and the proliferation of new businesses employing staff from non-EU countries who, in general, are not appropriately qualified. These threats are becoming increasingly difficult to deal with for Italian small and medium-sized companies, given the high degree of interdependence and globalisation that has been achieved in recent years in markets for goods and services, not to mention the economic crisis that has weighed heavily on almost all production sectors.

This situation can seriously tarnish the image of the Italian quality clothing and footwear industries, due to the improper use of the non-conventional *Made in Italy* trademark by companies that do not use the appropriate processes or staff, which often work on commission for major international companies to produce goods at a reduced cost.

It should also be noted that the sector in question employs tens of thousands of skilled workers, many of whom craftsmen, and has a significant economic impact in terms of both exports and GDP, not to mention the contribution it makes to the state budget through the taxes paid.

Even though the above facts refer to Italy, the same could be said also for strategic sectors in other Member States.

Can the Commission therefore answer the following questions:

1. What are the latest developments in EU labelling rules? Can the Commission say whether, and how, it aims better to safeguard the high quality of Italian and EU products?

2. Will it consider imposing sanctions on large companies that commission low-cost products from companies that are not of a suitable quality, in order to exploit non-conventional trademarks such as *Made in Italy*?

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

The obligation to indicate the origin of consumer products is included in the proposal for a regulation on Consumer Product Safety [COM(2013)78] which specifies that manufacturers and importers must ensure that all consumer products placed or made available on the Union market bear an indication of the country of origin of the product or, where the size or nature of the product does not allow it, that such indication is to be provided on the packaging or in a document accompanying the product. Where the country of origin is a Member State of the Union, the proposal specifies that manufacturers and importers may refer to the Union or to a particular Member State. In addition, the Commission will shortly submit a report to the European Parliament and to the Council regarding possible new labelling requirements to be introduced at Union level with a view to providing consumers with accurate, relevant, intelligible and comparable information on the characteristics of textile products, as required by Regulation (EU) No 1007/2011 on textile fibre names and related labelling and marking of fibre composition of textile products.

According to the abovementioned proposal for a regulation on Consumer Product Safety, Member States should lay down the rules on penalties applicable to infringements of the provisions of this regulation and should take all measures necessary to ensure that they are implemented. The penalties provided for must be effective, proportionate and dissuasive.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008636/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(15 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Nuove strumentazioni per limitare l'inquinamento elettromagnetico

Il progresso tecnologico degli ultimi decenni si è caratterizzato, tra le altre cose, anche per un sempre maggiore utilizzo di apparecchiature il cui funzionamento o il cui scopo è legato all'elettricità, al magnetismo o all'elettromagnetismo. Telefoni cellulari, dispositivi informatici, radar, reti di distribuzione di energia elettrica ad alto voltaggio, forni a microonde sono solo alcuni esempi che possono essere menzionati in quest'ottica. Nonostante tutti questi congegni abbiano oramai acquisito un ruolo fondamentale nella vita quotidiana e abbiano apportato indubbi vantaggi in termini di produttività lavorativa, vi è una particolarità negativa che li accomuna, e cioè il fatto di contribuire all'aumento dell'inquinamento elettromagnetico causato da radiazioni non ionizzanti, ovvero quelle radiazioni non suscettibili di indurre la ionizzazione di atomi o molecole. Malgrado i rischi derivanti dall'esposizione a radiazioni non ionizzanti siano ben più contenuti rispetto alle radiazioni ionizzanti (comunque presenti in natura tanto da causare ogni anno, solo in Italia, alcune migliaia di decessi per cancro ai polmoni) e benché vi sia già una legislazione al riguardo a tutela dei cittadini (tra tutte le norme si ricorda la raccomandazione del Consiglio 1999/519/CE), un impegno rivolto a limitare la proliferazione di apparecchiature come quelle precedentemente elencate conserva, comunque, una notevole importanza.

Considerato che:

— un gruppo di ricercatori di un'università italiana sta portando avanti un progetto pilota per la messa a punto dei cosiddetti radar passivi, i quali consistono in radiolocalizzatori in grado di fornire tutte le funzioni caratteristiche di un radar convenzionale, con la sola particolarità che nessuna onda radio sarà generata dagli stessi in quanto è previsto che si sfruttino i segnali, già presenti, della televisione digitale terrestre e satellitare e della telefonia mobile;

— gli effetti biologici dell'inquinamento elettromagnetico sono ancora controversi, soprattutto per quanto concerne la correlazione tra l'esposizione a radiazioni a bassa frequenza e le conseguenze a lungo termine per l'uomo come tumori o leucemie, a causa della difficoltà di effettuare studi con campioni statistici adeguatamente ampi e tempi di osservazione sufficientemente lunghi;

può la Commissione delucidare:

1. se ritiene opportuno incentivare ricerche e sviluppare apparecchiature quali i radar passivi che «riciclano» onde elettromagnetiche al fine di limitare l'inquinamento;

2. quali studi abbia commissionato per la valutazione dell'inquinamento elettromagnetico?

Risposta di Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(10 settembre 2013)

A causa della preoccupazione che i potenziali effetti sulla salute delle radiazioni non ionizzanti suscitano nei cittadini, l'UE finanzia da tempo attività di ricerca intese a ridurre l'esposizione ai campi elettromagnetici tramite mezzi tecnologici (ad esempio, lo sviluppo di apparecchiature a ridotta emissione di radiazioni) e non (ad esempio, una migliore comunicazione). A titolo di esempio, il progetto LEXNET ([1]) finanziato dal Settimo programma quadro per le attività di ricerca, sviluppo tecnologico e dimostrazione (7° PQ, 2007-2013), che beneficerà di un contributo dell'UE pari a 7,3 milioni di EUR, ha come obiettivo quello di identificare meccanismi, tecnologie, architetture e parametri delle future reti di comunicazione in grado di ridurre in modo significativo l'esposizione umana. Sebbene non sia specificamente incentrato sui radar, questo progetto produrrà risultati che potranno essere applicati anche alla riduzione delle emissioni provenienti dai radar.

([1]) LEXNET — Reti future a bassa esposizione ai campi elettromagnetici — www.lexnet-project.eu.

Oltre alle attività di ricerca condotte nell'ambito dei precedenti programmi quadro, il 7° PQ finanzia nove progetti multinazionali che affrontano vari problemi di esposizione e salute correlati ai campi elettromagnetici. Il finanziamento riguarda progetti che studiano la presunta correlazione tra cancro al cervello nei bambini e negli adolescenti e uso dei telefoni cellulari ([2]), i rischi connessi all'esposizione a campi a bassissima frequenza, come le linee ad alta tensione ([3]), e l'esposizione ai campi elettromagnetici e la sicurezza nei veicoli totalmente elettrici ([4]), nonché un progetto di vasta portata che adotta un approccio integrato per meglio comprendere i possibili meccanismi alla base dei potenziali effetti sulla salute dei campi elettromagnetici e per determinare i livelli di esposizione della popolazione ([5]).

([2]) MOBI-KIDS — Rischio di sviluppo del cancro al cervello a seguito dell'esposizione a campi a radiofrequenza da parte di bambini e adolescenti (www.mbkds.com).

([3]) ARIMMORA — Ricerca avanzata sui meccanismi di interazione delle esposizioni elettromagnetiche con gli organismi per la valutazione dei rischi (http://arimmora-fp7.eu).

([4]) Ad esempio, HEMIS — Monitoraggio dello stato della propulsione elettrica per una maggiore sicurezza dei veicoli totalmente elettrici — http://www.hemis-eu.org.

([5]) GERONIMO — Ricerca generalizzata sui campi elettromagnetici basata su metodi innovativi — un approccio integrato: dalla ricerca alla valutazione dei rischi e sostegno alla gestione dei rischi — progetto in fase di negoziazione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008636/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: New instruments that limit electromagnetic pollution

In recent decades, technological progress has been characterised, among other things, by an ever-increasing use of equipment which functions using — or is used in the fields of — electricity, magnetism and electromagnetism. Such equipment includes mobile phones, IT devices, radars, high-voltage electricity grids and microwave ovens, to mention but a few. Despite the fact that all these appliances now play an essential role in our daily lives and have unquestionably helped increase our productivity, there is one downside to them all, which is that they cause electromagnetic pollution by emitting non-ionising radiation, or in other words radiation which does not cause atoms and molecules to ionise. Despite the fact that the risks inherent in exposure to non-ionising radiation are much lower than those of exposure to ionising radiation (which occurs naturally and in Italy alone causes several thousands of deaths from lung cancer every year), and although legislation aimed at protecting the public already exists (including Council Recommendation 1999/519/EC), there is still a major need for a commitment to taken to limit the proliferation of equipment such as that listed above.

A group of researchers at an Italian university are working on a pilot project to perfect so-called 'passive radars', which consist of radar locators that offer all the functionalities of a conventional radar, apart from the fact that they do not generate their own radio waves because they are able to piggyback on digital terrestrial and satellite television signals and mobile phone signals.

Owing to the difficulty of conducting studies on sufficiently broad statistical samples over sufficiently long observation periods, there is still much debate over the biological effects of electromagnetic pollution, in terms of the connection between exposure to low-frequency radiation and the long-term consequences of this (such as tumours and leukaemia) in man.

In view of the above, can the Commission state:

1. whether it sees a need to encourage research and development in the field of developing equipment such as passive radars that 'recycle' electromagnetic waves so as to limit pollution;

2. what studies it has commissioned to assess the issue of electromagnetic pollution?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(10 September 2013)

Due to public concerns about potential health effects of non-ionising radiation, reducing human exposure to electromagnetic fields (EMFs) via technological (e.g. developing equipment emitting less radiation) and non-technological (e.g. better communication) means is an area of research that the EU has been funding since long. As an example, the LEXNET project ([1]) funded by the Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7, 2007-2013), receiving an EU contribution of EUR 7.3 million, aims at identifying future communication network mechanisms, technologies, architectures and parameters, which would allow a significant reduction of human exposure. Although not specifically focused on radars, this project will in general produce results that could also be applicable to the reduction of emissions from radars.

([1]) LEXNET — Low EMF exposure future networks — www.lexnet-project.eu

In addition to research conducted in earlier Framework Programmes, the current FP7 is funding nine multinational projects looking at various exposure and health-related issues related to EMFs. These include projects exploring the putative causal link between brain cancer in children and adolescents and mobile phone use ([2]), leukaemia risk related to exposure to extremely low frequency fields (ELFs), such as those emitted by high power lines ([3]), EMF exposure and safety within fully electric vehicles ([4]), and a large-scale project taking an integrated approach to better understand potential mechanisms underlying possible health effects of EMF and to characterise population levels of exposure ([5]).

([2]) MOBI-KIDS — Risk of brain cancer from exposure to radio frequency fields in childhood and adolescence (www.mbkds.com).

([3]) ARIMMORA — Advanced research on interaction mechanisms of electromagnetic exposures with organisms for risk assessments (http://arimmora-fp7.eu).

([4]) E.g., HEMIS — Electrical powertrain health monitoring for increased safety of FEVs — http://www.hemis-eu.org

([5]) GERONIMO — Generalised EMF research using novel methods — an integrated approach: from research to risk assessment and support to risk management — project under negotiations.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008637/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(15 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Fenomeno del commercio parallelo nel mercato farmaceutico comunitario

La scorsa settimana un'associazione di farmacisti ha presentato un esposto alle forze dell'ordine per le carenze nell'approvvigionamento di alcuni tipi di medicinali chiave. La denuncia si focalizza, dunque, sull'irreperibilità, anche per alcune settimane, di farmaci quali antipilettici, antiparkinsoniani o, in misura prevalente, farmaci innovativi e ad alto valore terapeutico che sono largamente richiesti sul mercato italiano e comunitario, ma che sono spesso contingentati dalle ditte produttrici. L'irreperibilità messa in luce è causata dal fenomeno del commercio parallelo o esportazione parallela, che consiste in un vero e proprio arbitraggio sul mercato farmaceutico comunitario operato dai grandi distributori di medicinali. Secondo questa tecnica, infatti, una volta acquisita una partita di farmaci dalle ditte produttrici, farmaci che teoricamente dovrebbero andare a soddisfare le esigenze della cittadinanza del paese dove il distributore opera, gli stessi vengono esportati nello Stato membro dove il prezzo sarà più alto in modo da realizzare una plusvalenza. Il fenomeno presentato è, di conseguenza, dettato da sole ragioni economiche e va a vantaggio delle grandi catene di farmacie, mentre le conseguenze negative, in particolar modo gli sforzi da profondere per riuscire a trovare il farmaco necessario, sono sopportate dai piccoli farmacisti e dai pazienti.

Considerato che:

— il fenomeno del commercio parallelo è fondato sul principio del libero scambio su cui si basa il mercato interno e si stima che rappresenti il 7 % del mercato farmaceutico europeo per un valore di 14 miliardi di euro;

— alcune ditte produttrici inviano solo il quantitativo di medicinali sufficiente a soddisfare le richieste di mercato, irrigidendo l'offerta e, conseguentemente, favorendo l'arbitraggio;

— i servizi di urgenza nelle consegne attivati da produttori e distributori non sono sufficienti a coprire il fabbisogno della cittadinanza;

— in Italia vige una norma, l'articolo 105, comma 4, del decreto legislativo 219/06, che tutela piccoli farmacisti e malati obbligando «i titolari di autorizzazione all'immissione in commercio a evadere direttamente gli ordinativi alle farmacie richiedenti senza nessuna specifica restrizione»;

può la Commissione far sapere:

1. quali misure intende adottare per limitare il fenomeno del commercio parallelo;

2. ritiene opportuno derogare dal principio del libero scambio per quanto concerne il mercato farmaceutico comunitario;

3. ha predisposto un elenco aggiornato dei farmaci carenti e, in caso contrario, quando intende provvedere?

Risposta di Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(6 settembre 2013)

La Commissione rinvia l'onorevole deputato alla propria risposta all'interrogazione E-000535/2011 su una tematica affine.

1. Il commercio parallelo dei prodotti farmaceutici è una forma lecita di commercio nel mercato interno conformemente agli articoli 34-36 del TFUE. Gli Stati membri dell'UE hanno tuttavia competenza per adottare misure al fine di limitare le importazioni e le esportazioni parallele di tali prodotti, a patto che le misure adottate possano essere giustificate alla luce dell'articolo 36 del TFUE.

2. Conformemente alla giurisprudenza costante le deroghe al principio della libera circolazione dei prodotti, compresi i prodotti farmaceutici, possono essere giustificate a motivo della tutela della salute e della vita degli esseri umani e se sono necessarie e proporzionate. In generale, la Commissione valuta le giustificazioni presentate dagli Stati membri caso per caso.

3. Il controllo e la supervisione del mercato nazionale, anche per assicurare l'approvvigionamento continuativo di prodotti medicinali, rientra nelle responsabilità nazionali. Nel caso in cui il commercio parallelo di prodotti medicinali portasse a una carenza di medicinali su un determinato mercato nazionale spetterebbe alle autorità nazionali risolvere la situazione adottando misure appropriate e proporzionate che siano in linea con la legislazione nazionale come anche con gli obblighi derivanti dall'articolo 81 della direttiva 2001/83 ([1]). In proposito la Commissione non è chiamata a svolgere un ruolo particolare. La collaborazione a livello unionale riguarda piuttosto le discontinuità nei rifornimenti derivanti da turbative impreviste che intervengono nel processo di produzione e che possono avere un impatto paneuropeo ([2]).

([1]) Cause riunite da C-468/06 a C-478/06 Lélos, punto. 75.

([2]) http://www.ema.europa.eu/ema/index.jsp?curl=pages/news_and_events/news/2012/11/news_detail_001663.jsp&mid=WC0b01ac058004d5c1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008637/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Parallel trade on the Community pharmaceuticals market

Last week, a pharmacists' association filed a complaint with the law enforcement authorities concerning the short supply of some types of key medicines. The complaint focused on the unavailability, over a period of weeks, of pharmaceuticals such as anti-epileptics and Parkinson's disease drugs and, prevalently, of innovative high-therapeutic-value drugs for which there is large demand on the Italian and Community market, but which are often quota-restricted by their manufacturers. The unavailability of these drugs stems from the phenomenon of parallel trade or parallel export, which consists of out-and-out arbitrage on the Community pharmaceuticals market by the major drugs distributors. This arbitrage works as follows: once a consignment of pharmaceuticals has been purchased from the manufacturers, these drugs — which should theoretically go to meet the needs of the public in the country where the distributor operates — are exported to Member States where the price is higher in order to make a gain. It is therefore driven solely by financial motives and works to the advantage of the large pharmaceutical chains, while its adverse effects, and in particular the efforts that need to be made to find the drugs required, have to be borne by small pharmacists and patients.

Since:

— parallel trade is based on the principle of free trade, which in turn underpins the internal market, and is estimated to constitute 7% of the European pharmaceuticals market and to be worth EUR 14 billion;

— some manufacturers only release a sufficient amount to satisfy demand on the market, which squeezes supply and hence encourages arbitrage;

— emergency services deliveries in consignments from manufacturers and distributors are insufficient to cover the needs of the public;

— In Italy, small pharmacists and patients are protected by Article 105(4) of Legislative Decree 219/06, which requires marketing authorisation holders to directly execute orders placed by requesting pharmacies, without imposing any specific restrictions;

Can the Commission state:

1. what steps it intends to take to restrict parallel trade;

2. whether or not it feels that a derogation from the principle of free trade should be allowed in the case of the Community pharmaceuticals market;

3. whether it has prepared an updated list of the pharmaceuticals which are in short supply and, if not, when it intends to do this?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(6 September 2013)

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its answer to question E-000535/2011 on a similar subject.

1. Parallel trade of pharmaceutical products is a lawful form of trade within the internal market, according to the articles 34-36 TFEU. However, the EU Member States are competent to adopt measures in order to restrict the parallel imports and exports of those products, provided that the adopted measures can be justified under the article 36 TFEU.

2. According to the established case law, derogations from the principle of free movement of products, including pharmaceuticals, can be justified on grounds of the protection of health and life of humans and if they are necessary and proportionate. In general the Commmission assesses the justifications provided by the Member States on a case by case basis.

3. Control and supervision of the national market, including to ensure the continuous supply of medicinal products, remains a national responsibility. In cases where parallel trade would effectively lead to a shortage of medicines on a given national market, it would be for the national authorities to resolve the situation, by taking appropriate and proportionate steps that were consistent with national legislation as well as with the obligations flowing from Article 81 of Directive 2001/83 ([1]). There is no particular role for the Commission in this regard. Collaboration at EU-level focuses instead on supply shortages that arise due to unforeseen disruptions within the manufacturing process and which may have a pan-European impact ([2]).

([1]) Joined Cases C-468/06 to C-478/06 Lélos, para. 75

([2]) http://www.ema.europa.eu/ema/index.jsp?curl=pages/news_and_events/news/2012/11/news_detail_001663.jsp&mid=WC0b01ac058004d5c1

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008638/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(15 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Il sistema bancario penalizza le piccole e medie imprese italiane

Il bollettino di luglio 2013 della Banca centrale europea (BCE) evidenzia l'esistenza di differenti condizioni imposte alle piccole e medie imprese (PMI) della zona euro rispetto alle grandi società nell'ottenimento di crediti bancari. L'Italia, nonostante risulti fra i paesi europei a maggior densità di PMI insieme a Spagna, Portogallo e Grecia, ha tuttavia registrato una produttività inferiore alla media europea, in particolare tra le microimprese fino a 9 addetti a causa del difficile accesso al credito bancario. Circa un quarto delle PMI italiane che hanno richiesto un prestito bancario tra il 2009 e il marzo 2013 sono state costrette a rinunciarvi a causa degli eccessivi costi di indebitamento. A partire dal 2006, infatti, il divario fra i tassi delle PMI e quelli delle grandi aziende è salito dallo 0,5 % all'1,5 %, determinando una crescente instabilità economica rispetto a paesi come la Germania dove, nonostante la percentuale di microimprese sia più bassa della media europea, la produttività risulta più alta.

1. È la Commissione informata dei fatti?

2. Con riferimento alle raccomandazioni specifiche rivolte all'Italia (COM(2013)0362 del 29 maggio 2013), in particolare la n. 3 sul miglioramento dell'accesso delle imprese ai finanziamenti e sul sostegno del flusso del credito alle attività produttive, non ritiene che l'imposizione da parte del sistema bancario di costi del credito elevati alle PMI contrasti con tali disposizioni?

3. Considerando che le PMI giocano un ruolo chiave in Europa nella creazione di lavoro e di valore aggiunto, e che esse rappresentano una priorità per le politiche economiche europee, così come affermato dalla BCE, come intende tutelare queste realtà nei paesi più colpiti dalle tensioni della crisi finanziaria, al fine di rilanciare la ripresa economica e l'occupazione?

4. Considerando che l'Italia è capofila in Europa per il valore delle PMI e che esse assicurano l'80 % dell'occupazione nel paese, non ritiene che intervenire a sostegno di queste realtà significhi anche tutelare i cittadini italiani garantendo loro il mantenimento dei posti di lavoro?

5. Considerando la situazione economica generale e le condizioni penalizzanti di accesso al credito per le PMI italiane, portoghesi, spagnole e greche, non ritiene necessario che si stabiliscano parametri omogenei tra i diversi Stati membri al fine di ridurre lo svantaggio competitivo?

Risposta di Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(3 settembre 2013)

La Commissione riconosce l'esistenza di una frammentazione del mercato finanziario e promuove la creazione dell'Unione bancaria ([1]). In Italia, il settore bancario continua a svolgere un ruolo centrale per il finanziamento delle imprese, più che in altre economie avanzate. Se è importante ripristinare il flusso del credito, un ulteriore incremento consistente della leva finanziaria delle imprese potrebbe costituire una sfida per la stabilità finanziaria ([2]). Il Consiglio dell'Unione europea ha raccomandato all'Italia di «promuovere maggiormente lo sviluppo dei mercati dei capitali al fine di diversificare e migliorare l'accesso delle imprese ai finanziamenti, soprattutto sotto forma di partecipazione al capitale» ([3]).

Gli strumenti finanziari dell'UE contribuiscono a mobilitare i prestiti e i capitali propri per le PMI ([4]). Entro la fine del 2012 il programma CIP ha contribuito a mobilitare oltre 1,6 miliardi di EUR di finanziamenti in Italia. Negli ultimi sei anni, la BEI ha finanziato progetti in Italia per un valore complessivo di 53 miliardi di EUR, di cui quasi 18 miliardi di EUR destinati ai prestiti alle PMI. Gli strumenti finanziari sono diventati uno strumento sempre più importante di attuazione della politica di coesione dell'UE nelle regioni più povere. Alla fine del 2011 sono stati destinati circa 2 miliardi di EUR agli strumenti finanziari per le imprese italiane ([5]).

([1]) Una dimostrazione della ridotta integrazione dei mercati finanziari è stata effettuata anche dal presidente della BCE in agosto, nell'esaminare il programma relativo alle operazioni definitive monetarie, si veda http://www.ecb.int/press/pressconf/2012/html/is120802.en.html
([2]) Documento di lavoro dei servizi della Commissione n. 362 del 2013.
([3]) Consiglio dell'Unione europea, configurazione «Affari economici e finanziari» del 9 luglio.
([4]) Il programma quadro per la competitività e l'innovazione (CIP), lo strumento di microfinanziamento «Progress» per la condivisione dei rischi (7o PQ), i prestiti della BEI per le PMI e i programmi operativi nazionali e regionali degli Stati membri che attuano gli obiettivi della politica di coesione.
([5]) Per accedere agli strumenti finanziari dell'UE, le PMI possono consultare il seguente sito web per individuare gli intermediari finanziari che concedono finanziamenti con il sostegno dell'UE: http://europa.eu/youreurope/business/finance-support/access-to-finance/index_it.htm

La Commissione procede nell'attuazione del suo piano d'azione sull'accesso delle PMI ai finanziamenti ([6]): gli atti normativi sul fondo di venture capital e sul fondo per l'imprenditoria sociale sono approvati; le nuove direttive in materia di trasparenza e di contabilità ([7]) ridurranno gli oneri a carico delle PMI; Il coefficiente correttore del pacchetto CRD IV dovrebbe agevolare i prestiti alle PMI ([8]) e la pubblicazione di un Libro verde su finanziamenti a lungo termine fornirà orientamenti su eventuali ulteriori interventi.

Per il periodo 2014-2020, la Commissione ha presentato proposte relative a strumenti finanziari, tra cui ESIF ([9]), COSME ([10]), «Orizzonte 2020» e le risorse della BEI che integrano i programmi nazionali. Per ulteriori informazioni la Commissione rimanda l'onorevole parlamentare alle rispostepreceden ti ([11]).

([6]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52003DC0713:IT:HTML
([7]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:182:0019:0076:IT:PDF
([8]) Quarta direttiva sui requisiti patrimoniali (comunemente nota come accordo di Basilea III), si veda: http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/bank/regcapital/legislation_in_force_en.htm
([9]) Fondi strutturali e di investimento europei.
([10]) Programma per la competitività delle imprese e le PMI (2014-2020).
([11]) E-001188/2013, E-001185/2013, E-000609/2012 ed E-003010/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008638/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: The banking system is penalising Italian small and medium-sized companies

The European Central Bank's July 2013 bulletin points out that different conditions are being imposed on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the euro area, compared to large companies, when it comes to obtaining bank loans. Italy, for example, despite having the highest density of SMEs in the EU, together with Spain, Portugal and Greece, has recorded productivity levels that are below the EU average, especially among micro-enterprises with up to 9 employees, due to their difficulties in accessing bank credit. Around a quarter of Italian SMEs that requested a bank loan between 2009 and March 2013 were forced to give up on it due to excessive borrowing costs. Since 2006, in fact, the gap between the rates applied to SMEs and those applied to large companies has risen from 0.5% to 1.5%, resulting in growing economic instability compared to countries such as Germany, which, despite having a lower percentage of micro-enterprises than the European average, has higher productivity.

1. Is the Commission aware of these facts?

2. With reference to the specific recommendations addressed to Italy (COM(2013) 0362 of 29 May 2013), in particular No 3 on enhancing firms' access to finance and supporting the flow of credit to productive activities, does the Commission not agree that the banking system's imposition of high credit costs on SMEs runs counter to these provisions?

3. Considering that SMEs play a key role in Europe in job creation and providing added value, and that they are a priority for European economic policies, as stated by the ECB, how does the Commission intend to protect them in the countries that are the most severely affected by financial crisis tensions, in order to boost economic recovery and employment?

4. Given that Italy is the leader in Europe in terms of the value of its SMEs, and that the latter provide 80% of all employment in the country, does it not agree that taking action to support them is tantamount to protecting Italian citizens by ensuring that they can keep their jobs?

5. In view of the general economic situation and the tough credit access conditions for Italian, Portuguese, Spanish and Greek SMEs, does the Commission not think that uniform parameters need to be established among the Member States in order to reduce the competitive disadvantage?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(3 September 2013)

The Commission recognises the existence of financial market fragmentation and promotes the creation of the Banking Union ([1]). In Italy, the banking sector continues to play a central role for the financing of firms, more than in other advanced economies. While restoring the flow of credit is important, further large increases in firms' leverage could be challenging for financial stability ([2]). The EU Council recommended Italy to 'promote further the development of capital markets to diversify and enhance firms' access to finance, especially into equity' ([3]).

EU financial instruments help to mobilise loans and equity to SMEs ([4]). By the end of 2012, the CIP programme helped to mobilise over EUR 1.6 billion of financing in Italy. In the last six years, the EIB has funded projects in Italy worth EUR 53 billion including loans to SMEs of almost EUR 18 billion. Financial instruments have become an increasingly important delivery tool of EU cohesion policy in the poorer regions. At the end of 2011, almost EUR 2 billion have been allocated to financial instruments for enterprises in Italy ([5]).

([1]) Evidence pointing out to declining financial market integration was equally presented by the President of the ECB in August, upon discussing the Outright Monetary Transactions programme, see http://www.ecb.int/press/pressconf/2012/html/is120802.en.html
([2]) SWD(2013)362.
([3]) Council of the European Union, Economic and finacial affairs configuration on 9 July.
([4]) The Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP), Progress Microfinance, the Risk-Sharing Instrument (FP7), EIB loans for SMEs and Member States' national and regional Operational Programmes implementing cohesion policy objectives.
([5]) To access EU financial instruments, SME can visit the following website to locate financial intermediaries that provide finance supported by the EU: http://access2eufinance.ec.europa.eu.

The Commission is delivering on its SME access to finance Action Plan ([6]): venture capital and social entrepreneurship fund legislation is approved; the new transparency and accounting directives ([7]) will reduce the burden for SMEs; CRD IV's correcting factor should ease SME lending ([8]), and the publication of a Green Paper on long term financing will give guidance on possible further action.

For 2014-2020, the Commission has put forward proposals for financial instruments including ESIF ([9]), COSME ([10]), Horizon 2020 and EIB resources complementing national programmes. The Commission would also refer the Honourable Member to previous answers for further information ([11]).

([6]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52003DC0713:EN:HTML.
([7]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:182:0019:0076:EN:PDF.
([8]) Capital Requirements Directive IV package (commonly known as the Basel III agreement) see: http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/bank/regcapital/legislation_in_force_en.htm
([9]) EU Structural and Investment Funds.
([10]) Programme for the Competitiveness of enterprises and SMEs 2014-2020.
([11]) E-001188/2013, E-001185/2013, E-000609/2012 and E-003010/2013.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008639/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(15 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Fondi a sostegno del Museo archeologico nazionale di Altino

Nel maggio 1960 nacque, nel comune di Quarto d'Altino in provincia di Venezia, il Museo archeologico nazionale di Altino, un piccolo museo concepito inizialmente come spazio espositivo per il materiale fino ad allora recuperato. Da allora le campagne di scavo nell'area si sono intensificate e riguardano prevalentemente le necropoli romane della Via Annia, della Via Claudia Augusta e delle vie vicinali per Oderzo e Treviso.

A oggi sono stati recuperati e catalogati più di 44.000 pezzi, che creano una collezione pressoché unica della cultura funeraria romana.

Molti di questi reperti oggi sono conservati in depositi ampliati durante gli anni, in quanto la nuova area museale a causa della mancanza di fondi non è ancora stata completata.

Peculiarità di questo museo è il rapporto diretto con la vastissima area archeologica interessata dagli scavi, inserita in un itinerario di visita culturale interattiva che parte dalle due sale espositive e prosegue nelle vaste aree di scavo limitrofe.

Considerata la rilevanza culturale a livello regionale e nazionale dell'area, l'interconnessione fra le attività del museo e il tessuto sociale della zona e stanti le potenzialità turistiche una volta ultimate le infrastrutture, può la Commissione comunicare se:

1. un progetto di questo tipo può essere cofinanziato dal Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale (FESR) in virtù dell'articolo 4, paragrafo 7, del regolamento (CE) n. 1080/2006;

2. esistono altri fondi accessibili per sostenere il Museo archeologico nazionale di Altino?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(4 settembre 2013)

1. Il progetto menzionato dall'onorevole deputata è stato cofinanziato dal Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale (FESR) nel quadro del programma Veneto 2007-2013, azione 3.2.2 «Interventi di valorizzazione del patrimonio culturale» per un importo complessivo di 6 milioni di EUR. Conformemente alle informazioni fornite dalle autorità regionali il progetto dovrebbe essere completato entro la fine del 2013.

2. La Commissione attribuisce la massima importanza alla salvaguardia del patrimonio culturale europeo e offre al settore culturale opportunità di finanziamento che, a decorrere dal 2014, verranno erogate nell'ambito del futuro programma «Europa creativa». Tuttavia, conformemente all'articolo 167 del trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea, la manutenzione, la tutela, la conservazione e il rinnovo del patrimonio culturale sono essenzialmente di competenza nazionale. Pertanto i lavori relativi al museo archeologico di Altino molto probabilmente non rientreranno negli obiettivi di «Europa creativa». Si noti tuttavia che il programma fornirà un sostegno a iniziative più specifiche come i premi dell'Unione europea per la conservazione del patrimonio culturale che intendono dare rilievo ai risultati d'eccezione ottenuti nel campo della conservazione, ricerca, istruzione, formazione e sensibilizzazione relative al patrimonio culturale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008639/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Financial support for the Altino National Archaeological Museum

In May 1960, the Altino National Archaeological Museum was founded in Quarto d'Altino in the province of Venice. It is a small museum which was originally designed to exhibit the existing finds. Since then, excavations in the area have intensified, concentrating mainly on the Roman necropolises along the Via Annia, the Via Claudia Augusta and the local roads towards Oderzo and Treviso.

To date, more than 44 000 items have been excavated and catalogued, creating a virtually unique collection of Roman funerary objects.

Many of these finds are currently preserved in stores which have grown over the years, as the new museum area has not yet been completed, for lack of funding.

One special feature of this museum is its direct link with the enormous archaeological area where the excavations are going on, creating an interactive cultural circuit for visitors which starts with the two exhibition rooms and continues into the huge neighbouring areas of excavations.

In view of the regional and national cultural significance of the area, the interconnectedness of the museum's work with the social fabric in the area and the potential for tourism once the infrastructure has been completed,

1. can a project of this kind be co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) pursuant to Article 4(7) of Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006?

2. do any other funds exist which could support the Altino National Archaeological Museum?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(4 September 2013)

1. The project mentioned by the Honorable Member has been co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) within the framework of the 2007-2013 Veneto programme, action 3.2.2 'Interventi di valorizzazione del patrimonio culturale' for a total amount of EUR 6 million. According to the information provided by the regional authorities, the project is expected to be completed by the end of 2013.

2. The Commission regards the safeguarding of European cultural heritage with utmost importance and offers the culture sector funding opportunities, which as of 2014 will be provided under the future Creative Europe Programme. However, according to Article 167 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the upkeep, protection, conservation and renovation of cultural heritage are primarily a national responsibility. Therefore, the Altino museum archaeological works will most likely not fit into Creative Europe's objectives. It should, however, be noted that the programme will provide support for more specific initiatives like the EU Prizes for Cultural Heritage, that seeks to put under spotlight outstanding achievements in the field of conservation, research, education, training and awareness raising in the field of cultural heritage.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008640/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(15 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Futuro Acordo de Comércio Livre com a Tailândia — impacto na indústria conserveira europeia

Perspetivando-se a assinatura de um acordo de comércio livre entre a União Europeia e a Tailândia, diversas vozes europeias têm-se manifestado contra a inclusão das conservas de peixe no mesmo.

A manter-se esta inclusão, o setor conserveiro da União teme ser muito afetado, dado que ela põe em causa a sua viabilidade futura.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Dispõe de dados quanto ao impacto que a inclusão das conservas de peixe no futuro acordo de comércio livre entre a União Europeia e a Tailândia poderá ter para o setor conserveiro europeu?

2. Considera que o acordo em questão prevenirá devidamente os impactos negativos temidos pelo setor conserveiro?

3. Prevê tomar ou já tomou medidas que minorem semelhante impacto e promovam a viabilidade do setor? Quais?

Resposta dada por Karel De Gucht em nome da Comissão
(30 de agosto de 2013)

A Comissão Europeia pretende celebrar um acordo de comércio livre, ambicioso e equilibrado, entre a UE e a Tailândia, que irá proporcionar, no seu conjunto, benefícios importantes para a economia e o emprego na UE, não deixando de ter em conta a natureza sensível da indústria conserveira de produtos da pesca, entre outros setores.

Em 2009, realizou-se a Avaliação de Impacto da Sustentabilidade do Comércio («SIA») do acordo de comércio livre entre a UE e os países da Associação das Nações do Sudeste Asiático (ASEAN). A SIA foi publicada e pode ser consultada no sítio Web da UE (ver os endereços na nota de rodapé ([1])). A SIA analisou os diferentes impactos potenciais decorrentes do acordo comercial e analisou também mais especificamente o setor das pescas.

A Comissão Europeia está consciente da importância e da vulnerabilidade da indústria conserveira do atum da UE, em particular no contexto do comércio bilateral com um importante operador no setor conserveiro do atum, tal como a Tailândia. Todavia, é demasiado cedo para antecipar o resultado destas negociações e respetivo impacto sobre a indústria conserveira do atum da UE.

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2010/april/tradoc_145989.pdf
http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2010/april/tradoc_145990.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008640/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Future free trade agreement with Thailand — impact on the European canning industry

Several European voices have spoken out against the inclusion of canned fish in the free trade agreement to be concluded between the EU and Thailand.

The EU canning industry fears that the inclusion of canned fish will have a huge impact on the sector and will jeopardise its future viability.

1. Does the Commission have data on the impact that the inclusion of canned fish in the future EU-Thailand free trade agreement may have on the European canning industry?

2. Does it believe that this agreement will adequately prevent the negative impacts the canning industry fears?

3. Will the Commission take or has it already taken measures to mitigate this impact and to promote the sector's viability? What are they?

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

The European Commission aims to conclude an ambitious and balanced free trade agreement between the EU and Thailand which brings substantial benefits to the EU economy and employment as a whole while taking into account the sensitive nature of the seafood canning industry, among others.

A Trade Sustainability Impact Assessment (SIA) of a Free Trade Agreement between the EU and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries was conducted in 2009. The SIA was published and can be found on the EU's website (see the following links below ([1])). The SIA analysed the different potential impacts deriving from the trade agreement and also looked more specifically at the fisheries sector.

The European Commission is aware of the importance and reported vulnerability of the EU tuna canning industry, in particular in the context of bilateral trade with a large player in the canned tuna sector such as Thailand. It is, however, too early to prejudge the outcome of this negotiation and its impact on the EU tuna canning industry.

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2010/april/tradoc_145989.pdf
http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2010/april/tradoc_145990.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008641/13
à Comissão
Rui Tavares (Verts/ALE)
(15 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Proteção de dados pessoais

Em Portugal foi aprovada no dia 23 de fevereiro de 2012 a Lei n.° 9, relativa à proteção de dados pessoais e à instalação de câmaras de vigilância nas vias públicas. Esta lei suprime o caráter vinculativo dos pareceres da Comissão Nacional de Proteção de Dados (CNPD), deixando esta instituição encarregada apenas de um parecer preliminar. A lei estabelece um prazo de 60 dias para a receção do pedido de autorização, sendo que, após esse tempo, o parecer será considerado positivo pelo Ministro da Administração Interna, podendo o ministro agir consoante o seu discernimento.

1. Em linha com as atuais negociações do Data Protection Package, considera a Comissão correto que as decisões do Ministro da Administração Interna sobre matérias deste tipo possam ser acionadas sem um parecer positivo da CNPD?

2. De que forma a instalação de câmaras de vigilância em locais onde não há efetivamente risco de crime poderá ser feita de modo a acautelar os direitos fundamentais da proteção dos dados pessoais dos cidadãos que transitam nas vias públicas?

3. Considera a Comissão que a instalação de câmaras de vigilância em locais onde não há efetivo risco de crime seja um abuso de autoridade e negligencie a qualidade dos dados?

Resposta dada por Viviane Reding em nome da Comissão
(28 de novembro de 2013)

A Diretiva 95/46/CE ([1]) é aplicável ao tratamento de dados de som e de imagem relativos às pessoas singulares. Não é aplicável às atividades do Estado no domínio do direito penal [artigo 3.°, n.° 2, primeiro parágrafo]. No entanto, o âmbito da Diretiva relativa à proteção de dados no que diz respeito ao tratamento de dados pessoais pelas autoridades policiais e as autoridades de justiça penal, proposta pela Comissão em janeiro de 2012 ([2]), deve cobrir o tratamento de dados pessoais pelas autoridades competentes para efeitos de prevenção, investigação, deteção e de repressão de infrações penais ou de execução de sanções penais.

Qualquer tratamento de dados pessoais mediante câmaras de vigilância que entre no âmbito de aplicação da diretiva em vigor tem de estar em conformidade com as disposições da legislação nacional de transposição da diretiva. Tem, nomeadamente, de assentar num dos motivos enunciados no artigo 7.° da diretiva e respeitar os princípios relativos à qualidade dos dados estabelecida no seu artigo 6.°.

Nos termos da proposta de regulamento geral de proteção de dados ([3]) o controlo de zonas acessíveis ao público através de vigilância vídeo em larga escala apresenta riscos específicos para os direitos e liberdades das pessoas em causa. Terá, pois, de ser efetuada uma avaliação de impacto em matéria de proteção de dados para essas operações de tratamento. Se a avaliação de impacto revelar que um determinado controlo de zonas acessíveis ao público através de vigilância vídeo em grande escala pode representar um elevado nível de riscos específicos, o responsável pelo tratamento ou o subcontratante deve consultar a autoridade de controlo da proteção de dados. Sempre que autoridade de controlo seja da opinião que as operações de tratamento não estão em conformidade com o regulamento, proíbe o tratamento previsto.

([1]) Diretiva 95/46/CE do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 24 de outubro de 1995, relativa à proteção das pessoas singulares no que diz respeito ao tratamento de dados pessoais e à livre circulação desses dados, JO L 281 de 23.11.1995, pp. 31-50.

([2]) COM(2012) 10 final, Proposta de diretiva do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho relativa à proteção das pessoas singulares no que diz respeito ao tratamento de dados pessoais pelas autoridades competentes para efeitos de prevenção, investigação, deteção e de repressão de infrações penais ou de execução de sanções penais, e à livre circulação desses dados.

([3]) COM(2012)11 final, Proposta de Regulamento do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho relativo à proteção das pessoas singulares no que diz respeito ao tratamento de dados pessoais e à livre circulação desses dados.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008641/13
to the Commission
Rui Tavares (Verts/ALE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Protection of personal data

On 23 February 2012, Portugal adopted Law No 9 on the protection of personal data and the installation of surveillance cameras on public roads. This law means that National Data Protection Commission (CNPD) opinions are no longer binding and that the institution is only required to issue a preliminary opinion. The law establishes a 60-day deadline for receiving authorisation applications, after which time the Minister for the Interior will consider the opinion positive and may act at his or her discretion.

1. In light of current negotiations on the Data Protection Package, does the Commission consider it right that the Minister for the Interior should be able to implement decisions on these matters without a positive opinion from the CNPD?

2. How can surveillance cameras be installed in places where there is no real risk of crime in such a way that the fundamental right to the protection of personal data of citizens travelling on public roads is respected?

3. Does the Commission consider the installation of surveillance cameras in places where there is no real risk of crime to be an abuse of authority and lack of regard for data quality?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(28 November 2013)

Directive 95/46/EC ([1]) applies to the processing of sound and image data relating to natural persons. It does not apply to the activities of the State in areas of criminal law [Article 3(2) first indent]. However, the scope of the Data Protection Directive for police and criminal justice authorities, proposed by the Commission in January 2012 ([2]), would cover the processing of personal data by competent authorities for the purposes of the prevention, investigation, detection or prosecution of criminal offences or the execution of criminal penalties.

Any processing of personal data by means of surveillance cameras which falls within the scope of the directive currently in force needs to be in line with the provisions of national law transposing the directive. It *inter alia* needs to be based on one of the grounds laid down in Article 7 of the directive and respect the principles relating to data quality laid down in its Article 6.

Under the proposed General Data Protection Regulation ([3]) the monitoring of publicly accessible areas by way of video surveillance on a large scale presents specific risks to the rights and freedoms of data subjects. A Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) for such processing operations would therefore need to be carried out. If the DPIA shows that a given monitoring of publicly accessible areas by way of video surveillance on a large scale is likely to present a high degree of specific risks the data controller or processor must consult the data protection supervisory authority. Where the authority is of the view that the processing operation is not in compliance with the regulation, it shall prohibit the intended processing.

([1]) Directive 95/46/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 1995 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, OJ L 281, 23.11.1995, p. 31-50.

([2]) COM(2012) 10 final, Proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by competent authorities for the purposes of prevention, investigation, detection or prosecution of criminal offences or the execution of criminal penalties, and the free movement of such data.

([3]) COM(2012) 11 final, Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008642/13
ao Conselho
Rui Tavares (Verts/ALE)
(15 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Relação entre a UE e o México na luta contra o crime organizado

Em 8 de outubro de 2012, um jornalista espanhol solicitou ao Conselho, com base no Regulamento (CE) n.° 1049/2001 do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 30 de Maio de 2001, uma série de documentos sobre a relação da UE-México na luta contra o crime organizado. O acesso a esses documentos foi negado ao abrigo do artigo 4°, n.° 1, alínea a), do mesmo regulamento por se tratarem de documentos classificados, com a justificação de que, se fossem divulgados, colocariam em risco as relações da União com o governo mexicano.

Entre esses documentos, foi solicitado o documento DS7/11, de novembro de 2010. O acesso a este documento foi negado por se tratar de um documento que contém informação sensível sobre a situação da segurança no México e detalha temas-chave referentes à cooperação UE-México neste campo.

— Poderia o Conselho esclarecer em que medida o acesso público a estes documentos, principalmente ao documento DS7/11, poderá prejudicar as relações entre a UE e o México?

— Poderia o Conselho esclarecer em que circunstâncias o acesso público a estes documentos, principalmente ao documento DS7/11, poderá prejudicar as relações entre a UE e o México?

Resposta
(23 de setembro de 2013)

Os documentos a que o Senhor Deputado se refere dizem respeito ao diálogo e à cooperação entre a UE e o México no domínio da segurança. A confidencialidade quanto ao alcance e ao teor desse diálogo é uma condição prévia para a sua credibilidade perante o governo mexicano.

Os documentos consistem em ordens do dia, documentos de trabalho e atas de reuniões institucionais entre o México e a UE. O documento DS 7/11 faz referência aos relatórios de uma missão de peritos da UE sobre a situação no México no domínio da segurança, que foram apresentados tanto às autoridades da UE como mexicanas com vista a preparar a futura cooperação UE-México no domínio da segurança, e cujo teor não foi tornado público.

Esses documentos contêm informações sensíveis em termos de diagnósticos, debates e propostas de políticas controversas para o México e para a UE no domínio da segurança. À luz das considerações supra, a confidencialidade desses documentos deverá ser preservada a fim de garantir que o diálogo bilateral continue a ser credível e produtivo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008642/13
to the Council
Rui Tavares (Verts/ALE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: EU-Mexico relations in the fight against organised crime

On 8 October 2012, a Spanish journalist asked the Council for a series of documents on EU-Mexico relations in the fight against organised crime, under Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2001. Access to these documents was denied under Article 4(1)(a) of the regulation as they are classified, on the grounds that disclosing them would jeopardise the EU's relations with the Mexican Government.

Among the documents requested was document DS7/11 of November 2010. Access to this document was denied as it contains sensitive information on the security situation in Mexico and details key issues relating to EU-Mexico cooperation in this field.

— Could the Council clarify the extent to which public access to these documents, particularly document DS7/11, may undermine EU-Mexico relations?

— Could the Council clarify under what circumstances public access to these documents, particularly document DS7/11, may undermine EU-Mexico relations?

Reply
(23 September 2013)

The documents referred to in the Honourable Member's question relate to the EU-Mexico dialogue and cooperation on security. Confidentiality on the scope and content of the dialogue is a prerequisite for its credibility vis-à-vis the Mexican government.

The documents contain agendas, working papers and minutes of institutional meetings between Mexico and the EU. Document DS7/11 refers to the reports of an EU experts' mission on the security situation in Mexico, which were submitted to both the EU and Mexican authorities with a view to preparing future EU-Mexico cooperation on security, and whose content has not been made public.

These documents contain sensitive information in terms of diagnostics, debates and controversial policy proposals for Mexico and the EU in the field of security. In the light of the above considerations, the confidentiality of these documents should be preserved, in order to ensure that the bilateral dialogue will continue to be credible and productive.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008643/13
a la Comisión
Nuno Teixeira (PPE), Mário David (PPE) y José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE)
(15 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: Política exterior de la Unión en el sector de la aviación — Región del Golfo

La aviación europea representa el 2,4 % del PIB de la Unión —aproximadamente 365 000 millones de euros— y da empleo a cerca de 5,1 millones de personas.

La crisis económica y financiera de la Unión ha tenido y tiene un impacto negativo en este sector, que pierde progresivamente competitividad frente a las compañías aéreas internacionales de otras regiones del mundo, que realizan grandes inversiones para la renovación de las flotas y de los servicios, así como para el aumento de la calidad y capacidad de las infraestructuras aeroportuarias.

El acuerdo relativo a los «cielos abiertos» de 2002 otorgó competencias a la Unión en el sector de la aviación para negociar acuerdos internacionales cuando existan normas internas de la Unión y concluyó que las cláusulas de nacionalidad de los acuerdos bilaterales violaban el Derecho de la Unión.

La política exterior de la Unión en el sector de la aviación se basa en tres pilares: los acuerdos horizontales, la creación de una Zona Europea Común de Aviación con los países vecinos y los acuerdos globales con socios clave.

En su Comunicación sobre la «Política exterior de aviación de la UE: responder a desafíos futuros», la Comisión subrayó que «el crecimiento del sector de la aviación [será] relativamente más acusado fuera de la UE, [como en] Asia y Oriente Próximo», cuyas compañías aéreas representarán en 2030 el 11 % del tráfico mundial.

Los gobiernos de la región del Golfo están invirtiendo enormemente en el sector de la aviación para promover y situar esta región a escala mundial, prestando los servicios relativos a la sexta libertad.

A la luz de lo anterior:

1. Teniendo en cuenta el potencial de los acuerdos generales a los que se refiere en su Comunicación COM(2012)556, ¿ha iniciado ya la Comisión negociaciones con los países del Golfo? En caso afirmativo, ¿cuáles? ¿Y cuál es el calendario previsto para su conclusión?

2. ¿Dispone la Comisión del algún estudio que exponga las ventajas potenciales de un acuerdo general de transporte aéreo entre la UE y los Emiratos Árabes Unidos, así como entre la UE y Qatar?

3. ¿Conoce la Comisión la posición del Consejo en lo relativo a la propuesta de autorización única para entablar negociaciones con países terceros en este ámbito?

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

Las respuestas de la Comisión a sus preguntas son las siguientes:

1. No, la Comisión no ha abierto negociaciones con ninguno de los países del Golfo. En su Comunicación «Política exterior de aviación de la UE: responder a desafíos futuros», sugiere que se considere la celebración de acuerdos de aviación a nivel de la UE con esos países. No obstante, durante los debates celebrados en torno a esa Comunicación, el Consejo se opuso al inicio, en este momento, de negociaciones con los Estados del Golfo. Así y todo, la Comisión tiene la intención de entablar un diálogo con esos países con vistas a aumentar la transparencia y proteger la competencia leal, de acuerdo con lo expuesto en el apartado 28 de las Conclusiones del Consejo de 22 de diciembre de 2012.

2. No, la Comisión no dispone de ningún estudio específico a ese respecto. No obstante, en el marco del desarrollo de la Comunicación «Política exterior de aviación de la UE: responder a desafíos futuros», se realizó una evaluación de alto nivel que confirma la posibilidad de conseguir importantes beneficios económicos para los consumidores y un aumento de la productividad en la economía en general gracias a posibles acuerdos de aviación entre la UE y los Emiratos Árabes Unidos y Qatar.

3. La Comisión no está al corriente de ningún debate en el seno del Consejo sobre la posibilidad de conceder una autorización única para entablar negociaciones con terceros países. Durante los debates sobre la Comunicación de la Comisión «Política exterior de aviación de la UE: responder a desafíos futuros», el Consejo se opuso a la apertura en este momento de negociaciones sobre transporte aéreo entre la UE y los Estados del Golfo.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008643/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE), Mário David (PPE) e José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE)
(15 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Política externa da União no setor da aviação — região do Golfo

A aviação europeia representa 2.4 % do PIB da União, cerca de 365 mil milhões de euros, empregando cerca de 5,1 milhões de pessoas.

A crise económica e financeira da União teve e tem um impacto negativo neste setor, que perde gradualmente competitividade face às companhias aéreas internacionais de outras regiões do mundo, que apresentam grandes investimentos para a renovação das frotas e dos serviços e para o aumento da qualidade e da capacidade das infraestruturas aeroportuárias.

O acórdão relativo aos «Open Skies», de 2002, deu competência à União no setor da aviação para negociar acordos internacionais sempre que existam regras internas da União e concluiu que as cláusulas de nacionalidade dos acordos bilaterais violavam o direito da União.

A política externa da União no setor da aviação está alicerçada em 3 pilares: os acordos horizontais, a criação de um Espaço de Aviação Comum com os países vizinhos e os acordos globais com parceiros-chave.

Na Comunicação sobre «A Política Externa da União no setor da aviação — Responder aos futuros desafios» a CE sublinhou «que o crescimento do setor da aviação será relativamente mais expressivo noutras zonas do mundo que não a UE, como a Ásia e o Médio Oriente», cujas companhias aéreas, em 2030, representarão 11 % do tráfego mundial.

Os governos da região do Golfo estão a investir de forma expressiva no setor da aviação, para promover e posicionar esta região globalmente, prestando os serviços da sexta liberdade.

Pergunta-se, por isso, à Comissão:

1. Tendo em conta o potencial dos acordos gerais, referidos na sua Comunicação 556/2012, já iniciou negociações com os países do Golfo? Se sim, com quais? E qual a calendarização prevista para a sua conclusão?

2. Possui a Comissão algum estudo que elenque as potenciais vantagens de um acordo geral de transporte aéreo entre a UE e os Emirados Árabes Unidos e entre a UE e o Catar?

3. Tem a Comissão conhecimento da posição do Conselho quanto à proposta de uma autorização única para iniciar as negociações com países terceiros neste domínio?

Resposta dada por Siim Kallas em nome da Comissão
(14 de agosto de 2013)

Eis as respostas da Comissão às perguntas dos Senhores Deputados:

1. Não, a Comissão não iniciou negociações com nenhum dos países do Golfo. Na sua Comunicação intitulada «A política externa da UE no setor da aviação — Responder aos futuros desafios», a Comissão sugeriu a possibilidade de se estabelecerem acordos de aviação a nível da UE com os Estados do Golfo. Todavia, durante as discussões sobre a comunicação, o Conselho tomou a posição de não apoiar a abertura de negociações com os Estados do Golfo nesta fase. Não obstante, a Comissão tenciona encetar um diálogo com os ditos Estados, tendo em vista aumentar a transparência e garantir condições de concorrência justas, em conformidade com o parágrafo 28 das Conclusões do Conselho de 22 de dezembro de 2012.

2. Não, não dispõe de qualquer estudo específico. Contudo, no contexto da elaboração da comunicação acima referida –, foi efetuada uma avaliação de alto nível, que confirmou que a possível conclusão de acordos de aviação a nível da UE com os Emirados Árabes Unidos e o Catar poderá trazer benefícios económicos significativos para os consumidores e ganhos de produtividade para o conjunto da economia.

3. A Comissão não tem conhecimento de que o Conselho esteja a estudar a possibilidade de conceder uma autorização única para a abertura de negociações com países terceiros. Durante as discussões sobre a comunicação da Comissão — o Conselho tomou a posição de não apoiar, nesta fase, a abertura de negociações sobre transporte aéreo a nível da UE com os Estados do Golfo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008643/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE), Mário David (PPE) and José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: The EU's external aviation policy — Gulf region

European aviation accounts for 2.4% of EU GDP, around EUR 365 billion, and employs around 5.1 million people.

The economic and financial crisis in the EU has had and continues to have a negative impact on this sector, which is gradually becoming less competitive than international airlines in other parts of the world, where heavy investments are being made in renewing fleets, improving services and increasing the quality and capacity of airport infrastructure.

The 'Open Skies' judgment of 2002 gave the EU competence to negotiate international aviation agreements wherever internal EU rules have been agreed, and concluded that the nationality clauses in bilateral agreements violated EC law.

The EU's external aviation policy is based on three pillars: horizontal agreements; the creation of a Common Aviation Area with neighbouring countries; and comprehensive agreements with key partners.

In its communication on 'The EU's External Aviation Policy — Addressing Future Challenges' the Commission emphasised that 'aviation growth will see a relative shift to areas outside the EU […] [such as] Asia and the Middle East', whose airlines will represent 11% of world traffic by 2030.

Governments in the Gulf region are investing heavily in the aviation sector, to promote and position the region globally, providing sixth freedom services.

1. Given the potential of comprehensive agreements, referred to in COM(2012) 556, has the Commission already opened negotiations with the Gulf countries? If so, with which countries? When does it expect to conclude these negotiations?

2. Does the Commission have at its disposal any studies outlining the potential benefits of a comprehensive air transport agreement between the EU and the United Arab Emirates and between the EU and Qatar?

3. Is it aware of the Council's position regarding the proposal for a single authorisation to open negotiations with third countries in this field?

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

The Commission replies to your questions as follows:

1. No, the Commission has not opened negotiations with any of the Gulf countries. In its communication on 'The EU's External Aviation Policy — Addressing Future Challenges' the Commission had suggested considering EU level aviation agreements with the Gulf States. However, during the discussions about the communication the Council took the position not to support the opening of negotiations with the Gulf States at this stage. Nevertheless, the Commission intends to start a dialogue with the Gulf States with a view to enhancing transparency and safeguarding fair competition, in line with paragraph 28 of the Council Conclusions of 22 December 2012.

2. No, it does not have any specific study. However, in the context of developing the communication on 'The EU's External Aviation Policy — Addressing Future Challenges', a high level assessment was made which confirmed that there could potentially be significant economic benefits for consumers and productivity gains for the wider economies of possible EU level aviation agreements with the United Arab Emirates and Qatar.

3. The Commission is not aware of discussions within the Council regarding the possibility to provide a single authorisation to open negotiations with third countries. During the discussions about the Commission Communication on 'The EU's External Aviation Policy — Addressing Future Challenges' the Council took the position not to support the opening of EU level air transport negotiations with the Gulf States at this stage.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008644/13
a la Comisión
Nuno Teixeira (PPE), Mário David (PPE) y José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE)
(15 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: Política exterior de la Unión en el sector de la aviación — región del Golfo II

La aviación europea representa el 2,4 % del PIB de la Unión, es decir, alrededor de 365 mil millones de euros, y da trabajo aproximadamente a 5,1 millones de personas.

La crisis económica y financiera de la Unión ha tenido y tiene un impacto negativo en este sector, que pierde gradualmente competitividad frente a las compañías aéreas internacionales de otras regiones del mundo, que destinan grandes sumas a la renovación de las flotas y los servicios y a aumentar la calidad y la capacidad de las infraestructuras aeroportuarias.

Las sentencias de los asuntos «cielos abiertos», de 2002, otorgaron competencias a la UE para negociar acuerdos internacionales en el sector de la aviación siempre que existan normas internas de la Unión y concluyó que las cláusulas relativas a la nacionalidad de los acuerdos bilaterales vulneraban el Derecho europeo.

La política exterior de la Unión en el sector de la aviación se cimenta en tres pilares: los acuerdos horizontales, la creación de una Zona Europea Común de Aviación con los países vecinos y los acuerdos globales con socios clave.

En su comunicación titulada «Política exterior de aviación de la EU: responder a desafíos futuros», la Comisión destacó que cabe prever que «el crecimiento del sector de la aviación sea relativamente más acusado fuera de la UE, y que Asia y Oriente Próximo», cuyas compañías aéreas representarán el 11 % del tráfico mundial en 2030.

Los gobiernos de la región del Golfo están haciendo grandes inversiones en el sector de la aviación a fin de promover la región y consolidar su posición en el mundo mediante la prestación de servicios amparados en la sexta libertad.

En vista de lo anterior, se plantean a la Comisión las siguientes preguntas:

1. ¿Tiene conocimiento de la voluntad manifestada por los gobiernos de los países del Golfo para la celebración de acuerdos en el sector de la aviación? En caso afirmativo, ¿con qué países?

2. ¿Tiene conocimiento de la actitud favorable de estos países en lo que respecta a la liberalización de la propiedad y la gestión de las compañías aéreas, en caso de que se negocie un acuerdo con ellos? ¿Considera la Comisión que la existencia de sistemas fiscales con diferentes niveles de imposición en los Estados miembros y, en particular, en el sector de la aviación, así como el respeto de las normas internacionales en materia laboral y ambiental, podrán ser también objeto de negociación en un futuro acuerdo?

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

Las respuestas de la Comisión a sus preguntas son las siguientes:

1. Sí, los Emiratos Árabes Unidos y Qatar han manifestado su interés por negociar acuerdos globales de transporte aéreo con la UE.

2. No, la Comisión no dispone de información sobre la postura de esos países respecto a la posible liberalización de la propiedad y la gestión de las compañías aéreas. Por lo que se refiere a a las cuestiones que podrían abordarse en esas negociaciones sobre transporte aéreo, la UE busca un proceso de cooperación/convergencia en materia de reglamentación en los acuerdos a nivel de la UE para garantizar una competencia leal y en igualdad de condiciones. Esa cooperación/convergencia en materia de reglamentación puede abarcar distintas cuestiones, como las relativas a la competencia leal, aspectos laborales como el tiempo de trabajo u otros asuntos medioambientales como las emisiones y el ruido de las aeronaves. No obstante, durante los debates celebrados en torno a la Comunicación «Política exterior de aviación de la UE: responder a desafíos futuros», el Consejo se opuso al inicio, en este momento, de negociaciones con los Estados del Golfo. Así y todo, la Comisión tiene la intención de entablar un diálogo con esos países con vistas a aumentar la transparencia y proteger la competencia leal, de acuerdo con lo expuesto en el apartado 28 de las Conclusiones del Consejo de 22 de diciembre de 2012.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008644/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE), Mário David (PPE) e José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE)
(15 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Política externa da União no setor da aviação — região do Golfo II

A aviação europeia representa 2,4 % do PIB da União, cerca de 365 mil milhões de euros, empregando cerca de 5,1 milhões de pessoas.

A crise económica e financeira da União teve e tem um impacto negativo neste setor, que perde gradualmente competitividade face às companhias aéreas internacionais de outras regiões do mundo, que apresentam grandes investimentos para a renovação das frotas e dos serviços e para o aumento da qualidade e da capacidade das infraestruturas aeroportuárias.

O acórdão relativo aos «Open Skies», de 2002, deu competência à União no setor da aviação para negociar acordos internacionais sempre que existam regras internas da União e concluiu que as cláusulas de nacionalidade dos acordos bilaterais violavam o direito da União.

A política externa da União no setor da aviação está alicerçada em 3 pilares: os acordos horizontais, a criação de um Espaço de Aviação Comum com os países vizinhos e os acordos globais com parceiros-chave.

Na Comunicação sobre «A Política Externa da União no setor da aviação — Responder aos futuros desafios» a CE sublinhou «que o crescimento do setor da aviação será relativamente mais expressivo noutras zonas do mundo que não a UE, como a Ásia e o Médio Oriente», cujas companhias aéreas, em 2030, representarão 11 % do tráfego mundial.

Os governos da região do Golfo estão a investir de forma expressiva no setor da aviação, para promover e posicionar esta região globalmente, prestando os serviços da sexta liberdade.

Pergunta-se, por isso, à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento da vontade manifestada, por parte dos governos dos Países do Golfo, para a celebração de acordos no setor da aviação? Se sim, com que países?

2. Tem conhecimento da recetividade, por parte destes países, quanto à liberalização da propriedade e da gestão das companhias áreas, case se negoceie um acordo com estes Países? Considera que a existência de sistemas fiscais com diferentes níveis de taxação nos Estados-Membros e, particularmente, no setor da aviação, bem como o respeito de normas internacionais em matérias laboral e ambiental poderão também ser alvo de negociação num futuro acordo?

Resposta dada por Siim Kallas em nome da Comissão
(14 de agosto de 2013)

Eis a resposta da Comissão às perguntas dos Senhores Deputados:

1. Sim, os Emirados Árabes Unidos e o Catar mostraram interesse em negociar acordos gerais de transporte aéreo com a UE.

2. Não, a Comissão não dispõe de informações sobre a posição destes Estados no que se refere à eventual liberalização da propriedade e do controlo das transportadoras aéreas. Quanto às eventuais matérias que seriam objeto de negociação, o que a UE pretende é incluir nos acordos celebrados a nível europeu um processo de cooperação e de convergência a nível regulamentar, tendo em vista garantir uma concorrência justa e em condições de igualdade. A cooperação/convergência em matéria regulamentar pode abranger diferentes domínios, incluindo as questões da lealdade da concorrência, laborais, como o tempo de trabalho, e ambientais, como as emissões de carbono e o ruído das aeronaves. No entanto, durante as discussões sobre a Comunicação da Comissão intitulada «A política externa da UE no setor da Aviação — Responder aos futuros desafios», o Conselho tomou a posição de não apoiar, nesta fase, a abertura de negociações sobre transporte aéreo a nível da UE com os Estados do Golfo. A Comissão tenciona, não obstante, encetar um diálogo com os Estados do Golfo, tendo em vista aumentar a transparência e garantir condições de concorrência justas, em conformidade com o parágrafo 28 das Conclusões do Conselho de 22 de dezembro de 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008644/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE), Mário David (PPE) and José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: The EU's external aviation policy — Gulf region II

European aviation accounts for 2.4% of EU GDP, around EUR 365 billion, and employs around 5.1 million people.

The economic and financial crisis in the EU has had and continues to have a negative impact on this sector, which is gradually becoming less competitive than international airlines in other parts of the world, where heavy investments are being made in renewing fleets, improving services and increasing the quality and capacity of airport infrastructure.

The 'Open Skies' judgment of 2002 gave the EU competence to negotiate international aviation agreements wherever internal EU rules have been agreed, and concluded that the nationality clauses in bilateral agreements violated EC law.

The EU's external aviation policy is based on three pillars: horizontal agreements; the creation of a Common Aviation Area with neighbouring countries; and comprehensive agreements with key partners.

In its communication on 'The EU's External Aviation Policy — Addressing Future Challenges' the Commission emphasised that 'aviation growth will see a relative shift to areas outside the EU […] [such as] Asia and the Middle East', whose airlines will represent 11% of world traffic by 2030.

Governments in the Gulf region are investing heavily in the aviation sector, to promote and position the region globally, providing sixth freedom services.

1. Is the Commission aware of any manifested willingness by the governments of the Gulf countries to conclude aviation agreements? If so, with which countries?

2. Does it know whether these countries are receptive to liberalising airline ownership and management, should an agreement be negotiated with them? Does it believe that the different levels of taxation in the tax systems of the Member States, particularly in the aviation sector, and compliance with international standards on labour and environmental issues may also be subject to negotiation in a future agreement?

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

The Commission replies to your questions as follows:

1. Yes, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar have expressed their interests in negotiating comprehensive air transport agreements with the EU.

2. No, the Commission does not have information on the position of these States as regards the possible liberalisation of air carrier ownership and control. As to the potential subject matters of air transport negotiations, the EU is seeking a process of regulatory cooperation/convergence in EU level agreements with a view to ensuring that competition is fair and takes place on a level playing field. Regulatory cooperation/convergence may cover different areas including fair competition issues, labour issues such as working time and environmental issues such as emissions and aircraft noise. However, during the discussions about the Commission Communication on 'The EU's External Aviation Policy — Addressing Future Challenges' the Council took the position not to support the opening of EU level air transport negotiations with the Gulf States at this stage. Nevertheless, the Commission intends to start a dialogue with the Gulf States with a view to enhancing transparency and safeguarding fair competition, in line with paragraph 28 of the Council Conclusions of 22 December 2012.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008645/13
al Consejo
Nuno Teixeira (PPE), Mário David (PPE) y José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE)
(15 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: Política exterior de la Unión en el sector de la aviación — región del Golfo III

La aviación europea representa el 2,4 % del PIB de la Unión, es decir, alrededor de 365 mil millones de euros, y da trabajo aproximadamente a 5,1 millones de personas.

La crisis económica y financiera de la Unión ha tenido y tiene un impacto negativo en este sector, que pierde gradualmente competitividad frente a las compañías aéreas internacionales de otras regiones del mundo, que destinan grandes sumas a la renovación de las flotas y los servicios y a aumentar la calidad y la capacidad de las infraestructuras aeroportuarias.

Las sentencias de los asuntos «cielos abiertos», de 2002, otorgaron competencias a la UE para negociar acuerdos internacionales en el sector de la aviación siempre que existan normas internas de la Unión y concluyó que las cláusulas relativas a la nacionalidad de los acuerdos bilaterales vulneraban el Derecho europeo.

La política exterior de la Unión en el sector de la aviación se cimenta en tres pilares: los acuerdos horizontales, la creación de una Zona Europea Común de Aviación con los países vecinos y los acuerdos globales con socios clave.

En su comunicación titulada «Política exterior de aviación de la EU: responder a desafíos futuros», la Comisión destacó que cabe prever que «el crecimiento del sector de la aviación sea relativamente más acusado fuera de la UE, y que Asia y Oriente Próximo», cuyas compañías aéreas representarán el 11 % del tráfico mundial en 2030.

Los gobiernos de la región del Golfo están haciendo grandes inversiones en el sector de la aviación a fin de promover la región y consolidar su posición en el mundo mediante la prestación de servicios amparados en la sexta libertad.

En vista de lo anterior, se plantean al Consejo las siguientes preguntas:

1. ¿Ha autorizado a la Comisión a iniciar negociaciones con los países del Golfo para celebrar un acuerdo general de transporte aéreo en el sector de la aviación?

2. ¿Cuál es el calendario previsto para la concesión a la Comisión de un mandato a tal fin?

3. ¿Cómo tiene previsto enfocar la posible celebración de este acuerdo general de transporte aéreo de la Unión con los países del Golfo?

Respuesta
(30 de septiembre de 2013)

El Consejo no ha autorizado a la Comisión a entablar negociaciones con los países del Golfo sobre un acuerdo general de transporte aéreo en el sector de la aviación ni la Comisión ha solicitado de momento tal mandato.

Tras el examen de la Comunicación de la Comisión titulada «Política exterior de aviación de la UE: responder a desafíos futuros» del 20 de diciembre de 2012, el Consejo adoptó unas conclusiones ([1]) en las que consideraba que *«un planteamiento a medida a escala de la UE resulta ahora particularmente oportuno por lo que se refiere a Turquía, India, Rusia, algunos países del Golfo, la ASEAN y, lo antes posible, a China y por ello (…), tras tomar nota de la evolución del mercado en años recientes entre algunos Estados miembros de la UE y los países del Golfo mencionados en la Comunicación de la Comisión, agradece la intención de la Comisión de iniciar un diálogo con aquellos países, con el fin de aumentar la transparencia y salvaguardar una leal competencia»* ([2]).

([1]) 17558/12.
([2]) Ibídem, apartado 28.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008645/13
ao Conselho
Nuno Teixeira (PPE), Mário David (PPE) e José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE)
(15 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Política externa da União no setor da aviação — região do Golfo III

A aviação europeia representa 2,4 % do PIB da União, cerca de 365 mil milhões de euros, empregando cerca de 5,1 milhões de pessoas.

A crise económica e financeira da União teve e tem um impacto negativo neste setor, que perde gradualmente competitividade face às companhias aéreas internacionais de outras regiões do mundo, que apresentam grandes investimentos para a renovação das frotas e dos serviços e para o aumento da qualidade e da capacidade das infraestruturas aeroportuárias.

O acórdão relativo aos «Open Skies», de 2002, deu competência à União no setor da aviação para negociar acordos internacionais sempre que existam regras internas da União e concluiu que as cláusulas de nacionalidade dos acordos bilaterais violavam o direito da União.

A política externa da União no setor da aviação está alicerçada em 3 pilares: os acordos horizontais, a criação de um Espaço de Aviação Comum com os países vizinhos e os acordos globais com parceiros-chave.

Na Comunicação sobre «A Política Externa da União no setor da aviação — Responder aos futuros desafios» a CE sublinhou «que o crescimento do setor da aviação será relativamente mais expressivo noutras zonas do mundo que não a UE, como a Ásia e o Médio Oriente», cujas companhias aéreas, em 2030, representarão 11 % do tráfego mundial.

Os governos da região do Golfo estão a investir de forma expressiva no setor da aviação, para promover e posicionar esta região globalmente, prestando os serviços da sexta liberdade.

Pergunta-se, por isso, ao Conselho:

1. Já autorizou a Comissão a iniciar negociações com os países do Golfo para um acordo geral de transporte aéreo no setor da aviação?

2. Qual a calendarização prevista para a concessão de um mandato à Comissão para esse efeito?

3. Como perspetiva a possibilidade da assinatura deste acordo geral de transporte aéreo da União com os países do Golfo?

Resposta
(30 de setembro de 2013)

O Conselho não autorizou a Comissão a iniciar negociações com os países do Golfo sobre um acordo geral de transporte aéreo no sector da aviação, e a Comissão até à data não apresentou um pedido para esse mandato de negociações.

Após a análise da comunicação da Comissão sobre «A política externa da UE no setor da aviação — Responder aos futuros desafios», a 20 de dezembro de 2012 o Conselho adotou conclusões ([1]) nas quais considerou que *«é agora especialmente apropriada uma abordagem adaptada da UE em relação à Turquia, à Índia, à Rússia, a certos países do Golfo, à ASEAN e, tão cedo quanto possível, à China, e portanto (…), tomando nota da evolução do mercado nos últimos anos entre alguns Estados-Membros e os países do Golfo identificados na Comunicação da Comissão, reconhece a intenção da Comissão de iniciar um diálogo com esses países com o objetivo de aumentar a transparência e salvaguardar a concorrência leal;»* ([2]).

([1]) 17558/12.
([2]) Idem, ponto 28.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008645/13
to the Council
Nuno Teixeira (PPE), Mário David (PPE) and José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: The EU's external aviation policy — Gulf region III

European aviation accounts for 2.4% of EU GDP, around EUR 365 billion, and employs around 5.1 million people.

The economic and financial crisis in the EU has had and continues to have a negative impact on this sector, which is gradually becoming less competitive than international airlines in other parts of the world, where heavy investments are being made in renewing fleets, improving services and increasing the quality and capacity of airport infrastructure.

The 'Open Skies' judgment of 2002 gave the EU competence to negotiate international aviation agreements wherever internal EU rules have been agreed, and concluded that the nationality clauses in bilateral agreements violated EC law.

The EU's external aviation policy is based on three pillars: horizontal agreements; the creation of a Common Aviation Area with neighbouring countries; and comprehensive agreements with key partners.

In its communication on 'The EU's External Aviation Policy — Addressing Future Challenges' the Commission emphasised that 'aviation growth will see a relative shift to areas outside the EU […] [such as] Asia and the Middle East', whose airlines will represent 11% of world traffic by 2030.

Governments in the Gulf region are investing heavily in the aviation sector, to promote and position the region globally, providing sixth freedom services.

1. Has the Council already authorised the Commission to open negotiations with the Gulf countries on a comprehensive air transport agreement in the aviation sector?

2. When does it expect to grant the Commission a mandate to that effect?

3. How does it view the possibility of concluding this comprehensive air transport agreement with the Gulf countries?

Reply
(30 September 2013)

The Council has not authorised the Commission to open negotiations with the Gulf countries on a comprehensive air transport agreement in the aviation sector, and the Commission has to date not submitted a request for such a negotiating mandate.

Following the examination of the communication from the Commission on 'The EU's External Aviation Policy — Addressing Future Challenges', on 20 December 2012 the Council adopted conclusions ([1]), in which it considered that 'a tailored EU approach is now particularly appropriate in relation to Turkey, India, Russia, certain Gulf countries, ASEAN, and at the earliest opportunity to China, and therefore (…). taking note of the market developments in recent years between individual EU Member States and the Gulf countries identified in the Commission's Communication, [it] acknowledges the Commission's intention to engage in a dialogue with those countries, with a view to enhancing transparency and safeguarding fair competition;' ([2])

([1]) 17558/12.
([2]) idem, point 28.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008646/13
a la Comisión
Nuno Teixeira (PPE), Mário David (PPE) y José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE)
(15 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: Política exterior de la Unión en el sector de la aviación — región del Golfo IV

La aviación europea representa el 2,4 % del PIB de la Unión, es decir, alrededor de 365 mil millones de euros, y da trabajo aproximadamente a 5,1 millones de personas.

La crisis económica y financiera de la Unión ha tenido y tiene un impacto negativo en este sector, que pierde gradualmente competitividad frente a las compañías aéreas internacionales de otras regiones del mundo, que destinan grandes sumas a la renovación de las flotas y los servicios y a aumentar la calidad y la capacidad de las infraestructuras aeroportuarias.

Las sentencias de los asuntos «cielos abiertos», de 2002, otorgaron competencias a la UE para negociar acuerdos internacionales en el sector de la aviación siempre que existan normas internas de la Unión y concluyó que las cláusulas relativas a la nacionalidad de los acuerdos bilaterales vulneraban el Derecho europeo.

La política exterior de la Unión en el sector de la aviación se cimenta en tres pilares: los acuerdos horizontales, la creación de una Zona Europea Común de Aviación con los países vecinos y los acuerdos globales con socios clave.

En su comunicación titulada «Política exterior de aviación de la EU: responder a desafíos futuros», la Comisión destacó que cabe prever que «el crecimiento del sector de la aviación sea relativamente más acusado fuera de la UE, y que Asia y Oriente Próximo», cuyas compañías aéreas representarán el 11 % del tráfico mundial en 2030.

Los gobiernos de la región del Golfo están haciendo grandes inversiones en el sector de la aviación a fin de promover la región y consolidar su posición en el mundo mediante la prestación de servicios amparados en la sexta libertad.

En vista de lo anterior, se plantean a la Comisión las siguientes preguntas:

1. ¿Dispone de información sobre qué Estados miembros han celebrado acuerdos bilaterales con los países de la región del Golfo?

2. Si se celebrase un acuerdo general con esta región del mundo, ¿optaría la Unión por un acuerdo entre bloques o preferiría un enfoque país por país?

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

En respuesta a su pregunta, la Comisión declara lo siguiente:

1. Según la información de que dispone la Comisión, han celebrado acuerdos bilaterales con los países de la región del Golfo los siguientes Estados miembros:

Con los Emiratos Árabes Unidos: AT, BE, BG, CY, DE, EE, ES, FI, FR, GR, HU, IE, IT, LU, LT, LV, NL, PT, RO, SK, SL, UK

Con Qatar: AT, BE, BG, CZ, CY, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GR, HU, IE, IT, LU, LV, MT, NL, PL, RO, SE, UK

Con Bahrain: AT, BE, BG, CZ, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GR, HU, IE, IT, LU, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, UK

Con Kuwait: AT, BG, BE, CZ, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GR, HU, IT, LU, NL, LV, MT, PL, SL, UK

2. Durante los debates sobre la Comunicación de la Comisión «Política exterior de aviación de la UE: responder a desafíos futuros», el Consejo tomó la posición de no apoyar la apertura de negociaciones con los Estados del Golfo en este momento. Por consiguiente, resulta prematuro considerar un enfoque global de la UE para la apertura de posibles negociaciones sobre transporte aéreo con los Estados del Golfo. No obstante, la Comisión tiene previsto iniciar un diálogo con dichos países con vistas a aumentar la transparencia y proteger la libre competencia, de conformidad con el apartado 28 de las Conclusiones del Consejo de 22 de diciembre de 2012.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008646/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE), Mário David (PPE) e José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE)
(15 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Política externa da União no setor da aviação — região do Golfo IV

A aviação europeia representa 2,4 % do PIB da União, cerca de 365 mil milhões de euros, empregando cerca de 5,1 milhões de pessoas.

A crise económica e financeira da União teve e tem um impacto negativo neste setor, que perde gradualmente competitividade face às companhias aéreas internacionais de outras regiões do mundo, que apresentam grandes investimentos para a renovação das frotas e dos serviços e para o aumento da qualidade e da capacidade das infraestruturas aeroportuárias.

O acórdão relativo aos «Open Skies», de 2002, deu competência à União no setor da aviação para negociar acordos internacionais sempre que existam regras internas da União e concluiu que as cláusulas de nacionalidade dos acordos bilaterais violavam o direito da União.

A política externa da União no setor da aviação está alicerçada em 3 pilares: os acordos horizontais, a criação de um Espaço de Aviação Comum com os países vizinhos e os acordos globais com parceiros-chave.

Na Comunicação sobre «A Política Externa da União no setor da aviação — Responder aos futuros desafios» a CE sublinhou «que o crescimento do setor da aviação será relativamente mais expressivo noutras zonas do mundo que não a UE, como a Ásia e o Médio Oriente», cujas companhias aéreas, em 2030, representarão 11 % do tráfego mundial.

Os governos da região do Golfo estão a investir de forma expressiva no setor da aviação, para promover e posicionar esta região globalmente, prestando os serviços da sexta liberdade.

Pergunta-se, por isso, à Comissão:

1. Dispõe de informação sobre quais os Estados-Membros que detêm acordos bilaterais com os países da região do Golfo?

2. Na eventualidade de um acordo geral com esta região do globo, a União dará preferência a um acordo entre blocos ou será uma abordagem de país a país?

Resposta dada por Siim Kallas em nome da Comissão
(14 de agosto de 2013)

Eis a resposta da Comissão às perguntas dos Senhores Deputados:

1. De acordo com as informações de que a Comissão dispõe, os Estados-Membros que têm acordos bilaterais de serviços aéreos com os Estados do Golfo são os seguintes:

— Com os Emirados Árabes Unidos: AT, BE, BG, CY, DE, EE, ES, FI, FR, GR, HU, IE, IT, LU, LT, LV, NL, PT, RO, SK, SL, UK

— Com o Catar: AT, BE, BG, CZ, CY, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GR, HU, IE, IT, LU, LV, MT, NL, PL, RO, SE, UK

— Com o Barém: AT, BE, BG, CZ, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GR, HU, IE, IT, LU, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, UK

— Com o Kowait: AT, BG, BE, CZ, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GR, HU, IT, LU, NL, LV, MT, PL, SL, UK

2. Durante as discussões sobre a Comunicação da Comissão intitulada «A política externa da UE no setor da Aviação — Responder aos futuros desafios», o Conselho tomou a posição de não apoiar, nesta fase, a abertura de negociações sobre transporte aéreo a nível da UE com os Estados do Golfo. Por conseguinte, é prematuro pensar numa abordagem da UE para possíveis negociações sobre transporte aéreo com os países do Golfo. No entanto, a Comissão tenciona encetar um diálogo com os Estados do Golfo, tendo em vista aumentar a transparência e garantir condições de concorrência justas, em conformidade com o parágrafo 28 das Conclusões do Conselho de 22 de dezembro de 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008646/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE), Mário David (PPE) and José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: The EU's external aviation policy — Gulf region IV

European aviation accounts for 2.4% of EU GDP, around EUR 365 billion, and employs around 5.1 million people.

The economic and financial crisis in the EU has had and continues to have a negative impact on this sector, which is gradually becoming less competitive than international airlines in other parts of the world, where heavy investments are being made in renewing fleets, improving services and increasing the quality and capacity of airport infrastructure.

The 'Open Skies' judgment of 2002 gave the EU competence to negotiate international aviation agreements wherever internal EU rules have been agreed, and concluded that the nationality clauses in bilateral agreements violated EC law.

The EU's external aviation policy is based on three pillars: horizontal agreements; the creation of a Common Aviation Area with neighbouring countries; and comprehensive agreements with key partners.

In its communication on 'The EU's External Aviation Policy — Addressing Future Challenges' the Commission emphasised that 'aviation growth will see a relative shift to areas outside the EU […] [such as] Asia and the Middle East', whose airlines will represent 11% of world traffic by 2030.

Governments in the Gulf region are investing heavily in the aviation sector, to promote and position the region globally, providing sixth freedom services.

1. Does the Commission have information on which Member States have bilateral agreements with countries in the Gulf region?

2. Will the EU favour a region-to-region or country-to-country approach in any comprehensive agreement with the Gulf region?

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

The Commission replies to your questions as follows.

1. Accordingly the information available to the Commission the following Member States have bilateral air services agreements with the Gulf States mentioned below:

With the United Arab Emirates: AT, BE, BG, CY, DE, EE, ES, FI, FR, GR, HU, IE, IT, LU, LT, LV, NL, PT, RO, SK, SL, UK

With Qatar: AT, BE, BG, CZ, CY, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GR, HU, IE, IT, LU, LV, MT, NL, PL, RO, SE, UK

With Bahrain: AT, BE, BG, CZ, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GR, HU, IE, IT, LU, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, UK

With Kuwait: AT, BG, BE, CZ, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GR, HU, IT, LU, NL, LV, MT, PL, SL, UK

2. During the discussions about the Commission Communication on 'The EU's External Aviation Policy — Addressing Future Challenges' the Council took the position not to support the opening of EU level air transport negotiations with the Gulf States at this stage. Therefore, it is premature to consider an EU approach towards possible air transport negotiations with the Gulf States. Nevertheless, the Commission intends to start a dialogue with the Gulf States with a view to enhancing transparency and safeguarding fair competition, in line with paragraph 28 of the Council Conclusions of 22 December 2012.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-008647/13
adresată Comisiei
Marian-Jean Marinescu (PPE)
(15 iulie 2013)

Subiect: Cursul solicitărilor Parlamentului pentru o accesibilitate standardizată a persoanelor cu dizabilități în privința numărului de urgențe 112

În Rezoluția sa din 5 iulie 2011 referitoare la serviciul universal și la numărul pentru urgențe 112 (P7_TA(2011)0306), Parlamentul a solicitat insistent Comisiei „standardizarea posibilității de acces a persoanelor cu dizabilități la numărul 112, eventual prin asigurarea unor terminale speciale în favoarea utilizatorilor cu deficiențe de auz, respectiv de vedere, a unor servicii textuale, respectiv de limbaj al semnelor sau a altor echipamente speciale". Parlamentul a adoptat, la 17 noiembrie 2011, o declarație privind necesitatea unor servicii de urgențe 112 accesibile, subliniind că este necesară acordarea unui acces total la numărul de urgență european standardizat 112 pentru persoanele surde, cu deficiențe de auz și cu deficiențe de vorbire, precum și pentru situațiile când apelul impune discreție. Declarația evidenția, de asemenea, necesitatea unor propuneri care să facă serviciile 112 accesibile tuturor cetățenilor. Raportul Comitetului pentru comunicații al Comisiei arată că opțiunea apelări numărului de telefon de urgențe 112 prin alte mijloace decât cele vocale (SMS, text, fax, tehnologii 112 de ultimă generați) este disponibilă doar în 12 state membre. Această cifră nu s-a schimbat între 2012 și 2013. Prin urmare, milioane de utilizatori finali cu dizabilități nu pot accesa serviciile 112.

Situația nu este nouă. Ea contravine, în plus, articolului 26 din Directiva 2009/136/CE, conform căreia utilizatorilor finali cu dizabilități trebuie să li se ofere un acces echivalent la serviciile 112. Care sunt propunerile Comisiei pentru a soluționa această chestiune și a accelera procesul de dezvoltare a capacităților pentru a face numărul 112 accesibil și prin alte mijloace decât cele vocale (de exemplu, apeluri 112 de ultimă generație, care să permită utilizarea limbajului semnelor)?

Intenționează Comisia să-și exercite rolul de gardian al tratatelor, asigurându-se că statele membre își îndeplinesc obligațiile în această privință?

Răspuns dat de dna Kroes în numele Comisiei
(28 august 2013)

Cadrul de reglementare al UE prevede obligația statelor membre de a se asigura că accesul utilizatorilor finali cu handicap la serviciile de urgență este echivalent cu cel de care beneficiază ceilalți utilizatori.

Comisia monitorizează îndeaproape, prin Raportul COCOM, punerea în aplicare a măsurilor privind accesibilitatea la serviciul 112. Din răspunsurile primite de la statele membre se constată faptul că cerințele noului cadru legislativ nu sunt încă puse în aplicare integral, iar statele membre trebuie să intensifice și să accelereze eforturile lor. Statele membre dispun de un cadru legislativ european pentru finanțarea serviciilor de accesibilitate prin intermediul mecanismelor de finanțare a serviciului universal în contextul comunicațiilor electronice.

În cadrul Programului-cadru pentru competitivitate și inovare – Achiziții publice înainte de comercializare, Comisia a finanțat proiectul REACH112, care a validat cu succes alternative accesibile la telefonia vocală tradițională (conversație totală). Proiectul a dezvoltat concepte pentru utilizarea unor astfel de tehnologii în beneficiul persoanelor afectate de surditate și de hipoacuzie și a pus în aplicare cu succes proiecte pilot în mai multe state membre.

Vom continua să urmărim îndeaproape evoluțiile din statele membre. În contextul celui de-al șaselea exercițiu de colectare de date, în chestionar s-au inclus o serie de indicatori de performanță esențiali, cu scopul de a se colecta date măsurate și comparabile cu privire la eficiența sistemelor 112 în statele membre, în conformitate cu cerințele cadrului de reglementare al UE. Pe baza datelor primite de la statele membre, Comisia va decide asupra acțiunilor ulterioare, astfel încât să asigure aplicarea eficientă a cadrului de reglementare al UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008647/13
to the Commission
Marian-Jean Marinescu (PPE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Follow-up to Parliament's request for standardised accessibility for disabled people with regard to the 112 emergency number

In its resolution of 5 July 2011 on universal service and the 112 emergency number (P7_TA(2011)0306), Parliament urged the Commission 'that accessibility be standardised for 112 for disabled people in particular, possibly via the provision of special terminal devices for hearing- or visually-impaired users, text relay or sign language services, or other specific equipment'. A declaration on the need for accessible 112 emergency services was adopted by Parliament on 17 November 2011, stressing the need to grant full access to the standardised European emergency number 112 for deaf, hard-of-hearing, speech-impaired users and for situations where discretion is needed in relation to the call. That declaration also emphasised the need for 'proposals to make 112 services accessible to all citizens'. The Commission's Communications Committee's 2013 report indicates that the option of calling the 112 emergency phone number by a means other than voice (SMS, text relay, fax, Next Generation 112 technologies) is available in only 12 Member States. This figure has not changed between 2012 and 2013. As a consequence, millions of disabled end-users cannot access 112 services.

This situation is not new. It is also goes against Article 26 of Directive 2009/136/EC, according to which disabled end-users must be granted equivalent access to 112 services. What are the Commission's proposals to address this issue and accelerate the process of developing capacities to make 112 accessible by a means other than voice (e.g. Next Generation 112 calls that would allow sign language to be used)?

Does it intend to exert its role as guardian of the Treaty by ensuring that Member States fulfil their obligations in this respect?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(28 August 2013)

The EU regulatory framework requires Member States to ensure that access to emergency services for disabled end-users is equivalent to that enjoyed by other users.

The Commission closely monitors the implementation of accessibility measures for 112 through the COCOM report. Responses received from Member States point to the fact that the requirements of the new legislative framework are not yet fully implemented and Member States have to increase and accelerate their efforts. Member States have a European legislative framework at their disposal to finance accessibility services through Universal Service funding mechanisms in the context of electronic communications.

The Commission financed within the CIP-PCP the REACH112 project, which successfully validated accessible alternatives to traditional voice telephony (total conversation). The project developed concepts for deployment of such technologies for the benefit of deaf and hard-of-hearing people and successfully implemented pilot projects in several MS.

We will continue to closely follow the developments in the Member States. In the context of the sixth data gathering exercise a set of key performance indicators were included in the questionnaire to gather measured and comparable data on the performance of 112 systems in Member States in line with the requirements of the EU regulatory framework. Based on the evidence received from Member States the Commission will decide how to proceed further in ensuring that the EU regulatory framework is effectively implemented.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-008648/13
komissiolle
Satu Hassi (Verts/ALE) ja Carl Schlyter (Verts/ALE)
(15. heinäkuuta 2013)

Aihe: Alkoholin vähimmäisvalmisteveron nostaminen kansanterveyden edistämiseksi

Alkoholin käytön rajoittaminen on tärkeä osa kansanterveyspolitiikkaa monissa EU:n jäsenvaltioissa. Hintojen sääntely alkoholin valmisteverolla on tärkeä työväline tällaisen politiikan toteutuksessa. Yhteys alkoholin hinnan ja kulutuksen välillä on selvästi todettavissa: mitä korkeampi hinta, sitä pienempi kulutus, erityisesti suurkuluttajien keskuudessa.

EU:n laajuiset vähimmäistasot alkoholin valmisteverolle ovat tarpeellisia sisämarkkinoilla, jotta hinnoittelupolitiikka ei heikenny rajojen yli ostamisella. Nykyisiä vähimmäisvalmiste-veroja ei ole kuitenkaan muutettu vuoden 1992 jälkeen, mikä tarkoittaa, että niiden todellinen arvo on laskenut keskimäärin kolmanneksen inflaation vuoksi. Lisäksi on huomioitava, että niiden todellinen arvo oli melko alhainen jo vuonna 1992.

Alkoholin vähimmäisvalmisteveron todellisen arvon heikentyminen aiheuttaa ongelmia terveyspolitiikalle useissa jäsenvaltioissa. Suomessa hallitus laski valmisteveroja vuonna 2004 vastauksena voimistuvaan suuntaukseen ostaa alkoholia Virosta, jossa verot ovat hyvin alhaisia. Tulos oli kansanterveyden kannalta erittäin huono. Tanskan hallitus päätti laskea oluen verotusta 15 prosentilla 1. heinäkuuta 2013, mikä teki alkoholista edullisempaa Tanskassa asuvien ihmisten lisäksi myös naapurimaiden asukkaille. Tässä kilpaillaan alimmasta verotasosta: se tarkoittaa, että verojen alentaminen yhdessä maassa johtaa verojen alenemiseen naapurimaissa.

Onko komissio samaa mieltä siitä, että alkoholin vähimmäisvalmisteveron nostamisesta olisi hyötyä kansanterveyden suojelussa?

Jos on, onko komissiolla suunnitteilla lainsäädäntöehdotuksia aiheesta lähitulevaisuudessa?

Algirdas Šemetan komission puolesta antama vastaus
(3. syyskuuta 2013)

1. Kyllä. Valmisteverolla voi olla suuri vaikutus alkoholin hintaan, ja on olemassa painavaa näyttöä siitä, että alkoholin hinnan korotus voi auttaa kansanterveyden suojelussa.

2. Ei. Komission ehdotuksella pyritään muun muassa korottamaan alkoholin valmisteveron vähimmäistasoja [KOM(2006)486]. Ehdotus on edelleen neuvoston käsiteltävänä, mutta siitä ei ole keskusteltu vuoden 2007 jälkeen.

Alkoholi on merkittävä kansanterveysongelma Euroopan unionissa, sillä se on yksi kroonisten sairauksien tärkeimmistä riskitekijöistä. Euroopan komissio on puuttunut arvoisan parlamentin jäsenen mainitsemiin negatiivisiin ilmiöihin EU:n strategialla, jolla tuetaan jäsenvaltioita alkoholiin liittyvien haittojen vähentämisessä. ([1]) Kansallista alkoholipolitiikkaa ja toimintaa käsittelevä komitea on yksi strategiaa täytäntöönpanevista rakenteista. Se on jäsenvaltioiden komitea ja toimii myös foorumina, jolla voidaan jakaa ja vaihtaa parhaita käytäntöjä.

([1]) Tiedonanto 24. lokakuuta 2006, EU:n strategia jäsenvaltioiden tukemiseksi alkoholiin liittyvien haittojen vähentämisessä KOM(2006)0625.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-008648/13
till kommissionen
Satu Hassi (Verts/ALE) och Carl Schlyter (Verts/ALE)
(15 juli 2013)

Angående: Höjd minimipunktskatt på alkohol för att förbättra folkhälsan

Att begränsa alkoholkonsumtionen är en viktig del av folkhälsopolitiken i många EU-medlemsstater. Prisreglering genom punktskatt på alkohol är ett viktigt verktyg i genomförandet av sådan politik. Kopplingen mellan priset på och konsumtionen av alkohol är väletablerad: ju högre pris, desto lägre konsumtion, särskilt bland missbrukare.

I och med den inre marknaden behövs EU-övergripande miniminivåer för punktskatt på alkohol för att undvika en urvattning av prispolitiken genom gränshandel. Den rådande minimipunktskatten har dock inte ändrats sedan 1992, vilket innebär att realvärdet har sjunkit med omkring en tredjedel på grund av inflationen, för att inte nämna det faktum att realvärdet var tämligen lågt redan 1992.

Minskningen av realvärdet av minimipunktskatten på alkohol skapar svårigheter för hälsopolitiken i flera medlemsstater. I Finland sänkte regeringen punktskatten 2004 som ett svar på den växande trenden att handla alkohol i Estland, där skatterna är mycket låga. Det fick oerhört allvarliga effekter på folkhälsan. Den danska regeringen beslutade att sänka skatten på öl med 15 procent den 1 juli 2013, vilket har gjort alkoholen billigare inte bara för invånarna i Danmark, utan även i dess grannländer. Detta är en kapplöpning mot botten: sänkta skatter i ett land kommer att leda till sänkta skatter i grannländerna.

Håller kommissionen med om att en höjning av minimipunktskatten på alkohol skulle bidra till att skydda folkhälsan?

Planerar kommissionen i så fall några lagstiftningsförslag den kommande tiden?

Svar från Algirdas Šemeta på kommissionens vägnar
(3 september 2013)

1. Ja. Punktskatt kan vara ett viktigt verktyg för att styra priset på alkohol och det finns gott om belägg för att högre alkoholpriser kan bidra till att skydda folkhälsan.

2. Nej. Ett förslag från kommissionen om höjda minimiskattesatser för punktskatt på alkoholdrycker [KOM(2006) 486] ligger fortfarande på rådets bord, men har inte diskuterats sedan 2007.

Alkohol är ett stort folkhälsoproblem i EU och en av de största riskfaktorerna för kroniska sjukdomar. För att motverka den negativa utvecklingen, bland annat det som parlamentsledamoten nämner, har kommissionen antagit en EU-strategi som ska hjälpa medlemsländerna att minska de alkoholrelaterade skadorna ([1]). För att genomföra strategin har vi också inrättat kommittén för nationella alkoholpolitiska insatser (Cnapa), där medlemsländerna kan utbyta god praxis.

([1]) Meddelande av den 24 oktober 2006, En EU-strategi för att stödja medlemsstaterna i arbetet med att minska de alkoholrelaterade skadorna, [KOM(2006) 625].

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008648/13
to the Commission
Satu Hassi (Verts/ALE) and Carl Schlyter (Verts/ALE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Raising minimum excise duties on alcohol to improve public health

Limiting the use of alcohol is an important part of public health policy in many EU Member States. Regulating prices through excise duties on alcohol is an important tool in implementing such policies. The link between alcohol prices and consumption is well established: the higher the prices, the lower the consumption, especially among heavy drinkers.

With the single market, EU-wide minimum levels for excise duties on alcohol are necessary in order to avoid the dilution of pricing policy through cross-border purchases. However, current minimum excise duties have not been changed since 1992, meaning that their real value has decreased by approximately one third because of inflation, not to mention the fact that the real value was rather low even in 1992.

The decline of the real value of minimum excise duties on alcohol is causing difficulties for health policies in several Member States. In Finland the government reduced excise duties in 2004 in a response to the growing trend for purchasing alcohol from Estonia, where the taxes are very low. The outcome as regards public health was extremely negative. The Danish Government decided to cut the beer tax by 15% on 1 July 2013, which made alcohol more affordable not only for people living in Denmark, but also in neighbouring countries. This is a sign of a race to the bottom: a decrease in taxes in one country will lead to decreases in taxes in the neighbouring countries.

Does the Commission agree that raising the minimum excise duties on alcohol would be useful in protecting public health?

If so, is the Commission planning any legislative proposals in the near future?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(3 September 2013)

1. Yes. Excise duty can have an important role in influencing the price for alcohol and there is good evidence that raising the cost of alcohol can help protect public health.

2. No. A Commission proposal aiming *inter alia* at increasing the minimum rates of excise duty on alcohol beverages [COM(2006)486] is still on the table of the Council but has not been discussed since 2007.

Alcohol is a key public health concern in the European Union as one of the major risk factors leading to chronic diseases. In response to the negative trends, such as those mentioned by the Honourable Member, the European Commission has adopted the EU strategy to support Member States in reducing alcohol related harm ([1]). One of the structures for implementing the strategy is the Committee on National Alcohol Policies and Action (CNAPA), which is a Member States committee and serves also as platform for sharing and exchange of good practices.

([1]) Communication of 24 October 2006, An EU strategy to support Member States in reducing alcohol related harm COM(2006) 625.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-008649/13
adresată Comisiei
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(15 iulie 2013)

Subiect: Actele de brutalitate împotriva copiilor din Bangladesh

În Bangladesh au avut loc recent cazuri șocante de brutalitate împotriva copiilor. În iunie, o fată a fost violată în grup de un imam (șef musulman) și prietenii acestuia în districtul Narsingdi, iar o fată de 11 ani a fost violată de un muezin (persoana care anunță chemarea la rugăciune) în districtul Feni Dagonbhuiyan, în timp ce în martie, o fată de 7 ani a fost ucisă după ce a fost violată în districtul Sherpur. În ianuarie, o fată de 9 ani a fost violată și ucisă prin spânzurare în Dhaka și o elevă de 11 ani din districtul Shah Ali din capitală a fost violată până la moarte de un grup și spânzurată după ce a fost ucisă. O altă fată din regiunea Muhseniapara din Cox's Bazar a fost ucis în mod sălbatic și spânzurată de o creangă de copac în urma unui viol barbar în grup.

Incidentele implicând agresiuni sexuale împotriva copiilor sunt în creștere, cu toate că Înalta Curte de Justiție din Bangladesh a solicitat poliției, în ianuarie 2013, „să nu aștepte intervenția nimănui și să deschidă ea însăși dosarele pentru cazurile de viol atunci când există informații în acest sens".

Odhikar, o organizație pentru drepturile omului bazată în Bangladesh, a afirmat, în raportul său de monitorizare a drepturilor omului pentru perioada ianuarie-iunie 2013, că 284 de copii cu vârsta de sub 16 ani au fost violați în timpul acestor șase luni. Dintre aceștia, 18 au fost uciși după ce au fost violați, 92 au fost victime de viol în grup și 3 s-au sinucis.

Asigură Comisia finanțare în Bangladesh pentru a combate brutalitatea îndreptată în special împotriva copiilor și pentru a garanta că se va face dreptate?

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-008650/13
adresată Comisiei (Vicepreședintelui/Înaltului Reprezentant)
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(15 iulie 2013)

Subiect: VP/HR— Actele de brutalitate împotriva copiilor din Bangladesh

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Ce măsuri va lua Vicepreședintele Comisiei/Înaltul Reprezentant al Uniunii pentru afaceri externe și politica de securitate-prin intermediul delegației UE la Dhaka sau prin alte mijloace-pentru a opri violența împotriva copiilor și pentru a garanta aplicarea măsurilor legale împotriva autorilor?

Răspuns comun dat de dna Ashton, Înalt Reprezentant/Vicepreședinte în numele Comisiei
(13 septembrie 2013)

Drepturile copiilor sunt unul dintre cele mai importante aspecte abordate de Uniunea Europeană în cadrul dialogului său periodic cu statul Bangladesh privind guvernanța și drepturile omului. Maltratarea copiilor, în toate formele sale, reprezintă în continuare o problemă gravă în Asia de Sud și gradul de sensibilizare a publicului cu privire la aceste aspecte este încă neadecvat. În ultimii ani s-au înregistrat progrese importante în Bangladesh, însă asigurarea respectării legislației continuă să fie o problemă. Este îmbucurător faptul că a fost întocmit un Plan național de acțiune pentru copii și că prim-ministrul prezidează personal Consiliul național pentru dezvoltarea femeilor și a copiilor, care supraveghează realizarea acestui plan. Bangladesh este parte semnatară a Convenției Națiunilor Unite cu privire la drepturile copilului și a câtorva dintre cele mai importante convenții ale Organizației Internaționale a Muncii (OIM).

Înaltul Reprezentant pentru Afaceri Externe și Politica de Securitate/Vicepreședintele Comisiei Europene a abordat în mod constant aspecte cum ar fi căsătoria sub vârsta majoratului, care este ilegală în Bangladesh, dar încă larg răspândită; traficul de copii, pedepsele corporale aplicate copiilor și vârsta de răspundere penală. Aceste aspecte au făcut, de asemenea, obiectul unor recomandări în cadrul evaluării periodice universale (EPU) a statului Bangladesh, desfășurată în aprilie 2013.

O serie de proiecte relevante, finanțate la nivelul UE și la nivel bilateral de către statele membre, au vizat drepturilor copiilor din Bangladesh și se așteaptă ca atât sistemul de justiție, cât și drepturilor femeilor și ale copiilor să fie abordate în continuare pe parcursul perioadei de programare, în cadrul următoarei etape de asistență (2014-2020).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008649/13
to the Commission
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Brutality against children in Bangladesh

Shocking cases of brutality against children have recently taken place in Bangladesh. In June, a girl was gang raped by an Imam (Muslim leader) and his friends in the Narsingdi district, and an 11-year-old girl was raped by a muezzin (announcer of the call to prayer) in the Feni Dagonbhuiyan district, while in March, a 7-year-old girl was killed after being raped in the Sherpur district. In January, a 9-year-old girl was raped and killed by hanging in Dhaka, and an 11-year-old schoolgirl in the Shah Ali district of the capital was raped to death by a gang and hanged after being killed. Another girl in the Muhseniapara area of Cox's Bazar was brutally killed and hanged from a branch of a tree following a barbaric gang rape.

Although the High Court of Bangladesh called on the police in January 2013 'not to wait for anybody to come and file a rape case on their own if they had information', incidents of sexual assault against children have been on the rise.

Odhikar, a Bangladesh-based human rights organisation, stated in its January-June 2013 human rights monitoring report that 284 children below the age of 16 were reportedly raped during these 6 months. Among them, 18 were killed after being raped, 92 were victims of gang rape and 3 committed suicide.

Does the Commission provide funding in Bangladesh to combat brutality against children in particular and to ensure that justice is served?

Question for written answer E-008650/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Brutality against children in Bangladesh

Shocking cases of brutality against children have recently taken place in Bangladesh. In June, a girl was gang raped by an Imam (Muslim leader) and his friends in the Narsingdi district, and an 11-year-old girl was raped by a muezzin (announcer of the call to prayer) in the Feni Dagonbhuiyan district, while in March, a 7-year-old girl was killed after being raped in the Sherpur district. In January, a 9-year-old girl was raped and killed by hanging in Dhaka, and an 11-year-old schoolgirl in the Shah Ali district of the capital was raped to death by a gang and hanged after being killed. Another girl in the Muhseniapara area of Cox's Bazar was brutally killed and hanged from a branch of a tree following a barbaric gang rape.

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How will the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy — through the EU delegation in Dhaka or by other means -take action in order to stop violence against children and to ensure that legal measures are taken against perpetrators?

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

Children's rights are among the most important issues the EU raises in its regular dialogue with Bangladesh on governance and human rights. Child abuse in all its forms remains a serious problem in South Asia and public understanding of the issues is still inadequate. Some important progress has been made in recent years in Bangladesh, but enforcement of justice continues to be a problem. It is positive that a National Plan of Action for Children has been drawn up and that the Prime Minister herself chairs the National Council for Women's and Children's Development which oversees it. Bangladesh is party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and to some of the most relevant International Labour Organisation (ILO) Conventions.

The HR/VP has consistently raised questions such as underage marriage, which is illegal in Bangladesh but still widespread; trafficking of children; corporal punishment of children and the age of criminal responsibility. These were also the subject of recommendations at Bangladesh's Universal Periodic Review in April 2013.

A number of relevant projects funded by the EU and bilaterally by Member States have targeted children's rights in Bangladesh, and both the justice system and women's and children's rights are expected to continue to be addressed during programming under the next phase of assistance (2014-2020).

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-008651/13
adresată Comisiei
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(15 iulie 2013)

Subiect: Violența împotriva femeilor în Bangladesh

Statisticile arată că oprimarea femeilor în Bangladesh a ajuns la un nivel deosebit de grav în ultimii patru ani. Un număr semnificativ de femei sunt victime ale violului, violenței legate de zestre, agresiunilor cu acid și hărțuirii sexuale.

Odhikar, o organizație pentru drepturile omului bazată în Bangladesh, a afirmat, în raportul său de monitorizare a drepturilor omului pentru perioada ianuarie-iunie 2013, că 221 de femei au fost violate, dintre care 16 au fost ucise, 255 au fost supuse violenței legate de zestre, dintre care 86 au fost ucise, 12 femei au fost victime ale atacurilor cu acid și 204 fete și femei au fost victime ale hărțuirii sexuale.

În plus, Fundația supraviețuitoarelor agresiunilor cu acid a dezvăluit statistici care arată că în Bangladesh are loc o agresiune cu acid la fiecare două zile, fiind un mod obișnuit de a răni și a umili femeile și familiile acestora.

Asigură Comisia finanțare în Bangladesh cu scopul specific de a combate violența împotriva femeilor și de a garanta că se va face dreptate?

Răspuns dat de dl Piebalgs în numele Comisiei
(5 septembrie 2013)

Comisia urmează o dublă abordare, pe de o parte prin integrarea aspectelor legate de egalitatea între femei și bărbați (inclusiv a celor legate de violența împotriva femeilor) în toate programele de cooperare pentru dezvoltare și, pe de altă parte, prin proiecte specifice. În prezent, aproximativ 2 milioane EUR sunt alocate pentru patru proiecte diferite privind egalitatea între femei și bărbați în Bangladesh, dintre care două sunt destinate în mod specific combaterii violenței împotriva femeilor, iar celelalte două vizează drepturile femeii în general, având componente de sensibilizare cu privire la violența împotriva femeilor ([1]). Printre activități se numără consolidarea capacităților comunităților locale și a abilităților acestora de a conduce, precum și întărirea rolului societății civile, al mass-media, al educatorilor și al tineretului de apărători ai acestei cauze, pentru a se spori sensibilizarea cu privire la violența împotriva femeilor și pentru a se elimina această problemă.

În plus, au fost create grupuri de lucru în domeniul asistenței judiciare pentru a informa victimele cu privire la protecția pe care le-o oferă legea și pentru a le oferi sprijinul adecvat în vederea reabilitării și integrării. În cadrul proiectului „*Activating Village Courts in Bangladesh*" („Activarea instanțelor judecătorești sătești în Bangladesh") (10 milioane EUR), intervenție emblematică a Comisiei în materie de acces la justiție, se derulează mai multe inițiative dedicate femeilor, vizând sensibilizarea și sporirea gradului de participare a populației, în calitate atât de reclamanți, cât și de jurați. Printre aceste inițiative se numără ateliere de formare, publicarea de materiale informative, precum și un proiect de act de modificare prin care numirea a cel puțin unei femei ca membră a juriului de judecată să devină obligatorie atunci când cauzele implică interesele femeilor.

Activitățile anterioare ale Comisiei în Bangladesh au abordat conflictele profunde care reprezintă factori de instigare la agresiuni cu acid și au contribuit atât la creșterea gradului de conștientizare, în sânul comunităților, a situației psihosociale a victimelor agresiunilor cu acid, cât și la preîntâmpinarea excluderii acestora. Începând cu anul 2002, când agresiunile cu acid au atins punctul culminant, s-a înregistrat o scădere considerabilă a numărului atacurilor de acest tip.

([1]) Mai multe detalii sunt prezentate în anexă, care este trimisă direct distinsei deputate și Secretariatului Parlamentului.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008651/13
to the Commission
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Violence against women in Bangladesh

Statistics show that the oppression of women in Bangladesh has increased to a severe extent over the last four years. A significant number of women are victims of rape, dowry-related violence, acid violence and sexual harassment.

Odhikar, a Bangladesh-based human rights organisation, stated in its January-June 2013 human rights monitoring report that 221 women were reportedly raped, among whom 16 were killed; 255 were subjected to dowry-related violence, among whom 86 were killed; 12 women were victims of acid violence; and 204 girls and women were victims of sexual harassment.

Additionally, the Acid Survivor's Foundation has revealed statistics showing that one acid attack happens every two days in Bangladesh, it being a very common way of hurting and humiliating women and their families.

Does the Commission provide funding in Bangladesh aimed specifically at combating violence against women and at ensuring that justice is served?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(5 September 2013)

The Commission follows a two-track approach by mainstreaming gender issues (including violence against women) into all development cooperation programmes alongside specific projects. Currently, around EUR 2 million are devoted to four different gender projects in Bangladesh, two of which are specifically aimed at combating violence against women and two others targeting women's rights in general with components on awareness-raising on violence against women ([1]). Activities include building the capacities of local communities and leadership, civil society, media, educators and youth as advocates to raise awareness about and to eliminate violence against women.

Furthermore, paralegal working groups have been created to make victims aware of the protection they enjoy by law and to provide them with appropriate support for rehabilitation and integration. The Commission's flagship intervention in the area of access to justice, the 'Activating Village Courts in Bangladesh' project (EUR 10 million.), has undertaken several initiatives targeting women to create awareness and increase participation both as petitioners and jury members. Among these are training workshops, publication of information materials, and a draft Amendment Act to make the nomination of at least one female panel member mandatory when cases involve women's interests.

Past Commission activities in Bangladesh have addressed the underlying conflicts that instigate acid violence and contributed to raising communities' awareness of the psycho-social situation of acid violence victims and preventing their exclusion. Since 2002, when acid violence reached its peak, there has been a considerable decrease in the number of attacks.

([1]) Details are provided in Annex, which is sent directly to the Honourable Member and to Parliament's Secretariat.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-008652/13
adresată Comisiei (Vicepreședintelui/Înaltului Reprezentant)
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(15 iulie 2013)

Subiect: VP/HR— Violența împotriva femeilor în Bangladesh

Statisticile arată că oprimarea femeilor în Bangladesh a ajuns la un nivel deosebit de grav în ultimii patru ani. Un număr semnificativ de femei sunt victime ale violului, violenței legate de zestre, agresiunilor cu acid și hărțuirii sexuale.

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În plus, Fundația supraviețuitoarelor agresiunilor cu acid a dezvăluit statistici care arată că în Bangladesh are loc o agresiune cu acid la fiecare două zile, fiind un mod obișnuit de a răni și a umili femeile și familiile acestora.

Ce măsuri va lua Vicepreședintele Comisiei/Înaltul Reprezentant al Uniunii pentru afaceri externe și politica de securitate, prin intermediul delegației UE la Dhaka, sau prin alte mijloace, pentru a opri violența împotriva femeilor și pentru a garanta aplicarea măsurilor legale împotriva autorilor?

Răspuns dat de dna Ashton, Înalt Reprezentant/Vicepreședinte în numele Comisiei
(19 septembrie 2013)

Drepturile femeii se numără printre chestiunile cele mai importante abordate de UE în dialogul pe care îl desfășoară periodic cu Bangladesh pe teme de guvernanță și drepturile omului.

Comisia Europeană aplică o strategie multilaterală care vizează, de asemenea, să integreze aspectele legate de gen (inclusiv cele legate de violența împotriva femeilor) în toate programele sale de cooperare pentru dezvoltare. În prezent, aproximativ 2 milioane EUR sunt alocate pentru patru proiecte diferite privind egalitatea dintre femei și bărbați în Bangladesh, două dintre ele fiind destinate în mod specific combaterii violenței împotriva femeilor, iar celelalte două vizând drepturile femeii în general, având componente legate de conștientizare și sensibilizare cu privire la violența împotriva femeilor. Printre activități se numără consolidarea capacităților comunităților locale și ale liderilor, ale societății civile, ale mass-media, ale educatorilor și ale tineretului ca susținători ai acestei cauze, având ca obiectiv sporirea sensibilizării cu privire la violența împotriva femeilor și eliminarea acestui fenomen.

În plus, au fost create grupuri de lucru în domeniul asistenței judiciare pentru a informa victimele cu privire la protecția pe care le-o oferă legea și pentru a le acorda un sprijin adecvat în vederea reabilitării și integrării lor. În cadrul proiectului „Activating Village Courts in Bangladesh" („Activarea instanțelor judecătorești sătești în Bangladesh") (10 milioane EUR), intervenție emblematică a Comisiei în materie de acces la justiție, se derulează mai multe inițiative dedicate femeilor, vizând sensibilizarea și sporirea gradului de participare a populației, în calitate atât de reclamanți, cât și de jurați.

Intervențiile anterioare din Bangladesh au abordat conflictele profunde care reprezintă factori de instigare la agresiuni cu acid și au contribuit atât la sensibilizarea comunităților cu privire la situația psihosocială a supraviețuitoarelor agresiunilor cu acid, cât și la prevenirea excluderii acestora. Începând cu anul 2002, când agresiunile cu acid au atins punctul culminant, s-a înregistrat o scădere considerabilă a numărului atacurilor de acest tip.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008652/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Violence against women in Bangladesh

Statistics show that the oppression of women in Bangladesh has increased to a severe extent over the last four years. A significant number of women are victims of rape, dowry-related violence, acid violence and sexual harassment.

Odhikar, a Bangladesh-based human rights organisation, stated in its January-June 2013 human rights monitoring report that 221 women were reportedly raped, among whom 16 were killed; 255 were subjected to dowry-related violence, among whom 86 were killed; 12 women were victims of acid violence; and 204 girls and women were victims of sexual harassment.

Additionally, the Acid Survivor's Foundation has revealed statistics showing that one acid attack happens every two days in Bangladesh, it being a very common way of hurting and humiliating women and their families.

How will the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, through the EU delegation in Dhaka or by other means, take action in order to stop violence against women and to ensure that legal measures are taken against perpetrators?

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

Women's rights are among the most important issues the EU raises in its regular dialogue with Bangladesh on governance and human rights.

The European Commission follows a multi-track approach by also mainstreaming gender issues (including violence against women) into all its development cooperation programmes. Currently, around EUR 2 million are devoted to four different gender projects in Bangladesh, two of which are specifically aimed at combating violence against women and two others targeting women's rights in general with components on awareness raising and sensitisation on violence against women. Activities include capacity building of local communities and leadership, civil society, media, educators and youth as advocates to raise awareness about and to eliminate violence against women.

Furthermore, paralegal working groups have been created to make victims aware of the protection they enjoy by law and to provide them with appropriate support for rehabilitation and integration. The Commission's flagship intervention in the area of access to justice, the Activating Village Courts in Bangladesh project (EUR 10 million), has undertaken several initiatives targeting women to create awareness and increase participation both as petitioners and jury members.

Past interventions in Bangladesh have addressed the underlying conflicts that instigate acid violence and contributed to sensitise communities for the psycho-social situation of acid violence survivors and prevent their exclusion. Since 2002, when acid violence reached its peak, there has been a considerable decrease in the number of attacks.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-008653/13
adresată Comisiei
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(15 iulie 2013)

Subiect: Informații privind procesul de regionalizare din România

Ministerul Dezvoltării Regionale din România a lansat recent o dezbatere publică privind procesul de descentralizare și regionalizare a administrației. Se pare că autoritățile române intenționează să organizeze un referendum privind modificarea structurii regiunilor clasificate NUTS II. La 3 iulie 2013, ministrul dezvoltării regionale a vizitat Comitetul Regiunilor pentru a prezenta modificările prevăzute.

Potrivit articolului 5 alineatul (1) din Regulamentul (CE) nr. 1059/2003, statele membre trebuie să informeze Comisia cu privire la modificările ce vizează unitățile administrative care ar putea afecta nomenclatorul comun al unităților teritoriale de statistică:

„Statele membre informează Comisia cu privire la:

(a) orice schimbare survenită în unitățile administrative, în măsura în care poate avea un impact asupra nomenclatorului NUTS, așa cum este definit la anexa I sau în conținutul anexelor II și III;

(b) orice altă modificare la nivel național care poate avea un impact asupra nomenclatorului NUTS, în conformitate cu criteriile de clasificare definite la articolul 3."

A contactat Guvernul României Comisia pentru a o informa cu privire la modificările prevăzute care ar putea afecta clasificarea NUTS?

Răspuns dat de dl Šemeta în numele Comisiei
(30 august 2013)

Atât Reprezentanța Permanentă a României pe lângă Uniunea Europeană, cât și Institutul Național de Statistică (INSSE) au informat Comisia în cadrul rundei de revizuire a NUTS din februarie 2013 că România nu va propune nicio modificare a actualei structuri a NUTS (NUTS 2010) pentru următoarea versiune (NUTS 2013), care va intra în vigoare la 1 ianuarie 2015.

În plus, autoritățile române au informat că programul național de guvernare 2013-2016 urmărește un proces de descentralizare administrativă în care se prevede crearea unui nivel administrativ regional suplimentar în România.

De îndată ce reforma administrativă prevăzută în România este finalizată, urmează ca autoritățile naționale să prezinte o propunere detaliată pentru a include modificările în clasificarea NUTS. Această propunere va fi evaluată în conformitate cu Regulamentul NUTS ([1]), în special cu articolul 5.

Trebuie menționat faptul că modificările NUTS făcute în afara revizuirilor efectuate periodic o dată la trei ani nu sunt posibile decât dacă are loc o reorganizare substanțială a structurii administrative într-un stat membru.

([1]) Regulamentul (CE) nr. 1059/2003 al Parlamentului European și al Consiliului din 26 mai 2003 privind instituirea unui nomenclator comun al unităților teritoriale de statistică (NUTS), JO L 154, 21.6.2003.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008653/13
to the Commission
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Communication on Romania's regionalisation

The Romanian Ministry of Regional Development has recently launched a public debate about the decentralisation process and administrative regionalisation. It appears that the Romanian authorities intend to submit to a referendum the proposed change to the structure of NUTS II regions. The Minister for Regional Development visited the Council of Regions on 3 July 2013 to present the planned changes.

In accordance with Article 5(1) of Regulation (EC) No 1059/2003, Member States must inform the Commission about changes concerning administrative units which could affect the nomenclature of territorial units for statistics:

'The Member States shall inform the Commission of:

(a) all changes that have occurred in administrative units, in so far as they may affect the NUTS classification, as laid down in Annex I, or the contents of Annexes II and III;

(b) all other changes at the national level that may affect the NUTS classification, in accordance with the classification criteria laid down in Article 3.'

Has any communication been initiated between the Romanian Government and the Commission on the intended changes that may affect the NUTS classification?

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

Both the Permanent Representation of Romania to the European Union and the National Statistical Institute (INSSE) informed the Commission in the framework of the NUTS 2013 revision round in February 2013 that Romania would not propose any changes to the current NUTS breakdown (NUTS 2010) for the next NUTS version (NUTS 2013), which shall take effect as of 1 January 2015.

In addition, the Romanian authorities informed that the national Governing Programme 2013-2016 pursuits a process of administrative decentralisation envisaging an additional regional administrative level in Romania.

Once the foreseen administrative reform is finalised in Romania, a detailed proposal from the national authorities is expected for the inclusion of the changes into the NUTS classification. Such proposal will be evaluated in accordance with the NUTS Regulation ([1]), in particular Article 5 thereof.

It is worth mentioning that NUTS amendments outside the regular revisions every 3 years are only possible if a substantial reorganisation of the administrative structure in a Member State has taken place.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1059/2003 of the European Parliament and the Council of 26 May 2003 on the establishment of a common classification of territorial units for statistics (NUTS), OJ L 154, 21.6.2003.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-008654/13
adresată Comisiei
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(15 iulie 2013)

Subiect: Efectul Zonei de liber schimb aprofundat și cuprinzător cu Moldova asupra întreprinderilor din Transnistria

La 12 iunie 2013, Comisia a anunțat încheierea negocierilor pentru o Zonă de liber schimb aprofundat și cuprinzător (ZLSAC) cu Republica Moldova.

În conformitate cu condițiile regimului de preferințe comerciale autonome, întreprinderile din regiunea „Transnistria" care exportă către Uniunea Europeană trebuie să posede un certificat care atestă că produsele lor provin din Republica Moldova. Pentru a obține acest certificat, întreprinderile trebuie să se înregistreze la Camera Înregistrării de Stat a Republicii Moldova. Pentru a verifica originea produselor, funcționarii vamali din Republica Moldova trebuie să efectueze inspecții la întreprinderile situate în teritoriile controlate de „autoritățile transnistrene".

Pentru a-și putea exporta produsele către Uniunea Europeană, întreprinderile înregistrate la Camera Înregistrării de Stat a Republicii Moldova trebuie să respecte noile reglementări referitoare la procedurile de atestare a proveniență aprobate în cadrul ZLSAC, cum ar fi standardele fitosanitare și de igienă.

A încercat Comisia să adapteze reglementările referitoare la procedurile de atestare a proveniență la contextul din regiunea „Transnistria", în special cele privind inspecțiile la întreprinderile situate pe malul stâng al râului Nistru?

Răspuns dat de dl De Gucht în numele Comisiei
(30 august 2013)

Stabilirea unor relații avansate între UE și Republica Moldova prin Acordul de asociere și Zona de liber schimb complex și cuprinzător aferentă va marca o schimbare în ceea ce privește amploarea și profunzimea angajamentelor reciproce asumate de ambii parteneri de negociere.

Zona de liber schimb complex și cuprinzător se bazează pe acordurile existente între UE și Republica Moldova, în special pe Acordul de parteneriat și cooperare, și pe accesul preferențial autonom și unilateral al mărfurilor dinspre Republica Moldova către piața UE, creat prin regulamentul Consiliului de introducere a unor preferințe comerciale autonome.

Cu toate acestea, în cadrul zonei de liber schimb complex și cuprinzător, părțile intenționează să demareze un program ambițios de reformă care să vizeze liberalizarea largă a comerțului, prin care economia Republicii Moldova, legislația și standardele sale să se apropie mai mult de cele ale UE. În acest context, UE a recunoscut faptul că Republica Moldova nu exercită în prezent un control efectiv în Transnistria și, prin urmare, nu este în măsură să pună în aplicare și să asigure respectarea zonei de liber schimb complex și cuprinzător în această regiune. Prin urmare, preferințele disponibile în cadrul acordului de liber schimb complex și cuprinzător vor fi extinse la Transnistria de îndată ce Republica Moldova demonstrează că este capabilă să asigure punerea în aplicare eficace și respectarea normelor de liber schimb complex și cuprinzător în Transnistria. Una dintre normele prevăzute în acordul de liber schimb complex și cuprinzător se referă la aplicarea uniformă și la respectarea legislației vamale privind regulile de origine.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008654/13
to the Commission
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Effect of the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area with Moldova on Transnistrian companies

On 12 June 2013, the Commission announced the conclusion of negotiations for a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area with Moldova (DCFTA).

Under the conditions of the Autonomous Trade Preferences regime, companies from the 'Transnistrian' region exporting to the European Union need to have a certificate proving that their goods originate from the Republic of Moldova. For this certificate, companies have to register with the Moldovan State Chamber of Registration. In order to verify the origin of goods, Moldovan customs officials must carry out inspections at the companies based in the territories controlled by the 'Transnistrian authorities'.

In order to be able to export their products to the European Union, companies registered with the Moldovan State Chamber of Registration must comply with new rules relating to the origin certification procedures agreed in the DCFTA, such as phyto-sanitary and hygiene standards.

Has the Commission sought to adapt the rules relating to the origin certification procedures to the context in the 'Transnistrian' region, especially the rules concerning inspections at the companies based on the left bank of the Dniester river?

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

The establishment of advanced relations between the EU and the Republic of Moldova through the Association Agreement and its Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) will mark a shift in the depth and breadth of the mutual commitments of both negotiation partners.

The DCFTA builds upon existing agreements between the EU and the Republic of Moldova, in particular the partnership and cooperation agreement, and the autonomous and unilateral preferential access for goods of the Republic of Moldova to the EU market created by Council Regulation introducing Autonomous Trade Preferences.

In the framework of the DCFTA, however, the Parties plan to engage in an ambitious reform agenda aiming at wide trade liberalisation through bringing the Moldovan economy, its legislation and standards closer to that of the EU. In this context, the EU acknowledged that the Republic of Moldova currently does not exercise effective control in Transnistria and is, therefore prevented from implementing and enforcing the DCFTA in this region. Therefore, the preferences available under the DCFTA will be extended to Transnistria, once the Republic of Moldova demonstrates that it is able to ensure effective implementation and enforcement of the DCFTA rules in Transnistria. One of these DCFTA rules relates to the uniform application and enforcement of customs legislation, covering rules of origin.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-008655/13
adresată Comisiei
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(15 iulie 2013)

Subiect: Standarde pentru controalele la frontieră în Republica Moldova

În cadrul Planului de acțiune privind liberalizarea regimului vizelor, autoritățile din Republica Moldova trebuie să implementeze în mod eficace legislația în materie de control al frontierelor prin controale și supraveghere adecvate ale frontierelor. În prezent, Republica Moldova implementează măsuri vizând controlarea fluxurilor de migrație prin regiunea Transnistria. Aceasta va fi realizată prin ameliorarea înregistrării persoanelor care nu dețin cetățenia Republicii Moldova și printr-o mai bună controlare a migrației, de către Ministerul de Interne, pe așa-numita „linie administrativă" dintre Republica Moldova și teritoriul controlat de așa-numitele „autorități transnistrene".

Al patrulea raport intermediar privind Planul de acțiune al Republicii Moldova privind liberalizarea regimului vizelor prevede că noile măsuri implementate în prezent nu vor afecta circulația persoanelor care nu dețin cetățenia Republicii Moldova în cadrul frontierelor Republicii Moldova recunoscute la nivel internațional.

Aceste măsuri ar trebui implementate astfel încât să nu împiedice circulația cetățenilor Republicii Moldova de cealaltă parte a așa-numitei „linii administrative". Circulația acestor cetățeni este vitală pentru cei ce trăiesc pe teritoriul controlat de „autoritățile transnistrene".

1. A ținut seama Comisia în recomandările sale de importanța libertății de circulație nerestricționată a cetățenilor Republicii Moldova în cadrul granițelor sale recunoscute pe plan internațional?

2. Cum pot fi adaptate măsurile implementate în cadrul Planului de acțiune privind liberalizarea regimului de vize pentru a menține libera circulație a cetățenilor Republicii Moldova care locuiesc în zona situată la est de râul Nistru?

Răspuns dat de dna Malmström în numele Comisiei
(3 octombrie 2013)

Comisia a prezentat o serie de recomandări autorităților din Republica Moldova (în cadrul celui de Al patrulea raport privind progresele realizate în ceea ce privește Planul de acțiuni al Republicii Moldova privind liberalizarea regimului de vize, publicat la data de 21 iunie 2013) în materie de control al deplasării persoanelor în jurul liniei de demarcație administrativă din regiunea Transnistria a Republicii Moldova. Aceasta este o chestiune de control intern al cetățenilor străini și nu poate fi asociată cu controlul la frontieră sau cu supravegherea frontierelor. Libera circulație a cetățenilor moldoveni între cele două maluri ale râului Nistru nu va fi afectată de aceste măsuri, dat fiind că acestea se vor aplica numai cetățenilor străini.

De exemplu, obligația de a se înregistra la intrarea în Moldova se aplică doar cetățenilor străini, fără a se impune o verificare a tuturor călătorilor care tranzitează regiunea Transnistria. Cetățenii Republicii Moldova care călătoresc din sau către regiunea Transnistria, chiar și după introducerea noilor măsuri, vor putea să continue să călătorească în mod liber și neîngrădit, fără controale, cu respectarea deplină a liberei circulații în interiorul frontierelor recunoscute la nivel internațional ale Republicii Moldova.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008655/13
to the Commission
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Standards for border controls in Moldova

Under the action plan on Visa Liberalisation, the authorities in the Republic of Moldova must effectively implement legislation on border control through adequate border checks and border surveillance. The Republic of Moldova is currently implementing measures to control migration flows through the Transnistrian region. This will be done through the improved registration of non-nationals and better control of migration by the Ministry of the Interior on the so-called 'administrative line' between Moldova and the territory controlled by the so-called 'Transnistrian authorities'.

The fourth Progress Report on the Moldova Action Plan on Visa Liberalisation states that the new measures currently implemented will not affect the movement of non-nationals within the internationally recognised borders of the Republic of Moldova.

These measures should be implemented in such a way as not to prevent the movement of Moldovan citizens over the so-called 'administrative line'. The movement of these citizens is vital for those living in the territory controlled by the 'Transnistrian authorities'.

1. Has the Commission taken into account in its recommendations the importance of the unrestricted movement of Moldovan citizens within its internationally recognised borders?

2. How can the measures implemented under the action plan on Visa Liberalisation be adapted in order to maintain the free movement of Moldovan citizens living in the zone east of the river Nistru?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(3 October 2013)

The Commission has presented several recommendations to the Moldovan authorities (via the Fourth Progress report on the Moldova Visa Liberalisation Action Plan issued on 21 June 2013) regarding the control of movement of people through the administrative boundary line of the Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova. This is a matter of internal control of foreign nationals and cannot be associated with border control or border surveillance. The free movement of Moldovan nationals between the two sides of the Nistru River will be not affected by these measures, as they will apply only for non-nationals.

As an example, the obligation to register on entering Moldova refers to foreign nationals only, without imposing a verification of all travellers who cross the Transnistrian region. Moldovan citizens travelling from or to the Transnistrian region, even after the introduction of the new measures, will continue travelling unaffected and unhindered, without controls, in full respect of free movement inside the internationally recognised borders of Moldova.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-008656/13
adresată Comisiei
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(15 iulie 2013)

Subiect: Repere pentru informarea cetățenilor cu privire la numărul unic european de urgență

112 a devenit numărul european unic pentru urgențe în 1991. Normele UE de telecomunicații prevăd ca europenii să aibă posibilitatea de a apela acest număr de pe orice tip de telefon, de oriunde ar fi în Europa. De atunci, Comisia a inițiat acțiuni în nerespectarea obligațiilor, implicând penalități financiare, împotriva statelor membre care nu au respectat normele UE privind telecomunicațiile.

Directiva privind serviciul universal a introdus cerințe detaliate pentru statele membre în privința numărului 112, una dintre acestea fiind ca toate țările UE să-și informeze cetățenii și vizitatorii cu privire la existența numărului de urgențe și cu privire la circumstanțele în care acesta ar trebui apelat. Cu toate acestea, nivelul de informare cu privire la apelarea numărului 112 variază între 6% în Grecia și 60% în Polonia, media fiind de 26%.

1. Există repere pentru creșterea gradului de informare, în funcție de care s-ar putea orienta statele membre în elaborarea unor strategii pentru a informa mai bine cetățenii cu privire la 112 ca număr unic de urgență?

2. Există posibilitatea deschiderii unor acțiuni în încălcarea obligațiilor împotriva statelor membre care nu promovează 112 ca număr unic european de urgență?

Răspuns dat de dna Kroes în numele Comisiei
(2 septembrie 2013)

În conformitate cu articolul 26 alineatul (6) din Directiva privind serviciul universal, „Statele membre se asigură că cetățenii sunt informați corespunzător despre existența și utilizarea numărului de apel de urgență unic european «112», în special prin inițiative care vizează în mod specific persoanele care călătoresc între statele membre.” Obligația de a informa cetățenii le revine, în primul rând, statelor membre. Oportunitatea inițierii unei eventuale proceduri de constatare a neîndeplinirii obligațiilor pe baza gradului redus de informare cu privire la numărul 112 trebuie să fie evaluată de la caz la caz, luându-se în considerare eforturile întreprinse de statele membre. Gradul redus de informare cu privire la numărul de urgență 112 poate fi legat de coexistența unor numere naționale cu o tradiție consacrată, cadrul legislativ neprevăzând trecerea obligatorie la utilizarea unui singur număr pentru apeluri de urgență. Astfel de circumstanțe naționale specifice fac dificilă stabilirea unor valori de referință la nivelul UE.

În vederea îmbunătățirii gradului de informare cu privire la numărul 112, Comisia a asumat, în ultimii ani, un rol important în sprijinirea eforturilor statelor membre. În acest sens, anul trecut Comisia a luat inițiativa de a invita societățile de transport să participe la o campanie de sensibilizare a clienților lor, atunci când aceștia călătoresc în alt stat membru. În acest an, Comisia a extins inițiativa la agențiile de voiaj și la operatorii de turism.

Mai mult, reprezentanțele Comisiei au fost implicate în campanii de promovare în țările cu un grad scăzut de informare cu privire la serviciul 112. De exemplu, în Grecia, Reprezentanța permanentă a Comisiei și autoritățile elene cooperează în mod activ pentru promovarea numărului 112 prin clipurile publicitare promoționale la nivel național. În urma succesului acestei campanii, Comisia intenționează să lanseze materiale promoționale în întreaga UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008656/13
to the Commission
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Benchmarks for raising awareness of the single European emergency number

112 became the single European emergency number in 1991. EU telecoms rules ensure that Europeans can call this number from any type of phone, wherever they are in Europe. The Commission has since launched infringement proceedings involving financial penalties against Member States which have not complied with EU telecoms regulations.

The Universal Service Directive introduced detailed requirements for Member States on 112, one of which was that all EU countries must inform their own citizens and visitors of the existence of the emergency number and under what circumstances they should call it. However, the level of awareness of 112 as the number to call varies from 6% in Greece to 60% in Poland, and the average is 26%.

1. Are there any benchmarks on awareness raising which could guide Member States on establishing strategies to better inform citizens about 112 as the single emergency number?

2. Is there a possibility to launch infringement proceedings against Member States which do not promote 112 as the single European emergency number?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(2 September 2013)

According to Article 26(6) of the Universal Service Directive, 'Member States shall ensure that citizens are adequately informed about the existence and use of the single European emergency call number '112', in particular through initiatives specifically targeting persons travelling between Member States.' The obligation to inform their citizens rests primarily with Member States. The appropriateness of possible infringement proceedings on the basis of low awareness of 112 has to be assessed case by case taking into account the efforts made by the Member States. Low awareness of the 112 emergency number may be linked to the co-existence of national numbers with a well-established tradition, and the legislative framework does not provide for a mandatory transit to a sole emergency number. Such specific national circumstances make it difficult to establish EU-wide benchmarks.

In order to improve the awareness levels on 112, in the past years the Commission played an important role to support Member State efforts. In view of this the Commission took the initiative last year to invite transport companies to join a campaign raising the awareness of their customers when they are travelling in another Member State. This year the Commission extended the initiative to travel agencies and tour operators.

Furthermore, the Commission Representations were involved in promotional campaigns in countries with low awareness rates on 112. For example, in Greece our Permanent Representation and the Greek authorities are actively cooperating in the promotion of 112 through nation-wide publicity of promotional videos. Following its success, the Commission is planning to launch the promotional material throughout the EU.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-008657/13
adresată Comisiei
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(15 iulie 2013)

Subiect: Reconstrucția statului Mali și angajamentul financiar al UE

În cadrul celui de al 10-lea Fond European de Dezvoltare (FED) 2008-2013, alocarea totală pentru Mali a Comisiei se cifrează la 583 de milioane de euro. În urma adoptării Strategiei de securitate și dezvoltare în regiunea Sahel, UE a oferit 250 de milioane de euro în asistență umanitară și 20 de milioane de euro prin intermediul Instrumentului pentru stabilitate. Pentru a răspunde la criza alimentară din Mali, în 2012 a fost acordat un cuantum suplimentar de 15 milioane de euro din rezervele FED.

Angajamentul financiar al UE pentru planul de redresare sustenabilă a statului Mali se cifrează la 3,25 miliarde de euro.

Ținând seama de lipsa de soliditate a administrației maliene după recentul război și recenta lovitură de stat, cum va ține Comisia evidența cheltuielilor și a investițiilor din pachetul de angajamente al UE?

Răspuns dat de dl Piebalgs în numele Comisiei
(26 august 2013)

Suma totală alocată Mali din cel de al 10-lea Fond european de dezvoltare (FED) pentru perioada 2008-2013 se ridică la 727,8 milioane EUR (incluzând 144,8 milioane EUR suplimentare, alocate Mali în 2013).

În cursul Conferinței la nivel înalt a donatorilor din 15 mai 2013, comunitatea internațională a anunțat angajamente în valoare de 3,285 miliarde EUR, dintre care 523 milioane EUR numai din partea Comisiei, pentru sprijinirea Planului de redresare durabilă a Mali pentru perioada 2013-2014. Această din urmă sumă include 54 de milioane EUR destinate asistenței umanitare, 225 de milioane EUR în cadrul unui contract pentru consolidarea instituțiilor statului, 15 milioane EUR pentru asistență electorală și 22 de milioane EUR din Instrumentul de stabilitate. Aproximativ o treime din asistența preconizată va viza crearea de legături între componentele de reabilitare, redresare și dezvoltare ale ajutorului, prin intervenții pe termen scurt și mediu în ceea ce privește securitatea alimentară, aprovizionarea cu apă, asigurarea salubrității și sprijinirea justiției și a democrației. A fost, de asemenea, mobilizată o misiune de observare a alegerilor.

În vederea coordonării acordării fondurilor corespunzătoare angajamentelor și a urmăririi utilizării acestora, autoritățile maliene și comunitatea internațională au convenit asupra unui cadru la nivel înalt de supraveghere a punerii în aplicare a recomandărilor Conferinței de la Bruxelles, articulat în jurul unor reuniuni periodice, care ar urma să fie organizate alternativ la Bamako și în Europa, cu participarea reprezentanților părților și a părților interesate neguvernamentale.

În plus, utilizarea corespunzătoare a fondurilor UE constituie o prioritate pentru Comisie. Va fi furnizată asistență tehnică pentru a îmbunătăți capacitatea de intervenție și conformitatea cu dispozițiile legale a acțiunilor desfășurate cu fonduri UE. Pentru a garanta cea mai bună utilizare posibilă a fondurilor UE, Comisia a stabilit și aplică reguli stricte (în materie de contabilitate, audit, control intern și proceduri de achiziții), care îi permit să controleze modul în care sunt gestionate fondurile de către partenerii UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008657/13
to the Commission
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Mali's reconstruction and the EU's financial commitment

In the framework of the 10th European Development Fund (EDF) 2008-2013, the Commission's total allocation for Mali amounts to EUR 583 million. Following the adoption of the strategy for Security and Development in the Sahel, the EU has offered EUR 250 million in humanitarian assistance and EUR 20 million from the Instrument for Stability. In 2012, an additional sum of EUR 15 million from the EDF reserves was granted in order to address the food crisis in Mali.

The EU's financial commitment to the Plan for the Sustainable Recovery of Mali totals EUR 3.25 billion.

Given the weakness of the Malian administration after the recent war and coup d'état, how will the Commission keep track of spending and investment from the EU's commitment package?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(26 August 2013)

The total allocation for Mali under the 10th European Development Fund (EDF) for the period 2008-2013 amounts to EUR 727.8 million (including EUR 144.8 million top-up allocated to Mali in 2013).

EUR 3.285 billion of pledges were announced by the international community during the high level donors' conference of 15 May 2013 in support of the Plan for the Sustainable Recovery of Mali 2013-2014, including EUR 523 million by the Commission alone. The latter includes EUR 54 million in humanitarian aid, a EUR 225 million state building contract, EUR 15 million in electoral assistance, EUR 22 million from the Instrument for Stability. About a third of the planned assistance will focus on linking rehabilitation, recovery and development through short and medium term interventions in food security, water and sanitation and support to justice and democracy. An election observation mission has also been deployed.

In order to coordinate the disbursement of all pledges and keeping track of their use the Malian authorities and the international community have agreed on a high-level follow-up to the Brussels conference, that will be framed around regular meetings to be organised alternately in Bamako and Europe, involving their representatives and non-governmental stakeholders.

Moreover, the proper use of EU funds is a priority for the Commission. Technical assistance will be provided in order to improve the capacity and compliance of actions implemented with EU funds. To guarantee the best use possible of EU funds, the Commission has set out and applies strict rules (accounting, audit, internal control and procurement procedures) that allow it to control the way funds are managed by the EU's partners.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008658/13
to the Commission
Chris Davies (ALDE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Common chargers for all communications devices

In 2009 the Commission strongly encouraged the mobile phone industry to adopt micro USB as a standard port for charging mobile phones. Does the Commission believe that this voluntary code has worked well and avoided the need for legislation?

Apple has now changed its standard connector from one proprietary socket to a new proprietary socket (the Lightning connector). Did Apple consult the Commission before taking this step?

Does the Commission remain of the belief that micro USB is the most appropriate common charger?

What further action will the Commission now take to ensure that a common charger is available for all communications devices?

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

The latest progress report provided by the signatories of the memorandum of understanding (MoU) has shown that more than 90% of the new devices put on the market by the end of 2012 support the common charging capability. This indicates that the voluntary agreement based on the micro-USB technology has been successful in delivering benefits for citizens without any particular need for stricter legislation.

Concerning Apple's previous and present proprietary connectors and their compatibility with the agreement, the MoU allows for the use of an adaptor without prescribing the conditions for its provision. Apple was not obliged to consult the Commission on its marketing strategies and the Commission could not interfere on these strategies provided that adaptors were made available.

The Commission is convinced that consumers and manufacturers can benefit from an extension of the initiative on harmonisation of chargers to new categories of products such as the new generation of mobile phones and other small portable electronic devices such as digital cameras and GPS receivers, while taking into account technological innovations. The Commission has therefore launched a study to evaluate the results achieved with the MoU and to analyse the compatibility of the common charger technology with other portable devices on the market. The study will also consider options for appropriate follow-up including voluntary measures (e.g. a voluntary agreement) and legislation.

The results of the study will be available in the first half of 2014, and will be the basis for the preparation of possible further measures in this area.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008659/13
to the Commission
Kay Swinburne (ECR)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Promotion of autism awareness and best practice

In November 2012, Parliament welcomed representatives of autism societies from the UK and across the rest of Europe to an event to discuss progress towards an 'Autism Strategy for Europe'. I was particularly pleased to host representatives from the autism societies of Wales, Ireland, Northern Ireland and Scotland, who have been looking to achieve their common goals via a pioneering, knowledge-sharing and cooperation initiative, the Celtic Nations Autism Partnership.

Since then and under the leadership of the Irish Presidency, for whom this was identified as a priority, I think there has been a welcome renewed focus within the institutions on how we can improve the lives of people with autism. However, with the Irish Presidency now having drawn to a close, it is essential that we ensure that the momentum gained is not lost.

I am aware that the Commission has a history of supporting initiatives relating to Autism Spectrum Disorders and that it will launch calls for its pilot action entitled 'European Prevalence Protocol for early detection of Autistic Spectrum Disorders in Europe' in 2013. However, would the Commission be willing to provide an update on any future action it has planned to ensure that the EU continues to highlight the need for higher quality services which meet the needs of people with autism across the EU?

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

The Commission does not, at this stage, plan further specific activities on Autism Spectrum Disorders apart from the call for a pilot action in 2013, to which the Honourable Member of Parliament refers, entitled 'European Prevalence Protocol for early detection of Autism Spectrum Disorders in Europe'. However, the Commission's activities in the field of chronic diseases will address issues which are also of relevance for Autism Spectrum Disorders.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008660/13
to the Commission
Chris Davies (ALDE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Animal experiments

Will the Commission confirm that under the definitions specified by Directive 2010/63/EU, Competent Authorities must be wholly independent of institutions where animal procedures are conducted or are proposed to be conducted, and that this requirement extends also to individual members of Competent Authorities?

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

According to Article 59(1) of Directive 2010/63/EU [1], Member States may designate bodies other than public authorities for the implementation of specific tasks laid down in the directive. Such designation is possible only if, *inter alia*, there is a proof that such bodies are free of any conflict of interest as regards the performance of the tasks. This requirement extends also to individual members of the designated body. The fulfilment of this requirement should be assessed on a case-by-case basis by Member States.

[1] Directive 2010/63/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes (OJ L 276, 20.10.2010, p. 33.).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008661/13
to the Commission
Chris Davies (ALDE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Alien invasive species

Carpet Sea-squirt (*Didemnum vexillum*) is a highly invasive non-native marine animal that could threaten conservation, fishing and the shellfish industry. Originally from Japan, this species is thought to have arrived in the EU in ship ballast water and has become a pest in other countries by smothering native species and interfering with fishing, aquaculture and other activities. It has recently been found in some marinas in England and Wales and there are strong concerns that it will spread more widely.

Can the Commission please confirm that its legislative proposals on invasive alien species will address the transport of ballast water organisms, and advise by when we can expect these proposals to be published?

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

As outlined in the communication on an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020 ([1]), the Commission is considering a legislative proposal for the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of invasive alien species. Pathways of introduction are among issues being examined. The legislative proposal on Invasive Alien Species is scheduled to be adopted by the Commission in autumn.

([1]) COM(2011)244 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008662/13
to the Commission
Chris Davies (ALDE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Emissions trading system

How many allowances have been set aside in the new entrants' reserve in accordance with Directive 2009/29/EC?

Some 300 million allowances have been or are to be monetised to fund the NER300 arrangements to support CCS and innovative renewable projects. What other calls have been made upon the remaining allowances, and is the Commission currently aware of any calls by new entrants that may be made in the period to 2020?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(29 August 2013)

For phase 3 of the EU ETS (2013-2020), 5% of the 'cap', i.e. the total quantity of allowances available, is set aside for new entrants. The amount available for the New Entrants' Reserve for phase 3 was preliminary estimated in 2010 to be around 770 million allowances, out of which 300 million have been set aside for support to CCS and innovative new renewable energy support.

The figure for the 'cap', and therefore also the amount for the New Entrants' Reserve, will be finally determined by the Commission during the course of September 2013, together with the decision on the preliminary free allocation to industry in phase 3 ([1]).

The Commission is aware that applications for new entrants are being prepared. Official applications will only be submitted after publication of the so-called standard capacity utilisation factors, which is also foreseen for this September. Applications will be dealt with in accordance with the rules set out in Commission Decision 2011/278/EU ([2]). Since the reserve is to be used for applications until 2020, it is too early to estimate the magnitude of applications for the entire phase 3.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/clima/news/articles/news_2013073001_en.htm
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:130:0001:0045:EN:PDF.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008663/13
to the Commission
Chris Davies (ALDE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Raising standards in European zoos

Further to the response (E-004698/2013) from the Commission of 6 June 2013, will the Commission confirm that the guidance and best practice document on the Zoos Directive it is preparing will make reference to the need to evaluate educational and conservation programmes in zoos, and that it will also include species-specific advice about animal welfare standards?

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

As already stated in its reply to Written Question E-004698/2013 on the same topic the Commission can confirm that the issues referred to by the Honourable Member will be considered in the context of the preparation of the guidance and best practice document on the Zoos Directive ([1]). However the Commission cannot prejudge the precise content of the final output as this will also depend on the consultation with the Member States and stakeholders through the Stakeholder Liaison Group.

([1]) Directive 99/22/EC, OJ L 94, 9.4.1999.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008664/13
to the Commission
Chris Davies (ALDE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Effects of wood dust and burning of biomass on human health

What EU requirements exist for the control and reduction of wood dust?

Do any such EU requirements comply with the guidelines of the World Health Organisation?

Is the Commission giving consideration to introducing new requirements for the control and reduction of wood dust in the air?

Is the Commission satisfied that the emissions produced from the commercial burning of biomass to generate heat or electricity comply with the requirements of EU air quality legislation?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(6 September 2013)

The production of pulp from timber or other fibrous materials, paper or cardboard or wood-based panels falls under the scope of the directive on Industrial Emissions (IED) ([1]). The IED obliges Member States to issue operating permits for such installations based on the application of Best Available Techniques (BAT) for all relevant emissions including dust. The IED applies to the burning of wood for generation of heat and power in installations above 50 MW capacity.

Due to its carcinogenic potential ([2]), hard wood dust is covered by Directive 2004/37/EC ([3]) on the protection of workers from the risks related to exposure to carcinogens or mutagens at work. In Annex I, hardwood dust is listed with an occupational exposure limit value of 5 mg/m$^{3.}$ According to this directive, employers are obliged to perform a risk assessment and to take the necessary risk management measures. The directive has been transposed in all Member States and its enforcement falls under the responsibility of the national authorities. WHO has not set any occupational exposure limit values specifically for wood dust, nor any ambient limit or guideline values.

As part of the Review of the Thematic Strategy on Air Pollution, the Commission is assessing all options for EU action on combustion plants with a rated thermal input of less than 50MW, including the option of presenting a legislative instrument. Burning of biomass in appliances below 1 MW will be regulated through the Ecodesign Directive ([4]). Under this directive the Commission is currently examining new emission limit values.

([1]) Directive 2010/75/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 November 2010 on industrial emissions, OJ L334/17, 17.12.2010.

([2]) Exposure to wood dust increases the risk of cancer, particularly cancer of the nose and throat (Demers P.A. and Boffetta P. (1998) Cancer Risk from Occupational Exposure to Wood Dust. IARC Technical Report No.30). The products of combustion of wood and other biomass materials include fine particles and other substances which are hazardous to health (Air quality in Europe — 2012 Report. European Environment Agency Report No 4/2012).

([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2004:158:0050:0076:EN:PDF.

([4]) Directive 2009/125/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 establishing a framework for the setting of ecodesign requirements for energy-related products OJ L285/10, 31.10.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008665/13
to the Commission
Chris Davies (ALDE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Daimler and the French Government

The French Government has temporarily suspended the registration of new models of Mercedes cars on the grounds that they do not comply with the requirements of the mobile air conditioning directive.

Does the Commission agree with the assessment of the French Government?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(10 September 2013)

The Commission has received on 26 July a notification by France that it had decided to launch the safeguard clause that is established by EU legislation, under Article 29 of Directive 2007/46/EC, which allows Member States, for a maximum period of six months, to refuse to register or to permit the sale or entry into service in its territory of vehicles if they, albeit in compliance with the applicable requirements or properly marked, present a serious risk to road safety, or seriously harm the environment or public health.

France informed the Commission, in its notification, that the referred risk to the environment occurs due to incorrect application of the relevant requirements, in this case Directive 2006/40/EC (MAC Directive), which bans one refrigerant with high impact on climate change.

The Commission is now following the procedures established in the directive, namely, it is consulting the parties concerned, notably the French and the German authorities, the company Daimler, which is the object of the measure, and the approval authority that has granted the type-approval, the German Federal Motor Transport Authority (KBA).

The French Conseil d'Etat ordered on 27 August that the decision refusing to register some Daimler vehicles shall be suspended until its final judgment on the substance. As requested by EC law, the Commission continues to deal with the ongoing procedures.

As established in Directive 2007/46/EC, if the Commission comes to the conclusion that the measures taken by France are legitimate and can be attributed to incorrect application of the relevant requirements, it will need to take the appropriate measures to ensure compliance of the referred vehicles.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008666/13
an die Kommission
Christian Ehler (PPE) und Elmar Brok (PPE)
(15. Juli 2013)

Betrifft: Aufklärungsprogramme ausländischer Nachrichtendienste und Sicherheit der EU-Institutionen

Unter Berufung auf den US-Staatsbürger E. J. Snowden wird seit Juni d. J. über Aufklärungsprogramme ausländischer Nachrichtendienste, insbesondere US-amerikanischer (Schlagwort PRISM) und britischer (Schlagwort TEMPORA) Nachrichtendienste, berichtet, die auch im Raum der Europäischen Union stattfinden und die sich zudem auch gegen Einrichtungen der EU richten sollen. In diesem Zusammenhang werden Konsequenzen für die anstehenden TTIP-Verhandlungen zwischen der EU und den USA gefordert.

Kann die Kommission dazu folgende Fragen beantworten:

1. Welche Maßnahmen hat die Kommission ergriffen, und welche Maßnahmen wird sie ergreifen, um die Vertraulichkeit der Verhandlungen und ihrer Vorbereitungen durch die EU und von ihr abhängige Einrichtungen, insbesondere gegen Maßnahmen der technischen Aufklärung, sicherzustellen?

2. Wie ist der aktuelle Stand der Informations- und Kommunikationstechnologie der Einrichtungen der EU in Bezug auf die Abschirmung und Sicherung gegen und die Feststellung von Eingriffe/n durch Dritte?

3. Welche Eingriffe durch Dritte gegen Informations- und Kommunikationstechnologien der Einrichtungen der EU wurden seit dem 1.1.2009 festgestellt; gegen wen richteten sie sich, und wie wurde darauf reagiert bzw. welche Gegenschutz- und Schutzmaßnahmen sind ergriffen worden?

4. Sollte den Verhandlungen über das Transatlantische Handels- und Investitionsabkommen (TTIP) nicht eine Übereinkunft aller Beteiligten vorangehen, worin gegenseitiges Einvernehmen darüber vereinbart wird, dass von keiner Seite offensive technische Aufklärungsmaßnahmen gegen die Verhandlungen sowie an ihr beteiligte Personen und Einrichtungen angewendet werden?

Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(16. September 2013)

Die IT-Infrastruktur der Europäischen Kommission ist durch ein mehrschichtiges Abwehrsystem gegen Lauschangriffe und Spionage geschützt. Diese Sicherheitsmaßnahmen umfassen das Systemkonfigurationsmanagement, Schadsoftware-Erkennung, Netzwerksegmentschutz und Systemüberwachung. Die gleichen Vorkehrungen gelten für die im Rahmen von Handelsverhandlungen zum Einsatz kommenden IT-Systeme. Außerdem gelten für bestimmte Unterlagen in Papierform Zugangsbeschränkungen.

Die Europäische Kommission ist — wie viele andere öffentliche Einrichtungen und Privatunternehmen — ein potenzielles Ziel für Hacker-Angriffe. Jeden Tag entdecken unsere Sicherheitssysteme mehrere Versuche, in unsere Netze und Server einzudringen, und wehren diese ab. Aus Sicherheitsgründen können zu den genauen Zielen keine weiteren Informationen gegeben werden; allerdings wurde daraufhin ein umfassender Aktionsplan gegen Cyberangriffe entwickelt. Dieser Plan wird ständig aktualisiert und es werden Instrumente umgesetzt, um Zugangskontrollen und Authentifizierung zu verstärken und die Netz- und Systemüberwachung zu verbessern.

Die Kommission ist der transatlantischen Handels- und Investitionspartnerschaft verpflichtet und erwartet, dass parallel dazu die vor kurzem ins Leben gerufene gemeinsame Arbeitsgruppe EU-USA für Datenschutz zu gegenseitigem Vertrauen in diesen Fragen beitragen wird.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008666/13
to the Commission
Christian Ehler (PPE) and Elmar Brok (PPE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Spying programmes conducted by foreign intelligence services and the security of EU institutions

On the basis of information placed in the public domain by the US citizen Edward Snowden, since June 2013 details have been emerging of spying programmes conducted by foreign intelligence services, in particular those in the US (PRISM) and the United Kingdom (TEMPORA). It is alleged that some of these activities have been carried out on EU territory and directed against EU institutions and bodies. These disclosures have prompted calls that the forthcoming negotiations on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Agreement (TTIA) between the EU and the USA should address the issue of data protection.

1. What measures has the Commission taken, and what measures will it take, in order to guarantee the confidentiality of the negotiations, and of the preparations for them which are being made by the EU and its institutions and bodies, and in particular in order to provide protection against electronic surveillance?

2. What information and communication technologies can EU institutions and bodies use in order to protect themselves against and detect spying activities by third parties?

3. How many attempts to hack into the information and communication technologies employed by EU institutions and bodies have been detected since 1 January 2009? Who were these hacking attempts directed against, and what countermeasures and protective measures did the institutions and bodies concerned take in response?

4. Does the Commission not agree that the negotiations on the TTIA should be preceded by an agreement between all the parties involved that no electronic surveillance will be carried out of the negotiations and of the persons and bodies involved?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(16 September 2013)

The IT infrastructure of the European Commission is protected by a layered system of defence against possible eavesdropping and espionage. These security measures comprise system configuration management, malware detection tools, network perimeter protection and system monitoring. The same provisions apply to trade negotiations as far as IT environment is concerned and we also apply a restricted access to paper copies for some documents.

The European Commission is — like many other government organisations and private companies — a possible target for hacking. Every day, the protective security tools detect and repulse several attempts to infiltrate our network and servers. For security reasons, no further information can be provided on the specific targets but — as a result — a comprehensive action plan against cyber attacks was developed. This plan is constantly updated and tools are implemented to strenghten access control and authentication and to improve network and system monitoring.

While the Commission is committed to the TTIP, it expects that in parallel, the recently set-up EU-US working group on data protection will contribute to mutual confidence on these issues.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008667/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Sophocles Sophocleous (S&D)
(15 Ιουλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Φίμωση του ποιητή Μοράρη από EUNIC

Όπως γνωρίζετε, η transpoesie, ευρωπαϊκός θεσμός για θέματα κουλτούρας και πολιτισμού, πρότεινε όπως γίνει μια έκθεση ποιημάτων, στην οποία θα εκπροσωπούνται όλα τα κράτη μέλη με ένα ποίημα ποιητή της επιλογής τους και η οποία πρόκειται να αναρτηθεί στο Μετρό των Βρυξελλών.

Ο Κύπριος ποιητής Γιώργος Μοράρης κλήθηκε να εκπροσωπήσει την Κύπρο με ένα ποίημά του με τίτλο «Νιόβη», το οποίο είναι εμπνευσμένο από τη δολοφονία της μικρής Νιόβης κατά την τουρκική εισβολή του 1974. Ωστόσο, η δημοσίευση του εν λόγω ποιήματος δεν έγινε αποδεκτή με το αιτιολογικό ότι υπάρχει κίνδυνος να θιγούν οι Τούρκοι μετανάστες των Βρυξελλών, ιδιαίτερα μιας και φέτος είναι η 50ή επέτειος της άφιξης Τούρκων μεταναστών στις Βρυξέλλες.

Η απόφαση της EUNIC (European Union National Institutes for Culture) αντιτίθεται στην προαγωγή του πνεύματος κοινότητας και αλληλεγγύης.

Πώς σχολιάζει η Επιτροπή την απόφαση της EUNIC να απορρίψει το ποίημα του κυρίου Μοράρη και τι μέτρα προτίθεται να πάρει, από τη στιγμή που η EUNIC λαμβάνει χρηματοδότηση από την ίδια την ΕΕ;

Απάντηση της κ. Βασιλείου εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(26 Αυγούστου 2013)

Ο ρόλος της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης στον τομέα του πολιτισμού, όπως εκφράζεται στο άρθρο 167 της Συνθήκης, είναι να συμβάλλει στην ανάπτυξη των πολιτισμών των κρατών μελών και να προβάλλει την κοινή πολιτιστική κληρονομιά.

Για να ανταποκριθεί στον ρόλο της αυτό, η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση με το πρόγραμμα «Πολιτισμός» υποστηρίζει διακρατικές δραστηριότητες και έργα όπως ορισμένα από τα έργα του δικτύου της EUNIC. Το δίκτυο συγκεντρώνει τα εθνικά ιδρύματα για τον πολιτισμό που δραστηριοποιούνται εκτός των εθνικών τους συνόρων και λειτουργούν με κάποιο βαθμό αυτονομίας από τις κυβερνήσεις τους, με στόχο τη βελτίωση και την προώθηση της πολιτιστικής ποικιλομορφίας και την αμοιβαία κατανόηση μεταξύ των ευρωπαϊκών κοινωνιών, καθώς και την ενίσχυση του διεθνούς διαλόγου και της συνεργασίας με χώρες εκτός Ευρώπης.

Η υποστήριξη που λαμβάνουν οι πολιτιστικές οργανώσεις από το πρόγραμμα «Πολιτισμός» δεν περιορίζει την ελευθερία τους να επιλέγουν τους ειδικούς τους οποίους θεωρούν τους πλέον κατάλληλους για ένα δεδομένο πλαίσιο λειτουργιών. Σε κάθε περίπτωση, το έργο «Transpoesie» δεν χρηματοδοτείται από την ΕΕ. Επιπλέον, δεν υπάρχει θεσμική ή νομική σχέση μεταξύ της ΕΕ και του δικτύου EUNIC. Το δίκτυο EUNIC, ως ανεξάρτητος οργανισμός, δεν εμπίπτει στις αρμοδιότητες της Επιτροπής.

Ωστόσο, δεδομένου ότι το συγκεκριμένο έργο έχει σκοπό να προωθήσει την πολυγλωσσία και την πολιτιστική ποικιλομορφία, που είναι θεμελιώδεις πυλώνες της πολιτιστικής μας πολιτικής, η επίτροπος που είναι αρμόδια για θέματα εκπαίδευσης και πολιτισμού έστειλε επιστολή, στις 24 Ιουλίου, στην κα Podgorska, πρόεδρο του δικτύου EUNIC των Βρυξελλών, ζητώντας περαιτέρω εξηγήσεις σχετικά με την απόφασή τους να απορρίψουν το ποίημα. Ανεξάρτητα από την απάντησή της, δεν υπάρχουν περαιτέρω ενέργειες στις οποίες θα μπορούσε να προβεί η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή, λαμβανομένης υπόψη της αυτονομίας του δικτύου.

Πρέπει επίσης να σημειωθεί ότι η επίτροπος που είναι αρμόδια για την εκπαίδευση και τον πολιτισμό έχει επίσης απαντήσει σε επιστολή του κ. Μοράρη με την οποία τον ενημέρωνε σχετικά με την ανεξάρτητη και αυτόνομη διάρθρωση του δικτύου EUNIC.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008667/13
to the Commission
Sophocles Sophocleous (S&D)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Poet Moraris censored by EUNIC

As you know, transpoesie, a European institution for culture and civilisation, proposed staging a poetry exhibition in the Brussels metro, in which each Member State would display a poem by a poet of their choice.

The Cypriot poet George Moraris was asked to represent Cyprus with a poem entitled 'Niobe', which is inspired by the murder of young girl called Niobe during the Turkish invasion in 1974. However, the poem in question was rejected, on the grounds that it risked upsetting Turkish immigrants in Brussels, especially as this year marks the 50th anniversary of the arrival of Turkish immigrants in Brussels.

The decision by EUNIC (European Union National Institutes for Culture) conflicts with efforts to promote a spirit of community and solidarity.

What comments does the Commission have on the decision by EUNIC to reject Mr Moraris's poem and what measures does it intend to take, given that EUNIC receives EU funding?

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

The role of the European Union in the field of culture, as expressed in Article 167 of the Treaty, is to contribute to the flowering of the cultures of the Member States and to bring the common cultural heritage to the fore.

In order to fulfil this role, the Culture programme supports transnational activities and projects such as some of those of the EUNIC network. The network gathers national institutions for culture engaged beyond their national borders, operating with a degree of autonomy from their governments, with the aim to improve and promote cultural diversity and understanding between European societies, and to strengthen international dialogue and cooperation with countries outside Europe.

Receiving support from the Culture programme cannot limit the freedom of cultural organisations to make the curatorial choices that they find most appropriate in a given context of operations. In any event, the project 'Transpoesie' is not funded by the EU. Furthermore, there is no institutional or legal relationship between EC and EUNIC. Being an independent institution EUNIC does not fall under the remit of the Commission.

However, as the particular project aims to promote multilingualism and cultural diversity which are fundamental pillars of our cultural policy, the Commissioner responsible for Education and Culture has sent a letter to Mrs Podgorska, President of EUNIC Brussels, on 24 July requesting further explanations on their decision to refuse the poem. Irrespective of her reply, there are no further actions that the European Commission could take in view of their autonomy.

Please also note that the Commissioner responsible for Education and Culture has also replied to a letter from Mr Moraris informing him about the independent and autonomous structure of EUNIC.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008668/13
to the Commission
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Crash helmets in France

The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe's Regulation No 22 stipulates, in paragraph 6.16.1, that motor cycle crash helmets should have conspicuity markings. This requirement includes the need for helmets to have four reflective stickers: one on the front, one at the rear and one on each side, with the surface of each sticker being 18 cm^2.

The UN's Vienna Convention on Road Traffic only mentions in Annex 1(5) that contracting parties may refuse to admit onto their territories motor cyclists without protective helmets.

France has recently introduced a national provision requiring all motorcyclists, including those transiting through from other EU Member States, to comply with the rules governing conspicuity markings on crash helmets.

Notwithstanding a note within paragraph 6.16.1 of Regulation 22 suggesting that signatory states can prohibit the use of helmets not meeting the conspicuity requirements, is the Commission satisfied that the requirement in place in France is compliant with Union law?

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

The use of helmets incorporating reflective stickers for motorcyclists is not regulated under EC law.

The Commission considers that in the absence of EU legislation, Member State authorities are entitled to adopt measures aiming at enhancing road safety provided that these measures do not constitute a disproportionate limitation to the freedom of movement.

The European Union has notified the United Nations that it is applying Regulation No 22 mentioned by the Honourable Member, which means that Member States must accept helmets certified under this regulation without being allowed to impose additional requirements to the ones set out in Regulation No 22.

Regulation No 22 leaves the mandating of conspicuity marks to the discretion of individual Contracting Parties, allowing them to prohibit the use of helmets not meeting the conspicuity requirements. However, it is the Commission's understanding that the obligation contained in the French legislation cannot apply retroactively to helmets already in use. As a consequence, foreign motorcycle riders carrying a helmet not containing these reflective markings cannot be obliged to bring their helmets in conformity retroactively. Only new helmet types placed on the French market must comply with the new requirements and bear this reflective material.

The Commission will assess whether the French law is in line with the provisions of the Treaty concerning the free movement of goods.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008669/13
to the Commission
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Equine hot branding

Under EU Equine Identification Regulation (EC) No 504/2008, all foals born after 1 July 2009 must have a microchip inserted as a means of identification. However, there is a derogation from the need for certain wild or semi-wild equine populations to be identified under Article 7 of the regulation. In such cases animals need only be identified and micro-chipped when they are moved out of defined areas.

Within England this derogation covers designated areas of Dartmoor, Exmoor and the New Forest. Some owners therefore choose to use hot branding on their horses and ponies so as to identify them. The hot branding is generally carried out without analgesia and is undoubtedly a painful process.

Within the European Union, Germany, Denmark, Scotland and the Netherlands have already banned hot branding. Article 13 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union recognises animals as sentient beings and requires that full regard be given to the welfare requirements of animals while formulating and enforcing some EU policies and the European Union Strategy for the Protection and Welfare of Animals 2012-2015. In the light of this, does the Commission have any plans to bring forward legislative proposals to end the branding of horses and ponies?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(2 September 2013)

It should be highlighted that the derogation under Article 7 of Regulation (EC) No 504/2008 ([1]) concerns only the issuing of the identification document within the year of birth, thus allowing equidae of defined populations living under wild or semi-wild conditions to be identified, including the active marking by a transponder, at the time they are removed from those conditions.

Furthermore, Article 13 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union increases the profile visibility of animal welfare and widens the scope of protective measures to further policy areas. Yet Article 13 also applies the principle of subsidiarity by allowing Member States to regulate certain controversial issues. For instance, Article 10(2) of Council Directive 98/58/EC ([2]) permits Member States within their territories to maintain or apply stricter rules for the protection of animals kept for farming purposes than those the directive prescribes.

The Commission does not intend to propose Union legislation banning hot branding of horses for animal welfare reasons.

([1]) OJ L 149, 7.6.2008.
([2]) OJ L 221, 8.8.1998, p. 23.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008670/13
to the Commission
Peter Skinner (S&D)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Trade with Burma/Myanmar

Since the lifting of EU sanctions on Burma/Myanmar in April this year, and considering that trade with conflict-affected states can be seriously inhibited due to lack of infrastructure and institutional gaps:

1. Does the Commission have an 'Aid for Trade' strategy in Burma/Myanmar?

2. What can the Commission do to ensure EU-Burma/Myanmar trade benefits the peace and reconciliation process?

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

Since April 2013, when EU sanctions on Myanmar were lifted, several measures have been taken to help the country engage in international trade. To help Myanmar build its capacity to trade after years of isolation, the Commission has formulated a EUR 10 million programme which is expected in the autumn. The objective of the programme is to enable Myanmar to take advantage of its re-integration into the world trading system (including the Association of Southeast Asian Nations), and of the opportunities for trade and investment to enhance sustainable economic growth, raise standards of living and support inclusive development.

The EU is also heavily involved in 'aid for trade' strategy-related processes that are spearheaded by other international partners, including the World Trade Organisation Trade Policy Review and the National Export Strategy prepared by the International Trade Centre. We support the accession of Myanmar to the Enhanced Integrated Framework for Least Developed Countries. This process will ultimately result in a common platform for greater coordination of the Donor Partners' trade support to the country to enhance aid effectiveness and maximise the socioeconomic dividends of this aid for trade strategy.

The EU contribution to Myanmar's process of economic and trade liberalisation is expected to support the reform process of the country thereby cementing the democratisation process including peace and reconciliation, and bring benefits to Myanmar's population.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008671/13
to the Commission
Peter Skinner (S&D)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Proposal for a European Parliament and Council decision on providing macro-financial assistance to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

The Commission staff working document entitled 'Ex-ante evaluation statement on EU macro-financial assistance to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan' states that Jordan has cut current expenditure on security as part of its fiscal consolidation measures. It also cites the housing and medical costs associated with the influx of refugees as one of the financial pressures facing the country.

Given the fact that Jordan is now home to the largest refugee camps in the world, and in light of the fact that large refugee camps elsewhere in the world have contributed to insecurity in the host states and fuelled regional instability, what action is the Commission taking vis-à-vis Jordan's strategy for policing these camps and ensuring that stability and security is maintained?

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

Safety and security in Zaatari camp in the North of Jordan has been a matter of concern in recent months due to the steady increase of refugees: according to the UNHCR's latest figures, the camp hosts approximately 123 000 people.

The management of refugee camps lies with Jordan's Public Security Directorate under the leadership of the newly set-up Syrian Refugees Camps Dept. This includes the provision of security through the deployment of policemen and gendarmes assigned to Zaatari.

In June 2013, the UNHCR (with EU financial support) and the Government of Jordan signed an agreement to provide additional police/gendarmerie staff and needed material (vehicles, communications, IT equipment, etc.) enhancing the security measures in place in Zaatari camp.

In addition, the EU (through the Instrument of Stability) is developing a project with the International Organisation for Migration and UNHCR to assist refugees on arrival at the border crossing points and to enhance security in the camps.

The Commission has so far allocated EUR 61.5 million in humanitarian assistance to Jordan, a large proportion of which supports projects in the Zaatari refugee camp. The EUR 400 million package presented by the President of the Commission in June 2013 also includes EUR 250 million for humanitarian assistance, part of it to Jordan. In terms of development assistance, the Commission provided so far EUR 23.8 million to support access to education, mentoring and skills development for Syrian refugees as well as for host communities affected. In the frame of the above package, the Commission also made available to Jordan a further EUR 50 million to support education, health services and host communities with a high concentration of refugees.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008672/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(15 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Testimone del processo di beatificazione del cardinale Van Thuan fermato all'aeroporto di Hanoi

Il critico letterario vietnamita Nguyen Hoang Duc, atteso a Roma per la chiusura della causa di beatificazione del cardinale Van Thuan, è stato fermato dalle autorità del Vietnam all'aeroporto di Hanoi lo scorso 2 luglio.

Considerando che un funzionario ha comunicato a Hoang Duc, solo una volta raggiunto lo scalo, che non era autorizzato a lasciare il Paese in quanto il regime comunista disapprova la canonizzazione del cardinale e il fatto che lo stesso processo canonico evidenzi i 13 anni di prigione trascorsi da Van Thuan nelle carceri nazionali;

sottolineando inoltre che il partito comunista ha più volte perseguitato lo stesso Hoang Duc per via della sua decisione di convertirsi al Cristianesimo, bloccando la pubblicazione del libro nel quale racconta la sua esperienza;

evidenziando infine come tutte queste misure siano contrarie alla Dichiarazione universale dei diritti dell'uomo, in particolare laddove essa prevede (articolo 18) che «Ogni individuo ha il diritto alla libertà di pensiero, coscienza e di religione; tale diritto include la libertà di cambiare religione o credo, e la libertà di manifestare, isolatamente o in comune, sia in pubblico che in privato, la propria religione o il proprio credo nell'insegnamento, nelle pratiche, nel culto e nell'osservanza dei riti»,

si chiede alla Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante:

— se sia in grado di fornire i dettagli riguardanti lo svolgimento dei fatti?

— se intenda promuovere azioni concrete per permettere a Ngyen Hoang Duc di arrivare in Europa per prendere parte al processo di canonizzazione?

Risposta dell'Alto Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(4 novembre 2013)

Le informazioni su questo incidente fornite dalla delegazione UE ad Hanoi all'AR/VP sembrano confermare quanto è stato reso pubblico, vale a dire che al sig. Nguyen Hoang DUC è stato impedito di imbarcarsi su un aereo diretto a Roma il 2 luglio presumibilmente a causa del parere critico del governo in merito al processo di canonizzazione del Cardinale Van Thuan.

Recentemente il Vietnam ha preso provvedimenti per stabilire relazioni diplomatiche con la Santa Sede ed è lecito attendersi che ciò contribuirà ad evitare il ripetersi di tali incidenti.

La libertà di religione e credo è stata una delle questioni sollevate durante il terzo round del dialogo approfondito UE-Vietnam sui diritti umani svoltosi l'11 settembre 2013 a Hanoi. In tale occasione l'UE ha espresso in particolare la sua preoccupazione circa la violenta repressione, il 4 settembre, delle manifestazioni dei fedeli cattolici nella provincia di Nghe An. D'altro canto, la decisione annunciata dal Vietnam di invitare il relatore speciale dell'ONU per la libertà di religione o credo a visitare il paese nel 2014 è un segnale positivo. La visita dovrebbe consentire progressi in questo importante settore.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008672/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Beatification of Cardinal Van Thuan: witness stopped at Hanoi Airport

The Vietnamese literary critic Nguyen Hoang Duc, who was due to travel to Rome to attend the closing ceremony of the cause for the beatification of Cardinal Van Thuan, was stopped at Hanoi Airport by the Vietnamese authorities on 2 July.

It was only after he had gone to the departure gate that Hoang Duc was told by an official that he was not allowed to leave the country: the Communist regime disapproves of Cardinal Van Thuan's canonisation, bearing in mind that the whole process serves to highlight the fact that the Cardinal spent 13 years of his life in Vietnamese jails.

The Communist Party has, moreover, constantly harassed Hoang Duc on account of his decision to convert to Christianity and has blocked publication of the book in which he recounts his experience.

All these measures are contrary to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, first and foremost Article 18, which states that 'Everyone shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. This right shall include freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice, and freedom, either individually or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in worship, observance, practice and teaching'.

Is the Vice-President/High Representative able to supply a detailed account of this particular incident?

Will she take specific steps to enable Nguyen Hoang Duc to come to Europe in order to take part in the canonisation process?

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

The information on this incident provided by the EU Delegation in Hanoi to the HR/VP appears to confirm what has been publicly reported, i.e. that Mr Nguyen Hoang Duc was prevented from boarding the plane to Rome on 2 July supposedly because of the Government's critical view of the canonisation process of Cardinal Van Thuan.

Recently Vietnam has taken steps towards establishing diplomatic relations with the Holy See and it can be expected that this would help avoiding such incidents in the future.

Freedom of Religion and Belief was one of the issues raised during the 3rd round of the EU-Vietnam enhanced Human Rights Dialogue on 11 September 2013 in Hanoi. The EU at that occasion in particular expressed its concerns about the violent crackdown on Catholic parishioners in Nghe An province on 4 September. On the other hand, Vietnam's announcement of its decision to invite the UN Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Religion or Belief to visit the country in 2014 is a positive signal. The visit should lead to progress in this important area.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008673/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(15 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Guerra tra estremisti islamici in Siria

Visti come unica soluzione al potere assoluto del governo di Bashar al Assad, all'inizio della guerra in Siria i ribelli islamisti sono stati sostenuti da numerosi gruppi sociali nazionali.

Ora, tuttavia, si moltiplicano le notizie di esecuzioni senza processo pronunciate dai tribunali islamici e di rastrellamenti contro le minoranze religiose nei territori controllati dalle truppe ribelli.

Di recente, nel nord-ovest del paese è stato assassinato un membro del *Supreme Military Council*, braccio armato del più noto *Free Syrian Army*. Autore dell'omicidio sarebbe l'*Islamic State of Sharia and Levant*, che agisce sotto la protezione di Al Qaeda.

Considerando come l'episodio confermi la progressiva separazione, all'interno delle fazioni ribelli ad Assad, tra ribelli più o meno estremisti, che danno origine alla repressione degli strati più deboli della società civile proprio attraverso l'applicazione della sharia;

osservando inoltre le cifre diffuse dal *Syrian Observatory for Human Rights*, che racconta di centinaia di casi di decapitazione dei guerriglieri fatti prigionieri negli scontri tra Islamic State e FSA;

evidenziando infine come la Siria stia vedendo un acuirsi dell'emergenza umanitaria che la coinvolge, anche a causa dell'intervento di Hezbollah al fianco di Assad e dell'ottenimento di nuovi e più potenti armamenti da parte dell'Occidente;

può il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante Lady Ashton far sapere:

— Se sia in grado di divulgare dati certi sul numero delle vittime di questa guerra civile?

— Come l'Unione europea intenda rispondere, in concreto, all'emergenza umanitaria?

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

L'UE non dispone di mezzi autonomi per verificare il numero di vittime in Siria e basa le proprie stime su relazioni provenienti dalle Unite (ONU). Il Segretario generale dell'ONU Ban Ki-moon ha dichiarato il 25 luglio 2013 che oltre 100 000 persone sono rimaste uccise nel conflitto in Siria. La cifra effettiva è tuttavia presumibilmente più elevata.

Il contributo complessivo dell'UE per affrontare la crisi siriana ammonta a circa 1,8 miliardi di euro; vale a dire 1 449 milioni di euro in aiuti umanitari ([1]) e 327 milioni di euro per assistenza economica, allo sviluppo e alla stabilizzazione. Ciò comprende l'assistenza sia in Siria che nei paesi limitrofi.

L'assistenza umanitaria, convogliata tramite i partner dell'UE, vale a dire la Croce Rossa/Mezzaluna Rossa, le agenzie delle Nazioni Unite e le organizzazioni non governative internazionali (ONG), provvede innanzitutto a fornire iniziative mediche di emergenza, farmaci essenziali, prodotti alimentari e nutrizionali, acqua potabile e prodotti igienico-sanitari di base, a mettere a disposizione ricoveri, a distribuire beni non alimentari di base e a proteggere e aiutare le famiglie più vulnerabili (sfollati, profughi, comunità di accoglienza).

Ciò rientra nell'approccio globale dell'Unione europea in relazione al conflitto e alle sue conseguenze che è stato illustrato nella comunicazione congiunta della Commissione e dell'Alta Rappresentante del 24 giugno 2013.

([1]) 934 milioni di euro provengono dagli Stati membri e 515 milioni di euro dalla Direzione generale per gli aiuti umanitari e la protezione civile della Commissione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008673/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — War between Islamic extremists in Syria

Islamist rebels were seen as the only alternative to Bashar al-Assad's all-powerful regime when the war broke out in Syria and, as such, they were supported by various sections of society in the country.

Now, however, there are an increasing number of reports of summary executions ordered by Islamic courts and of persecution of religious minorities in areas under rebel control.

A member of the Supreme Military Council, the military arm of the better-known Free Syrian Army (FSA), was recently murdered in the north-west of the country. The group alleged to be behind the murder is the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, which acts under the protection of al-Qaeda.

This incident provides further confirmation of the growing divide between extremists and more moderate Islamists within the rebel factions fighting Assad, which is leading to the application of Sharia law against some of the most vulnerable sections of society.

Figures published by the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights indicate that hundreds of fighters taken prisoner have been beheaded in the clashes between the Islamic State group and the FSA.

The humanitarian crisis is becoming ever more severe in Syria, in part because of Hezbollah's involvement in the war in support of Assad and because of the use of new, more powerful weapons obtained from the West.

Can the Vice-President/ High Representative provide realistic figures on the number of victims of this civil war?

Can she say what action the EU intends to take in response to the humanitarian crisis in Syria?

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

The EU does not have independent means of verifying casualty rates in Syria and bases its estimates on the reports by the United Nations (UN). UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon announced on 25 July 2013 that more than 100 000 people have been killed in the conflict in Syria. The actual figure is, however, presumed to be higher.

The EU's overall contribution to address the Syrian crisis stands at approximately EUR 1.8 billion; EUR 1449 million in humanitarian aid ([1]) and EUR 327 million for economic, development and stabilisation assistance. This includes assistance both in Syria and in the neighbouring countries.

The humanitarian assistance, channelled through EU partners, i.e. the Red Cross/Red Crescent movement, the UN agencies and International Non-governmental Organisations (INGOs), primarily supports life-saving medical emergency responses, the provision of essential drugs, food and nutritional items, safe water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), shelter, distribution of basic non-food items (NFIs) and protection to help the most vulnerable families (internally displaced people, refugees, host communities).

This is part of the EU comprehensive approach in response to the conflict and its consequences which was set out in the joint Commission/HR Communication of 24 June 2013.

([1]) EUR 934 million from Member States and EUR 515 million from the Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection of the Commission.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008674/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(15 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Riforme a tutela della donna in Arabia Saudita

Il Ministero arabo del Lavoro ha recentemente nominato una commissione di 45 ispettrici cui è stato attribuito il compito di controllare i negozi di abbigliamento al fine di assicurare l'osservanza del divieto di assumere personale misto, con dipendenti uomini e donne.

Considerando che la legge saudita ha prescritto, fin dallo scorso mese di gennaio, la costruzione di muri divisori di altezza non inferiore a 1,6 metri nei negozi di biancheria intima, per separare l'intimo maschile da quello femminile;

sottolineando inoltre che le commissioni di vigilanza anzidette si affiancheranno alla polizia religiosa — muttawa — nelle città dell'Arabia orientale, a Jeddah e a Riyad;

osservando infine come la decisione di istituire commissioni di donne vigilanti si inserisca nel più ampio quadro delle riforme sociali con le quali re Abdullah mira a combattere la disoccupazione femminile, che colpisce il 34 % delle donne arabe istruite,

si chiede alla Commissione:

— È a conoscenza dell'esatto contenuto di tali riforme sociali?

— Intende stabilire un dialogo con l'Arabia Saudita sul tema del miglioramento della condizione femminile?

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

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente è a conoscenza della situazione esistente nel Regno dell'Arabia Saudita e ha sostenuto con coerenza nelle sue relazioni con i paesi terzi il rispetto del principio di non discriminazione sulla base del genere come uno dei principi fondamentali dell'Unione europea.

La Convenzione delle Nazioni Unite sull'eliminazione di tutte le forme di discriminazione contro le donne (CEDAW) sancisce tale principio, insieme a molti altri, nel diritto internazionale. L'Unione europea ritiene che tutti gli Stati, compresa l'Arabia Saudita, debbano ratificare e attuare la CEDAW senza riserve. La questione, e più in generale la discriminazione nei confronti delle donne, è stata affrontata dagli Stati membri dell'UE nel corso dell'esame periodico universale cui è stata sottoposta l'Arabia Saudita in occasione del Consiglio dei diritti dell'uomo delle Nazioni Unite nel 2009.

L'UE intrattiene regolarmente scambi di opinioni con l'Arabia Saudita e gli altri cinque paesi del Golfo, anche in relazione ai diritti delle donne.

Si prega di fare riferimento alle risposte fornite alle interrogazioni scritte E-003961/2013, E-007077/2013, E-006638/2013 ([1]) per maggiori informazioni sulla politica dell'UE in materia di diritti umani per il Regno dell'Arabia Saudita.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/it/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008674/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Reforms to improve the situation for women in Saudi Arabia

The Saudi Ministry of Labour recently set up a committee of 45 female inspectors to check clothes shops with a view to ensuring that businesses are respecting the law banning men and women from working together in such shops.

Under a law introduced in January 2013, dividers at least 1.6 m high must be erected in underwear shops to separate the women's and menswear departments.

The inspectors will work alongside the Mutawa religious police in eastern Saudi cities, Jeddah and Riyadh.

This decision to set up committees of female inspectors is part of broader social reforms being introduced by King Abdullah to tackle female unemployment, which affects 34% of the educated female population.

Does the Commission know exactly what these social reforms involve?

Does it intend to engage in dialogue with Saudi Arabia on improving the situation of women?

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

The HR/VP is well aware of the situation prevailing in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) and has consistently advocated in its relations with third countries for the respect for the principle of non-discrimination on the basis of gender as one of the fundamental principles of the EU.

The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) sets this principle — along with many others — down in international law. The EU believes that all states — including Saudi Arabia — should ratify and implement CEDAW, without reservations. This issue — and more generally that of discrimination vis-à-vis women in the country — was raised by EU Member States during the Universal Periodic Review that Saudi Arabia underwent at the UN Human Rights Council in 2009.

The EU holds regular exchanges of views with Saudi Arabia and the other five Gulf countries, including on women's rights.

Please refer to answers given to written questions ([1]) E-003961/2013, E-007077/2013, E-006638/2013 for information about the EU's stance on Human Rights towards KSA.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008675/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(15 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Rivolta dei detenuti nel carcere indonesiano di Medan

In data odierna è stata diffusa la notizia che 500 detenuti presenti nel Tanjung Gusta Detention Center, a Medan, in Indonesia, hanno dato luogo a una sommossa contro la direzione del carcere.

Causa scatenante dei tumulti è la mancanza di acqua potabile e di elettricità nella struttura; unita al mancato accoglimento, da parte del ministero per i Diritti umani e la Legge, della richiesta di ridurre le pene detentive comminate nel paese in occasione della coincidenza del mese del Ramadan e della festa nazionale dell'indipendenza.

Nel suo complesso, il carcere di Tanjung Gusta ospita 2600 persone e almeno 200 hanno tentato di evadere durante gli scontri registratisi oggi.

Anche l'Indonesia, al pari di molti paesi dell'UE, conosce un problema di sovraffollamento carcerario e nel febbraio dello scorso anno gli scontri tra i detenuti del penitenziario di Bali e la polizia locale erano culminati in un incendio doloso.

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

— ha intenzione di stabilire un tavolo di dialogo con l'Indonesia sul tema del sovraffollamento carcerario?

— È in possesso di dati e studi recenti relativamente alle condizioni di vita nelle carceri dell'arcipelago?

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

I diritti dei detenuti e dei prigionieri vengono discussi puntualmente in occasione del dialogo annuale UE-Indonesia in materia di diritti umani.

La delegazione dell'UE a Giacarta non dispone di dati o studi recenti sulle condizioni nelle carceri in Indonesia, a parte quelli già pubblicamente disponibili.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008675/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Riot by inmates of the Indonesian Tanjung Gusta prison

On 11 July 2013, 500 inmates of the Tanjung Gusta Detention Center, in the Indonesian city of Medan, staged a riot against the prison authorities.

The disturbance arose after the prison's drinking-water supply had been cut off as a result of an electricity blackout; a further trigger factor lay in the refusal of the Ministry of Law and Human Rights to shorten prison sentences, notwithstanding the request for clemency prompted by the fact that the month of Ramadan this year falls close to Indonesia's national Independence Day.

The Tanjung Gusta prison as a whole now houses 2 600 inmates, and at least 200 attempted to escape during the rioting.

Prison overcrowding is a problem in Indonesia, just as it is in many EU Member States; in February 2012 fighting broke out between inmates and the local police when a Bali jail was set on fire.

Will the Commission embark on dialogue with Indonesia on the subject of prison overcrowding?

Does it have any figures or recent studies on prison conditions in Indonesia?

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

The rights of detainees and prisoners is a regular topic for discussion at the annual EU-Indonesia Human Rights Dialogue.

The Delegation of the European Union in Jakarta does not have any recent figures or studies on prison conditions in Indonesia apart from those that are already publicly available.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008676/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(15 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Uccisione di un sacerdote copto ortodosso in Egitto da parte di estremisti islamici

È notizia recente che il sacerdote copto ortodosso Mina Abboud Haroan è stato ucciso nel Sinai, nella città di el-Arish, da un gruppo di estremisti islamici. I fatti di cronaca raccontati dalle testate locali evidenziano come questi episodi si facciano sempre più frequenti in seguito alle rivolte che hanno portato alla destituzione dell'ex presidente Morsi.

Il commando che ha assassinato il sacerdote risultava armato e l'omicidio è stato compiuto in pieno giorno sparando a bruciapelo alla vittima, mentre questa si trovava in un quartiere del centro abitato.

Inoltre, già lo scorso anno un cristiano copto, Makram Diab, era stato condannato a sei anni di prigione da un tribunale nella provincia di Assiut con l'accusa di «aver insultato il Profeta» ed era sfuggito per caso a un attentato analogo contro la sua persona.

Infine, le cronache descrivono, in modo unanime, la presenza di folle di islamici fuori dai tribunali ove si svolgono i processi contro i cristiani, con l'intento di ottenerne la condanna a morte o il linciaggio anche qualora gli imputati siano colpevoli solo di manifestare la loro libertà di pensiero o di culto.

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

— è informata riguardo ai recenti avvenimenti in Egitto?

— Intende intraprendere una strada di sostegno all'Egitto verso la sua transizione democratica?

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

L'UE è perfettamente al corrente dei recenti episodi di cui sono vittime le minoranze religiose in Egitto e a cui fa riferimento l'onorevole deputato, ed esprime profonda preoccupazione al riguardo. L'Unione europea condanna ogni forma di intolleranza, discriminazione e violenza nei confronti delle persone per motivi di religione o di credo, in ogni parte del mondo e indipendentemente dalla religione/dal credo. L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente ha ripetutamente esortato le autorità egiziane a garantire la libertà di religione e di credo nel paese.

La delegazione dell'UE segue da vicino i casi di violenza settaria e nei suoi contatti con le autorità egiziane insiste sull'importanza di evitare discriminazioni per motivi religiosi. Per contribuire ad aumentare il rispetto della libertà di religione e di credo in Egitto, l'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente è pronta a impegnarsi con tutte le parti interessate nel paese e con le organizzazioni regionali e internazionali che condividono i valori e gli obiettivi dell'UE su questo tema. L'UE sta quindi monitorando la situazione in loco in stretto contatto con le principali parti interessate al fine di adottare le misure necessarie e appropriate.

Inoltre, l'UE continua a sostenere le aspirazioni democratiche del popolo egiziano e chiede una rapida evoluzione verso un processo di trasformazione inclusivo. La riconciliazione e il dialogo sono elementi fondamentali in vista di una soluzione pacifica.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008676/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Coptic orthodox priest murdered in Egypt by Islamic extremists

According to recent reports, the Coptic orthodox priest Mina Abboud Haroan was murdered in the city of el-Arish, in Sinai, by a group of Islamic extremists. According to local newspaper reports, such incidents are happening increasingly frequently following the uprising that led to the removal of former President Morsi from office.

The group that murdered the priest was armed and the murder took place in broad daylight, with the victim shot at point-blank range in a residential area.

Moreover, last year, a Coptic Christian, Makram Diab, was sentenced to six years' imprisonment by a court in the province of Asyut for 'having insulted the Prophet' and luckily escaped a similar attempt on his life.

Finally, news outlets all report that crowds of Muslims gather outside courts where Christians are on trial, with the intention of getting them sentenced to death or lynching them, even though those accused are guilty only of exercising their freedom of thought or worship.

— Is the Commission aware of recent events in Egypt?

— Will it support Egypt in its transition to democracy?

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

The EU is well aware and concerned about the recent events mentioned by the Honourable Member which religious minorities face in Egypt. The EU condemns all forms of intolerance, discrimination and violence against persons because of their religion or belief, wherever it takes place and regardless of the religion/belief. The HR/VP repeatedly called on the Egyptian authorities to ensure freedom of religion or belief in the country.

The EU delegation is closely following cases of sectarian violence and emphasises the importance of avoiding discrimination on religious grounds in its contacts with Egyptian authorities. In order to support the improvement of freedom of religion or belief in Egypt, the HR/VP is keen to engage with all relevant stakeholders in the country as well as with the regional and international organisations sharing EU's values and objectives in this respect. Therefore, the EU 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.

Moreover, the EU continues to support the democratic aspirations of the Egyptian people and calls for a rapid move to an inclusive transformation process. Reconciliation and dialogue are paramount for a peaceful solution.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008677/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(15 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Stupro e uccisione di una bambina indiana di quattro anni nell'Uttar Pradesh

Dall'India giunge oggi la notizia di un nuovo caso di stupro e uccisione di una bambina di 4 anni. Questa vicenda, non nuova ai media mondiali, viene all'attenzione nella città di Lucknow, nell'Uttar Pradesh, dove la piccola era stata rapita lo scorso 8 luglio.

I questi stessi giorni l'India attende anche il verdetto su uno dei sei violentatori di New Delhi, accusato dello stesso crimine, e l'imputato rischia una condanna a tre anni di riformatorio, in quanto minorenne al tempo delle violenze.

Inoltre gli stupri su bambine anche molto piccole non sono casi isolati né vengono percepiti come delitti da tutta la popolazione del paese, tanto che si verificano casi di ritardo nella registrazione, da parte delle autorità di polizia, delle denunce presentate.

Va infine evidenziato che alcuni passi avanti nella tutela della dignità della donna sono stati compiuti dal governo — nel senso, ad esempio, di imporre un rigido controllo sulla diffusione delle sostanze acide impiegate per deturpare il viso delle ragazze -, ma che nessuna misura è stata finora adottata per reprimere le violenze su bambine di età particolarmente sensibile, le quali restano esposte a ogni genere di sopruso in certi contesti sociali e culturali.

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

— è a conoscenza di altri casi significativi?

— Ha intenzione di intraprendere programmi scolastici ed educativi nel paese per migliorare la condizione delle donne?

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

I casi a cui fa riferimento l'onorevole deputato, cioè lo stupro di una bambina di quattro anni a Uttar Pradesh nel luglio 2013 e lo stupro collettivo di una ventitreenne avvenuto a Delhi nel dicembre 2012, sono stati correttamente segnalati, cosa che non succede spesso, e hanno ricevuto un seguito adeguato. L'indignazione suscitata, in particolare, dallo stupro collettivo ha indotto a rivedere la definizione di stupro e la legislazione pertinente, basandosi sui lavori della commissione guidata dal giudice (in pensione) Verma, riunitasi a fine dicembre 2012. Il disegno di legge (di modifica) sul diritto penale dell'aprile 2013 dimostra che i decisori indiani sono fermamente intenzionati ad affrontare la questione.

Già da tempo l'Unione europea coinvolge le autorità indiane e la società civile nel dibattito sulla violenza e la discriminazione nei confronti delle donne e sulle questioni di genere, L'approccio dell'UE si fonda su tre principi: la promozione dell'uguaglianza di genere e dell'emancipazione femminile, la lotta alle discriminazioni di genere e alla violenza contro donne e bambine e la protezione e la promozione dei diritti dei minori, in particolare delle bambine. A questi temi viene dato largo spazio, tra l'altro, nelle riunioni del dialogo regolare tra UE e India sui diritti umani.

Le questioni relative alle donne sono parte integrante anche delle attività di cooperazione allo sviluppo dell'UE: il benessere delle donne e delle ragazze è al centro dei programmi in materia di istruzione e di sanità, mentre numerosi progetti hanno aiutato le organizzazioni della società civile ad affrontare questioni quali la violenza contro le donne, compresi fenomeni quali la tratta di minori, i matrimoni infantili, la violenza domestica e l'HIV/AIDS.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008677/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Four-year-old Indian girl raped and murdered in Uttar Pradesh

According to reports from India today, there has been another rape and murder, this time involving a four-year-old girl. This incident, which comes as no surprise to the world's media, was reported in the city of Lucknow in Uttar Pradesh, where the little girl was abducted on 8 July 2013.

India is also currently awaiting the verdict in the trial of one of the six New Delhi rapists, accused of the same crime, and the defendant potentially faces three years in a young offenders' institution, as he was a minor at the time of the offence.

Moreover, rapes involving even younger children are not uncommon or even universally considered a crime in India, so much so that there are cases where the police delay recording reports made to them.

Lastly, the Indian Government has made some progress in protecting the dignity of women, for example by imposing tight controls on the distribution of acids, which are used to disfigure girls, but no action has yet been taken to curb violence against girls of a particularly sensitive age, who remain exposed to all kinds of abuse in certain social and cultural contexts.

— Is the Commission aware of other notable cases?

— Will it undertake school and educational programmes in India to improve the situation of women?

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

The cases referred to by the Honourable Member, i.e. the rape of a four year-old girl in Uttar Pradesh in July 2013 and the gang rape of a 23 year-old woman in Delhi in December 2012 were, unlike many, well reported and followed up upon. The Delhi gang rape case, in particular, generated national and international outrage leading to a rethinking both on the definition of rape and its legislation, building on the work of the (late) Justice Verma Committee end December 2012. The Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill in April 2013 reflected the eagerness of Indian decision-makers to address the issue.

The EU has engaged the Indian authorities and civil society for some time already on violence, discrimination against women and gender issues. The EU approach is based on three principles: promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, combatting gender-based discrimination and violence against women and girls, and protecting and promoting the rights of children, especially girls. These topics feature prominently, *inter alia*, in the meetings of the regular Human Rights Dialogue between the EU and India.

Women's issues are also mainstreamed into EU development cooperation activities: education and health-related programmes have a strong focus on women and girls' welfare, while numerous projects have helped civil society organisations to address issues such as violence against women, including trafficking and child marriage, domestic violence and HIV/AIDS.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-008678/13
do Komisji
Danuta Jazłowiecka (PPE)
(15 lipca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Podatek od wynajmowania siły roboczej w Danii – nieprawidłowości

Na podstawie ustawy L921 z dnia 18 września 2012 r. wynagrodzenie należne za wykonaną usługę zagranicznym firmom delegującym pracowników do Danii jest pomniejszane przez duńskich zleceniodawców o 35,6 % wartości zlecenia netto (38 % brutto). Tego typu opodatkowanie stosowane jest w branżach rolniczej, leśnej i ogrodniczej. Podatek ten, według oficjalnej informacji duńskiej administracji skarbowej SKAT ([1]), zawiera w sobie 8 % składkę AMB na fundusz zatrudnienia oraz 30 % podatek za „wynajmowanie siły roboczej". Warto podkreślić, iż podatek ten jest równoważny z zaliczkami pobieranymi od dochodów duńskich pracowników zatrudnionych w Danii na poczet podatku dochodowego, składki na fundusz zatrudnienia, podatku municypalnego, w tym składki na ubezpieczenie zdrowotne i emerytalne. Pracownicy delegowani odprowadzając taki podatek nie uzyskują w zamian nic – nie mogą np. korzystać z duńskiej służby zdrowia, otrzymać numeru identyfikacji podatkowej czy dokonać odliczeń.

W praktyce zaistniała więc sytuacja, w której zagraniczny pracodawca, delegujący pracowników do pracy w Danii, potrąca od ich wynagrodzeń zaliczkę na podatek dochodowy oraz składki na ubezpieczenie społeczne i zdrowotne w kraju pochodzenia, jak również zobligowany jest do potrącania od wynagrodzenia pracowników podatku za „wynajmowanie siły roboczej" w wysokości 35,6 % w Danii. Oznacza to, iż w rzeczywistości zagraniczni pracownicy delegowani są poddawani podwójnemu opodatkowaniu.

— Czy Komisja zgodzi się ze stwierdzeniem, że wprowadzony podatek od **„**wynajmowania siły roboczej**"** dyskryminuje zagranicznych przedsiębiorców i stanowi nieproporcjonalne ograniczenie traktatowej swobody świadczenia usług?

— Jakie kroki w tej sytuacji Komisja zamierza podjąć?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Algirdasa Šemetę w imieniu Komisji
(9 września 2013 r.)

Komisja gromadzi bardziej szczegółowe informacje, aby ocenić, czy zmienione duńskie przepisy dotyczące nałożenia na pracowników delegowanych „podatku za wynajmowanie siły roboczej" są zgodne z prawem unijnym, w tym z przepisami dotyczącymi koordynacji zabezpieczenia społecznego. W związku z tym na obecnym etapie Komisja nie jest w stanie udzielić odpowiedzi na pytanie. Przed końcem 2013 r. Komisja poinformuje szanowną Panią Posłankę o wyniku oceny i ewentualnych działaniach następczych.

([1]) http://skat.dk/SKAT.aspx?oId=170532

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008678/13
to the Commission
Danuta Jazłowiecka (PPE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Legality of Danish 'hiring out of labour tax'

Under Act L921 of 18 September 2012 Danish firms hiring out employees of foreign firms must withhold 35.6% of the net amount (38% of the gross amount) payable in respect of the services they provide. This tax is levied in the farming, forestry and horticulture sectors. According to official details provided by the SKAT ([1]) (Danish tax authorities), 'labour market contributions' account for 8% of that figure and 'hiring out of labour tax' for the remaining 30%. This tax is equivalent to the amounts withheld from the pay of Danish workers employed in Denmark, to cover income tax, employment fund contributions, local taxes and health and pension contributions. The posted workers subject to the tax receive nothing in return. For instance, they are not entitled to make use of the Danish health service, to obtain a Danish tax registration number or to deduct anything from the tax they pay.

This means, in practice, that foreign employers posting workers to Denmark withhold from the pay of those workers the amounts required to cover income tax and health and social security contributions in the country of origin and are also obliged to deduct 35.6% to cover the 'hiring out of labour tax' in Denmark. The posted workers are therefore being subjected to double taxation.

— Would the Commission agree that the 'hiring out of labour tax' introduced in Denmark discriminates against foreign employers and constitutes a disproportionate restriction of the freedom to provide services established in the Treaties?

— What action will it take in this matter?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(9 September 2013)

The Commission is gathering more detailed information in order to assess whether the modified Danish rules on the 'hiring out of labour tax' of posted workers are compatible with EC law, including the social security coordination rules. It is therefore not in a position to answer the question at this stage. The Commission will inform the Honourable Member about the outcome of the assessment and possible consequent action not later than by the end of 2013.

([1]) http://skat.dk/SKAT.aspx?oId=170532.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-008679/13
do Komisji
Danuta Jazłowiecka (PPE)
(15 lipca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Duński rejestr zagranicznych zleceniobiorców RUT – nieprawidłowości

W dniu 1 stycznia 2011 r. weszły w życie zmiany do ustawy o duńskim rejestrze zagranicznych zleceniobiorców RUT, wprowadzonym ustawą nr 509 z dnia 19 maja 2010 r. Nowelizacja RUT wprowadziła elektroniczny system rejestracji przedsiębiorstw i zleceń poprzez stronę: www.virk.dk/rut. Przesyłane przez przedsiębiorców informacje nt. firmy, takie jak: dane adresowe firmy, przedmiot działalności, dokładny adres świadczonej usługi lub adres klienta, są upublicznione na stronie urzędu. Upublicznianie części danych zawartych w rejestrze RUT umożliwia duńskim związkom zawodowym wyszukiwanie zagranicznych firm, często w celu zmuszenia ich do przystąpienia do układów zbiorowych, jak również ułatwia duńskim firmom nieuczciwą walkę z zagraniczną konkurencją.

Dodatkowo nowelizacja z dnia 1 stycznia 2011 r. wprowadza obowiązek przedstawienia duńskiemu kontrahentowi dowodu zarejestrowania zagranicznej firmy w systemie jeszcze przed podpisaniem kontraktu na wykonanie usługi oraz nakłada uciążliwe kary finansowe (każdorazowo 10 000 DKK) na podmioty, które nie dopełniły obowiązku rejestracji usługi w systemie.

— Czy Komisja zgodzi się ze stwierdzeniem, że wprowadzona nowelizacja jest niezgodna z zasadą proporcjonalności, zbyt uciążliwa i dyskryminuje zagranicznych przedsiębiorców?

— Czy Komisja zgodzi się ze stwierdzeniem, że zmiany wprowadzone do systemu RUT stanowią nieproporcjonalne ograniczenie traktatowej swobody świadczenia usług?

— Jakie kroki w tej sytuacji Komisja zamierza podjąć?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Michaela Barniera w imieniu Komisji
(4 września 2013 r.)

Komisja jest w pełni świadoma obaw wyrażonych przez Panią Poseł dotyczących duńskiego rejestru zagranicznych zleceniobiorców, tzw. RUT.

Trybunał Sprawiedliwości w sprawie nr C-577/10 orzekł, że podobny system – Limosa (mający zastosowanie do usługodawców samozatrudnionych w Belgii) – jest nieproporcjonalny i niezgodny z art. 56 TFUE.

Zgodnie z tym orzeczeniem służby Komisji zainicjowały nieformalny dialog z władzami duńskimi, aby lepiej poznać sposób i zakres funkcjonowania systemu RUT i aby ustalić czy ten system (lub jakikolwiek z jego elementów) stanowi ograniczenie swobody świadczenia usług zgodnie z art. 56 TFUE oraz z dyrektywą usługową ([1]). Jeżeli zaistnieje taka konieczność, będziemy starali się znaleźć rozwiązanie mające na celu zmianę duńskiego prawa krajowego w taki sposób, aby było zgodne z dorobkiem prawnym UE.

Dalsze działania Komisji będą zależały od wyniku tych rozmów. Komisja poinformuje Panią Poseł o decyzjach, które zostaną podjęte w tej sprawie.

([1]) Dyrektywa 2006/123/WE Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady z dnia 12 grudnia 2009 r. dotycząca usług na rynku wewnętrznym.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008679/13
to the Commission
Danuta Jazłowiecka (PPE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Legality of Danish register of foreign service providers (RUT)

1 January 2011 saw the entry into force of changes to the rules on the RUT – the Danish register of foreign service providers – which were introduced by law No 509 of 19 May 2010. The amendments to the RUT led to the introduction of an electronic registration system for companies and sole proprietors, which can be found at www.virk.dk/rut. Companies are required to provide such information as their address, their activity, the exact address where the service is provided or the client's address, which is published on the website. The publication of elements of the data included in the RUT register enables the Danish trade unions to identify foreign firms, often in order to force them to enter into collective agreements; it also makes it easy for Danish firms to wage an unfair war against foreign competitors.

Another change which came into force on 1 January 2011 was the obligation to provide proof of the registration of foreign firms in the system to Danish contractors prior to the signature of a contract for services and imposes hefty fines (DKK 10 000 on each occasion) on entities which fail to register services in the system.

Does the Commission agree that the changes referred to are not consistent with the proportionality principle, are too draconian and discriminate against foreign companies?

Does the Commission agree that the changes made to the RUT system constitute an unreasonable restriction on the freedom to provide services as laid down in the Treaties?

What action is the Commission planning to take on this matter?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(4 September 2013)

The Commission is fully aware of the concerns expressed by the Honourable Member regarding the Danish system of prior declaration called RUT.

The European Court of Justice in Case C-577/10 already found a similar system, Limosa (applicable to the self-employed service providers in Belgium), to be disproportionate and incompatible with Article 56 TFUE.

Following this ruling, the Commission services initiated an informal dialogue with the Danish authorities to better understand the nature and scope of the RUT system, to establish whether the system (or any of its elements) constitutes a restriction to the freedom to provide services as laid down in Article 56 TFUE and the Services Directive ([1]) and, if needed, to find a solution bringing the national law in line with the EU *acquis*.

Further actions by the Commission will depend on the outcome of the abovementioned dialogue. The Commission will inform the Honourable Member of the decisions taken in relation to this case.

([1]) Directive 2006/123/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 December 2009 on services in the internal market.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-008680/13
adresată Comisiei
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(15 iulie 2013)

Subiect: Protecția plantelor

Protecția plantelor este una din activitățile agricole care prezintă un risc important pentru menținerea terenului în bune condiții pentru agricultură și mediu. Riscul major derivă în primul rând din utilizarea pesticidelor. Din acest motiv legislația europeană în domeniul agriculturii are, printre alte scopuri, și pe acela de limitare a folosirii produselor chimice de protecție a plantelor (pesticide) și de încurajare a dezvoltării și utilizării de produse și metode cu acțiune predominant ecologică pentru atingerea obiectivelor agriculturii durabile.

Peste 50% din teritoriul european este folosit pentru agricultură, deci realizarea unei agriculturi durabile este o parte esențială a procesului de dezvoltare durabilă, iar dezvoltarea durabilă constituie obiectivul major al tuturor strategiilor elaborate pe plan mondial, inclusiv al celor elaborate în România.

În acest context, care este abordarea Comisiei cu privire la metodele de protecție a plantelor care sunt cele mai larg cunoscute și utilizate și cu un grad ridicat de utilizare a resurselor?

Între diferitele metode de combatere și cele agrotehnice există numeroase interacțiuni. Are în vedere Comisia dezvoltarea unor metode de protecție integrată a plantelor, pentru a asigura păstrarea și dezvoltarea armonioasă a ecosistemelor agricole?

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(2 septembrie 2013)

Regulamentul (CE) nr. 1107/2009 ([1]) privind introducerea pe piață a produselor fitosanitare prevede criterii stricte pentru aprobarea substanțelor active care urmează să facă parte din produsele de protecție a plantelor. În plus, acesta prevede, de asemenea, criterii și proceduri simplificate pentru produsele cu risc redus și substanțele de bază, acestea din urmă fiind comercializate în alte scopuri (de exemplu, produse alimentare), dar care sunt totuși folositoare pentru protecția plantelor.

În plus, în conformitate cu articolul 55 din acest regulament, produsele de protecție a plantelor trebuie să fie utilizate în mod corespunzător. Utilizarea corespunzătoare implică, printre altele, punerea în aplicare a dispozițiilor din Directiva 2009/128/CE ([2]) privind utilizarea durabilă a pesticidelor și, în special, a principiilor generale de combatere integrată a dăunătorilor (IPM), care sunt definite în anexa III și vor trebui să fie aplicate cel mai târziu începând de la 1 ianuarie 2014 de către toți utilizatorii profesioniști. Printre principiile generale există cel conform căruia „metodele durabile biologice, fizice și alte metode nechimice trebuie preferate metodelor chimice, dacă acestea asigură un control corespunzător al dăunătorilor”.

În prezent, Comisia urmărește îndeaproape transpunerea și punerea în aplicare a Directivei 2009/128/CE care prevede ca statele membre să ia toate măsurile necesare pentru a promova o gestionare a organismelor dăunătoare bazată pe o utilizare redusă a pesticidelor, favorizând, ori de câte ori este posibil, metodele nechimice.

În cele din urmă, ca răspuns la cea de-a doua întrebare a distinsului membru, Comisia face trimitere la răspunsul la întrebarea E-006608/2013 ([3]), în care au fost furnizate informații cu privire la o serie de proiecte de cercetare privind găsirea de alternative la utilizarea pesticidelor chimice, în special proiectul PURE ([4]), care este axat pe gestionarea integrată a dăunătorilor.

([1]) JO L 309, 24.11.2009, p. 1-50.
([2]) Directiva 2009/128/CE privind utilizarea durabilă a pesticidelor: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:309:0071:0086:ro:PDF
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/ro/parliamentary-questions.html
([4]) Proiectul PURE — Pesticide Use-and-risk Reduction in European farming systems with integrated pest management („Reducerea utilizării pesticidelor și a riscurilor aferente în cadrul sistemelor agricole europene prin gestionarea integrată a dăunătorilor”) : http://www.pure-ipm.eu/project

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008680/13
to the Commission
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Plant protection

Plant protection is one of the agricultural activities that pose a major threat to maintaining farmland in a sound environmental condition and good farming condition. The main risk comes from the use of pesticides. That is why one of the main aims of EU legislation in the sphere of agriculture is to limit the use of chemical plant protection products (pesticides) and to encourage the development and use of products and techniques that work along predominantly ecological lines, in order to achieve the objectives of sustainable agriculture.

Over 50% of the surface area of the EU is used for agriculture, so the implementation of sustainable agriculture is a key part of the process of sustainable development, and sustainable development is a prime objective of all the strategies developed internationally, including in Romania.

In this context, what is the Commission's approach to the most widely-recognised and broadly-used plant protection methods, which entail a high level of resource use?

There are a host interactions between the various plant protection methods and agro-technical methods. Does the Commission intend to develop integrated plant protection methods, in order to ensure the preservation and harmonious development of agricultural ecosystems?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(2 September 2013)

Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 ([1]) on the placing of plant protection products on the market provides for strict criteria for the approval of 'active substances' to be part of plant protection products. Moreover, it provides also for criteria and simplified procedures for low risk products and basic substances, this last being substances being on the market for other purposes (e.g. foodstuff) but nevertheless being useful in plant protection.

In addition, in accordance with Article 55 of that same Regulation, plant protection products shall be used properly. Proper use shall include, among others, the application of the provisions of Directive 2009/128/EC ([2]) on the sustainable use of pesticides and in particular the general principles of Integrated Pest Management (IPM), which are defined in its Annex III and will have to be applied at latest by 1 January 2014 by all professional users. Among the general principles there is the general principle that: 'sustainable biological, physical and other non-chemical methods must be preferred to chemical methods if they provide satisfactory pest control'.

The Commission is currently following closely the transposition and implementation of the directive 2009/128/EC which provides for Member States to take all necessary measures to promote low pesticides-input pest management, giving, wherever possible, priority to non-chemical methods.

Finally, in reply to the second question of the Honourable Member, the Commission would refer to the reply to Question E-006608/2013 ([3]) in which information has been provided on a number of research projects on finding alternatives to chemical pesticides and in particular PURE ([4]) which is focused on Integrated Pest Management.

([1]) OJ L 309, 24.11.2009, pp. 1-50.
([2]) Directive 2009/128/EC on sustainable use of pesticides: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:309:0071:0086:en:PDF
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([4]) PURE Project — Pesticide Use-and-risk Reduction in European farming systems with integrated pest management: http://www.pure-ipm.eu/project

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008681/13
an die Kommission
Axel Voss (PPE)
(15. Juli 2013)

Betrifft: Warnhinweise für Kinderbettdecken/Beschluss 2010/376/EU

Die EU-Kommission hat am 2. Juli 2010 einen Beschluss (2010/376/EU) „zu den Sicherheitsanforderungen, die gemäß der Richtlinie 2001/95/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates durch europäische Normen über bestimmte Produkte für die Bettruhe von Kindern zu erfüllen sind", gefasst.

Nach dieser Norm müssen u. a. kleine Kinderbettdeckchen mit einem sicherheitstechnischen Warnvermerk in allen EU-Sprachen versehen sein, um die Aufsichtspersonen darauf aufmerksam zu machen, dass eine zu dicke Zudecke zu einer Überwärmung des Kleinkindes führen kann.

Kann die Kommission dazu folgende Fragen beantworten:

1. Wie hoch schätzt die Kommission den bürokratischen und finanziellen Aufwand für die Industrie ein, der notwendig ist, um den Beschluss 2010/376/EU umzusetzen?

2. Ist die Tatsache, dass eine zu dicke Zudecke zu einer Überwärmung führen kann, nach Auffassung der Kommission nicht eine allgemeingültige Erkenntnis, die den Bürgerinnen und Bürgern der EU hinreichend bekannt ist? Gibt es Studien oder Untersuchungen, nach denen dieser Warnhinweis wirklich notwendig ist?

3. Wäre es aus Sicht der Kommission auch möglich, dass die o. a. Warnhinweise anstatt an den Kinderbettdeckchen selbst auch über beiliegende Informationsblätter oder sonstige Kommunikationswege verbreitet werden? Wenn nein, warum nicht?

Antwort von Herrn Mimica im Namen der Kommission
(16. September 2013)

Der Beschluss 2010/376/EU der Kommission vom 2. Juli 2010 zu den Sicherheitsanforderungen, die gemäß der Richtlinie 2001/95/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates durch Europäische Normen über bestimmte Produkte für die Bettruhe von Kindern zu erfüllen sind ([1]), ist auf Wirtschaftsbeteiligte nicht unmittelbar anwendbar. Er hat somit keine direkten Folgen für die Industrie.

Die Sicherheitsanforderungen in dem Beschluss beruhen auf einer Untersuchung des französischen *Laboratoire national de métrologie et d'essais* aus dem Jahr 2008. Die Studie stufte die Schwere der von Wärmestaugefahren verursachten Verletzungen als sehr ernst ein („plötzlicher Säuglingstod"); eine Kinderbettdecke stelle in dieser Hinsicht ein gewisses (mäßiges) Risiko dar.

Zweck des Beschlusses ist die Festlegung der Sicherheitsanforderungen, denen künftige europäische Normen genügen müssen. Die Kommission hat den Europäischen Normungsorganisationen einen entsprechenden Normungsauftrag erteilt. Diese werden sich mit der vorgeschriebenen Warnung vor den Wärmestaugefahren befassen. Wie die Warnung im Einzelnen zu gestalten ist (u. a. in puncto Form und Inhalt), wird nicht die Kommission, sondern — unter Mitwirkung von Vertretern der Industrie — das Europäische Komitee für Normung bestimmen.

([1]) ABl. L 170 vom 6.7.2010, S. 39.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008681/13
to the Commission
Axel Voss (PPE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Warning labels on children's duvets (Decision 2010/376/EU)

On 2 July 2010 the Commission adopted a decision (2010/376/EU) 'on the safety requirements to be met by European standards for certain products in the sleep environment of children pursuant to Directive 2001/95/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council'.

Under this decision, small duvets for children have to be labelled with a safety warning in all EU languages, to draw carers' attention to the fact that covering a child with too thick a duvet may lead to overheating (hyperthermia).

Can the Commission please answer the following questions:

1. What does the Commission estimate is the cost to industry in terms of money and red tape of implementing Decision 2010/376/EU?

2. Does the Commission not consider the fact that too thick a duvet can lead to overheating to be a matter of general knowledge of which EU citizens are already sufficiently aware? Have there been any studies to show that such warning labels are really necessary?

3. Does the Commission consider that it would be possible to distribute such warnings on accompanying leaflets or by some other means of communication rather than on the blankets themselves? If not, why not?

Answer given by Mr Mimica on behalf of the Commission
(16 September 2013)

Commission Decision 2010/376/EU of 2 July 2010 on the safety requirements to be met by European standards for certain products in the sleep environment of children pursuant to Directive 2001/95/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council ([1]) is not directly applicable to the economic operators. It therefore does not directly create any impact on industry.

The safety requirements set out in the decision are based on a study of the Laboratoire national de métrologie et d'essais in 2008. The study concluded that the severity of injury related to hyperthermia hazards was very serious ('sudden infant death syndrome') and that in this respect children's duvet presented a certain (moderate) level of risk.

The purpose of the decision is to set out the safety requirements which are to be satisfied by future European standards. The Commission has issued a mandate to the European Standardisation Organisations to develop such standards. They will address the warning requirement regarding hyperthermia hazards. Details of the warning such as form and content will not be determined by the Commission, but by the European Committee for Standardisation with the participation of industry representatives.

([1]) OJ L 170, 6.7.2010, p. 39.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008682/13
aan de Commissie
Judith Sargentini (Verts/ALE)
(15 juli 2013)

Betreft: Grootschalige internationale observatie- en afluistersystemen en grondrechten

De laatste weken zijn belangrijke onthullingen gedaan over grootschalige internationale observatie- en afluistersystemen die door de VS, het Verenigd Koninkrijk en Frankrijk worden ingezet, waarbij ook gebouwen van de EU-instellingen zouden worden afgeluisterd. Programma's als PRISM en Tempora ondergraven de grondrechten van burgers in Europa en de rest van de wereld. In zijn resolutie over dit onderwerp, die op 4 juli 2013 is aangenomen, heeft het Parlement zijn veroordeling uitgesproken over deze spionageactiviteiten en heeft het aangedrongen op snelle actie op meerdere fronten. De Commissie heeft eveneens haar bezorgdheid betoond over de tot dusver verborgen gehouden massale observatiesystemen.

1. Is de Commissie van plan naar aanleiding van de recente onthullingen, met name over PRISM, en gelet op de Amerikaanse Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act Amendment Act, Section 1881a, haar cloud computing-strategie te herzien en een duidelijk en samenhangend cloud computing-initiatief op te zetten dat al deze kwesties aan de orde stelt en EU-cloud computing-initiatieven bevordert die de volle bescherming van alle burgerlijke vrijheden omvatten?

2. Kan de Commissie garanderen dat PNR- en Swift-gegevens die de VS verkrijgt uit hoofde van de PNR- respectievelijk de TFTP-overeenkomst tussen de EU en de VS, niet worden gekruist met gegevens die met PRISM of soortgelijke programma's worden verkregen, met het oog op bijvoorbeeld profiling? Zo neen, is de Commissie dan van plan deze overeenkomsten op te schorten?

Antwoord van mevrouw Reding namens de Commissie
(27 september 2013)

Wat betreft de recente berichten in de media over programma's zoals PRISM, verwijst de Commissie het geachte Parlementslid naar het antwoord op de vragen E-7934/13 en E-6783/13.

Overeenkomstig de Europese cloud computing-strategie en de voorgestelde algemene verordening gegevensbescherming steunt de Commissie de ontwikkeling van een gedragscode op het gebied van cloud computing en gegevensbescherming. In combinatie met de voorgestelde algemene gegevensbeschermingsverordening zal een dergelijke gedragscode leiden tot een hoog niveau van bescherming van persoonsgegevens. Rechtszekerheid op het gebied van gegevensbescherming is immers van vitaal belang voor ondernemingen die actief zijn in de EU.

De Commissie buigt zich momenteel over mogelijke verbanden tussen Amerikaanse observatieprogramma's en de PNR-overeenkomst met de VS; dit gebeurt in het kader van de reguliere evaluatie van deze overeenkomst. Deze evaluatie heeft onlangs plaatsgevonden en het verslag zal te zijner tijd worden voorgelegd aan het Europees Parlement. Bij de evaluaties van de TFTP-overeenkomst tussen de EU en de VS die in 2011 en 2012 werden gehouden, is de toepassing van de waarborgen ten aanzien van de verwerking van de verstrekte gegevens tegen het licht gehouden en werden de genomen maatregelen afdoende bevonden. De Commissie zal om verdere toelichting vragen in de EU-VS ad-hocwerkgroep.

Beide overeenkomsten met de VS moeten de gemeenschappelijke veiligheidsbelangen van de Europese Unie dienen en de grondrechten van de EU-burgers beschermen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008682/13
to the Commission
Judith Sargentini (Verts/ALE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Massive international surveillance systems and fundamental rights

Major revelations have been made in recent weeks concerning massive international surveillance systems in use by the United States, the United Kingdom and France, as well as targeted surveillance against EU offices. Programmes like PRISM and TEMPORA undermine the fundamental rights of European citizens and people around the world. In a resolution it adopted on the subject on 4 July 2013, Parliament condemned the spying and called for urgent action on a number of fronts. The Commission has also expressed concern over the previously undisclosed mass-surveillance systems.

1. Will the Commission revise its cloud computing strategy in light of the recent surveillance revelations, specifically PRISM, and of the US Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act Amendment Act, Section 1881a, and set up a clear and consistent cloud computing initiative that addresses all the issues and promotes EU cloud initiatives that fully encompass the protection of all civil liberties?

2. Can the Commission guarantee that PNR and Swift data obtained by the US under the EU-US PNR and TFTP agreements are not combined with data obtained under PRISM or a similar programme, for instance for profiling purposes? If not, will the Commission seek to suspend these agreements?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(27 September 2013)

Regarding the recent media reports about programmes such as PRISM, the Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to the answer E-7934/13 and E-6783/13.

In line with the European Cloud Computing Strategy and the proposed General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), the Commission is supporting the development of a cloud computing and data protection code of conduct. Together with the proposed GDPR such a code will ensure a high level of protection of personal data. Indeed, legal certainty when it comes to data protection is vital for companies operating in the EU.

Possible relations between US surveillance programmes on the one hand and the PNR Agreement with the US on the other are currently looked into by the Commission as part of the regular reviews of this Agreement. The review of the PNR Agreement was undertaken recently and its report will be submitted to the European Parliament in due time. Two regular reviews of the EU-US TFTP Agreement in 2011 and 2012 assessed the implementation of the safeguards applicable to the processing of provided data and considered the measures taken as adequate. The Commission will seek further clarifications in the context of the EU-US ad hoc working group.

Both Agreements with the US aim to promote and protect the European Union's common security interests and the fundamental rights of EU citizens.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-008683/13
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(15 ta' Lulju 2013)

Suġġett: Immigrazzjoni mit-Tramuntana tal-Afrika lejn il-Mediterran

X'laqgħat kellha l-Kummissjoni mal-gvernijiet individwali tat-Tramuntana tal-Afrika u/jew l-Unjoni Afrikana dwar il-kwestjoni tal-immigrazzjoni irregolari mill-2008?

X'programmi ġew introdotti u/jew x'miżuri speċifiċi ttieħdu flimkien mal-istati individwali tat-Tramuntana tal-Afrika biex jindirizzaw il-kwestjoni tal-migrazzjoni irregolari fil-Mediterran? X'fondi thallsu lil kull Stat tat-Tramuntana tal-Afrika bħala parti minn pakkett ta' soluzzjonijiet biex jittaffa l-fluss ta' immigranti irregolari lejn l-Istati Membri tal-UE?

Il-Kummissjoni ppubblikat xi rapporti dwar il-livell ta' għajxien tal-immigranti irregolari li qegħdin jgħixu fl-UE matul dawn l-aħħar erba' snin?

Il-Kummissjoni biħsiebha tiddiriġi lil Eurostat biex tibda tiġbor data soċjoekonomika dwar il-migranti irregolari li qegħdin jgħixu fl-UE sabiex jiġu vvalutati l-kundizzjonijiet tal-għajxien tagħhom, u l-perċezzjonijiet u l-aspettattivi tagħhom marbutin mal-għajxien tagħhom fl-UE?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sa Malmström f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(14 ta' Awwissu 2013)

Il-Ftehimiet ta' Assoċjazzjoni ffirmati mill-UE mal-Marokk, l-Alġerija, it-Tuneżija u l-Eġittu, jipprovdu lill-Kummissjoni bil-possibbiltà ta' djalogu regolari dwar il-kwistjonijiet tal-migrazzjoni ma' dawn il-pajjiżi. Barra minn hekk, minn Ottubru 2011, il-Kummissjoni wettqet mal-Marokk u t-Tuneżija djalogu aktar intens dwar il-migrazzjoni, il-mobbiltà u s-sigurtà, li rriżulta fl-2013, fl-iffirmar ta' Sħubija għall-Mobbiltà mal-Marokk. Dan id-djalogu jista' jibda wkoll ma' pajjiżi oħra tal-Afrika ta' Fuq ladarba l-kundizzjonijiet jippermettu. Id-djalogi reġjonali jseħħu fil-kuntest tal-Proċess ta' Rabat u s-Sħubija dwar il-Migrazzjoni, il-Mobbiltà u l-Impjieg mal-Unjoni Afrikana.

L-UE tassisti l-pajjiżi tal-Afrika ta' Fuq dwar kwistjonijiet ta' migrazzjoni permezz tal-"Istrument Ewropew ta' Viċinat u Sħubija" u permezz tal-"Programm Tematiku dwar il-Kooperazzjoni ma' pajjiżi terzi fl-oqsma tal-Migrazzjoni u l-Asil". Taħt dawn il-programmi, bosta proġetti jindirizzaw il-migrazzjoni irregolari mill-Afrika ta' Fuq. Dawk prinċipali huma il-proġett "Sahara-Med", ta' ammont ta' EUR 10 miljun, u "Seahorse Mediterranean Network", ta' ammont ta' EUR 10 miljun u EUR 4,5 miljun rispettivament.

F'dawn l-aħħar snin il-Kummissjoni ma ppubblikatx rapporti li jiffokaw b'mod speċifiku fuq il-livell tal-għajxien tal-migranti irregolari li jgħixu fl-UE. Madankollu xi tagħrif jista' jinstab fl-istudju dwar "*is-sitwazzjoni ta' ċittadini ta' pajjiżi terzi sakemm isir ir-ritorn/tneħħija fl-Istat Membru tal-UE u l-Pajjiżi Assoċjati ta' Schengen*" li huwa disponibbli fuq il-websajt tad-DĠ Home ([1]). Rigward l-istatistika, il-EUROSTAT ma tiġborx id-dejta soċjo-ekonomika dwar il-kundizzjonijiet tal-għajxien tal-migranti irregolari fl-UE u ma hemm l-ebda pjan biex tinġabar din id-dejta.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/e-library/documents/policies/immigration/return-readmission/docs/11032013_sudy_report_on_immigration_return-removal_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008683/13
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Immigration from North Africa to the Mediterranean

What meetings has the Commission held with individual North African governments and/or the African Union on the issue of irregular immigration since 2008?

What programmes have been introduced and/or specific measures taken together with the individual North African states to address the issue of irregular migration in the Mediterranean? What funds have been paid to each North African state as part of a package of solutions to mitigate the flow of irregular immigrants into EU Member States?

Has the Commission published any reports on the standard of living of irregular migrants living in the EU during the past four years?

Does the Commission intend to direct Eurostat to commence the collection of socioeconomic data on irregular migrants living in the EU in order to assess their living conditions, and their perceptions and expectations with regard to living in the EU?

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

The Association Agreements signed by the EU with Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Egypt, provide the Commission with the possibility of a regular dialogue on migration matters with these countries. Furthermore, since October 2011 the Commission has carried out with Morocco and Tunisia a more intense Dialogue on migration, mobility and security, which resulted in 2013 into the signature of a Mobility Partnership with Morocco. Such Dialogue may also start with other North African countries once conditions would allow. Regional dialogues take place in the context of the Rabat Process and the Partnership on Migration, Mobility and Employment with the African Union.

The EU assists North Africa countries in migration matters through the 'European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument' and through the 'Thematic programme for the Cooperation with third countries in the areas of Asylum and Migration'. Under these programmes, several projects deal with irregular migration from North Africa, the main ones being the 'Sahara-Med' project, of an amount of 10 M EUR, and 'Seahorse Mediterranean Network', of an amount of 10 and 4,5 M EUR respectively.

In recent years the Commission has not published reports specifically focusing on the standard of living of irregular migrants living the EU. However some information can be found in the study on '*the situation of third-country nationals pending return/removal in the EU Member State and the Schengen Associated Countries' which is available on DG Home website* ([1]). As regards statistics, Eurostat does not collect socioeconomic data on the living conditions of irregular migrants in the EU and there are no plans to collect such data.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/e-library/documents/policies/immigration/return-readmission/docs/11032013_sudy_report_on_immigration_return-removal_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008684/13
to the Commission
Claude Moraes (S&D)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Urban green spaces / clean air

The European Union is committed to promoting and safeguarding the existence of green spaces and natural habitats within cities and urban areas, under the Habitats (92/43/EEC) and Wild Birds (2009/147/EC) directives.

The UK Environment Agency has said that 'good quality green spaces can improve people's access to nature in urban areas, improve quality of life, enhance biodiversity and support social cohesion and the local economy'.

Given this, can the Commission provide details on how it ensures that cities such as my constituency of London have adequate green spaces, or what action it can take to ensure that urban development over green spaces must satisfy a very high bar of assessment to ensure that it is evaluated with a strong emphasis on the preservation of natural habitats, biodiversity, and clean air?

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

Green spaces in urban areas can indeed contribute to better air quality, but based on the provisions of Directive 2008/50/EC ([1]) the Commission has no role in ensuring the implementation of specific air quality measures at national or local level.

For those urban green sites that are part of the European Natura 2000 network set up under Directive 2009/147/EC ([2]) and Directive 92/43/EEC ([3]), any plan or project not directly connected with, or necessary to the management of such a site, but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to an appropriate assessment in view of the sites conservation objectives. The competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned.

The Commission promotes the implementation of green infrastructure ([4]) including in urban areas, to provide citizens with the multiple social, environmental and economic benefits that ecosystems deliver. The choice of measures to implement green infrastructure depends on regional and local conditions and is a matter for Member States to decide.

([1]) Directive 2008/50/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 May 2008 on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe, OJ L 152/1, 11.6.2008.
([2]) Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds, OJ L 20/7, 26.1.2010.
([3]) Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild flora and fauna, OJ L 206 , 22.07.1992.
([4]) See Commission Communication COM(2013)249 on Green Infrastructure (GI) — Enhancing Europe's Natural Capital (http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/ecosystems/).

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008685/13
aan de Commissie
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(15 juli 2013)

Betreft: Belemmeringen van het vrij verkeer van personen

Een Belgisch burger is met zijn familie verhuisd naar Frankrijk. Zoals het wettelijk moet, hebben zij zich eerst uitgeschreven uit het bevolkingsregister in hun stad in België.

Vervolgens kregen ze van hun verzekeringsmaatschappij te horen dat ze sindsdien volgens de Belgische wetgeving niet meer verzekerd zijn voor hun wagen. Nochtans informeerde de Belgische ambassade in Frankrijk hen dat je met een Belgische nummerplaat mag blijven rijden voor de duur die nodig is om de Franse immatriculatie in orde te brengen. De wettelijke bepalingen inzake autoverzekeringen verhinderen echter de effectieve uitoefening hiervan én vormen bovendien een belemmering van het vrij verkeer van personen (in casu bij verhuizing van België naar een ander EU-land).

1. Is de Commissie het ermee eens dat het recht op vrij verkeer van personen wordt gehinderd in de situatie waarbij mensen die willen emigreren, zich moeten uitschrijven uit het bevolkingsregister alvorens het land te verlaten, maar tegelijkertijd hierdoor geconfronteerd worden met het vervallen van hun autoverzekering, waardoor ze zich niet meer op een legale manier met de wagen naar hun punt van bestemming kunnen begeven?

2. Welke acties denkt de Commissie hieromtrent te ondernemen?

Antwoord van de heer Barnier namens de Commissie
(16 september 2013)

Als hoedster van het Verdrag is de Commissie vastbesloten de door de lidstaten opgelegde belemmeringen van grensoverschrijdende activiteiten aan te pakken.

Uit de vraag van het geachte Parlementslid leiden wij af dat de betrokken Belgische verzekeringsmaatschappij mogelijk niet bijdraagt aan het Franse garantiefonds voor autoverzekeringen. Bijgevolg mag die verzekeringsmaatschappij geen verzekeringsdiensten verrichten in Frankrijk en moet zij de verzekeringspolis beëindigen zodra een klant meedeelt dat hij zich in Frankrijk vestigt. Verzekeringsmaatschappijen zijn vrij te kiezen in welke lidstaten van de Europese Unie zij zaken wensen te doen.

Voorts moeten personen die naar een andere lidstaat willen verhuizen en hun voertuig willen registreren, bewijzen dat het voertuig verzekerd is. De registratie moet normaal gesproken binnen zes maanden plaatsvinden. De registratieautoriteiten zijn verplicht verzekeringen te aanvaarden van elke verzekeringsmaatschappij die gevestigd is in het betrokken land of die gemachtigd is om in dat land diensten te verrichten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008685/13
to the Commission
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Obstacles to the free movement of persons

A Belgian national moved to France, together with his family. As required by law, they first had themselves removed from the population register in their town in Belgium.

Thereupon, their insurance company informed them that, in accordance with Belgian law, their car was no longer insured. Despite this, the Belgian Embassy in France told them that it was permissible to continue to drive with Belgian registration plates for as long as was necessary in order to register the vehicle in France. However, the statutory provisions on car insurance are an obstacle to this in practice and moreover form an obstacle to the free movement of persons (in this case, if they move from Belgium to another EU Member State).

1. Does the Commission agree that the right to free movement of persons is obstructed in a situation in which people who wish to emigrate are required to have themselves removed from the population register before leaving the country but at the same time are as a result confronted with the loss of their car insurance, so that it is no longer legal for them to use their car to travel to their destination?

2. What action will the Commission take in this connection?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(16 September 2013)

The Commission is, in its role of the Guardian of the Treaty, determined to address obstacles imposed by the Member States on the pursuit of cross-border activities.

From the Honourable Member's question we gather that the Belgian insurer in question may not contribute to the French motor insurance guarantee fund. As a consequence, the insurer is not authorised to provide insurance services in France and would have to terminate the insurance policy once a client informs it that he moves residence to France. Insurers are free to choose in which Member States of the European Union they wish to do business.

In addition, people who wish to move to another Member State and register their vehicle they need to present proof that they have insurance cover for their vehicle. Citizens must register their car normally within six months. The registration authorities should accept insurance cover from any insurance company which is based in that country or which is authorised to provide services there.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008686/13
aan de Commissie
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(15 juli 2013)

Betreft: Optreden beveiligingsagenten bij bezoek premier

Op 25 juni protesteerde de vrouwenrechtengroep FEMEN bij het Berlaymontgebouw naar aanleiding van het bezoek van de Tunesische premier. Hierbij werden de vrouwen hardhandig aangepakt en op het beeldmateriaal is duidelijk te zien hoe een beveiligingsagent een FEMEN-actievoerder in bedwang houdt met een wurggreep ([1]). Omwille van het mogelijk dodelijke karakter van deze greep is het gebruik ervan in België verboden voor politie. Ook voor veiligheidsagenten is het, conform de wet van 10 april 1990 tot regeling van de private en bijzondere veiligheid (de wet Tobback), verboden om dit niveau van geweld te gebruiken, vooral omdat het hier niet gaat om iemand die een wapen hanteert en/of mensen met de dood bedreigt. Onder de bepalingen van de wet Tobback zou deze agent zijn licentie kunnen verliezen omwille van het gebruik van buitensporig geweld.

1. Is de beveiligingsagent in dienst, al dan niet in onderaanneming, van de Commissie?

2. Indien ja, welke disciplinaire maatregelen zijn er genomen tegen deze agent omwille van het gebruik van buitensporig geweld?

Antwoord van de heer Šefčovič namens de Commissie
(16 september 2013)

De veiligheidsagent in kwestie is een ambtenaar van de Europese Commissie.

Zijn optreden was een reactie op de plotse actie tegen de auto van de Tunesische premier, om de hooggeplaatste bezoeker te beschermen door de actievoerster tijdelijk te immobiliseren en haar tegelijk te behoeden voor mogelijke verwondingen die zij kon oplopen door haar onvoorzichtige gedrag vlakbij een rijdende auto.

Uit ander beeldmateriaal ([2]) blijkt dat de greep waar het geachte parlementslid naar verwijst, erg kortstondig werd toegepast en in verhouding stond tot de genoemde doelstellingen. De actievoerster verliet de plek ongedeerd en in goede gezondheid.

([1]) http://nos.nl/op3/artikel/522267-femen-bespringt-tunesische-premier.html
([2]) http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x119djm_femen-topless-protesters-jump-on-tunisian-pm-s-car-in-brussels_news

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008686/13
to the Commission
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Action by security officers during visit by Prime Minister

On 25 June, the women's rights group Femen held a protest outside the Berlaymont Building concerning the visit by the Prime Minister of Tunisia. The women were harshly manhandled, and footage of the demonstration clearly shows one security officer holding a Femen activist in a stranglehold ([1]). The police in Belgium are prohibited from using strangleholds because they can be fatal. Under the Law of 10 April 1990 on private security (the Tobback Law), it is prohibited to use this level of force, especially in cases like this one in which the victim is unarmed and/or if the victim's life is endangered as a result. Under the terms of the Tobback Law, the security officer could lose his licence for using excessive force.

1. Is the security officer employed by the Commission (via a subcontractor or otherwise)?

2. If so, what disciplinary measures have been taken against this officer for using excessive force?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(16 September 2013)

The security officer, who dealt with the case under consideration, is an official of the European Commission.

His conduct was triggered by the sudden action against the car of the Prime Minister of Tunisia and was aimed at protecting the high-level official visitor by temporarily immobilising the activist while at the same time preventing possible injury of the same activist due to her inconsiderate behaviour in the proximity of a moving car.

Other footage ([2]) shows that the grip, referenced to by the Honourable Member, was applied for a very short duration and was proportionate to the abovementioned purposes. The activist left the scene unharmed and in good condition.

([1]) http://nos.nl/op3/artikel/522267-femen-bespringt-tunesische-premier.html
([2]) http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x119djm_femen-topless-protesters-jump-on-tunisian-pm-s-car-in-brussels_news

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008687/13
aan de Commissie
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(15 juli 2013)

Betreft: Ramingen Europese reserves aan schaliegas

Hoewel de commerciële exploitatie van schaliegas in de Verenigde Staten reeds jaren aan de gang is, blijkt er nog steeds erg veel onzekerheid te zijn over de geschatte schaliegasreserves verborgen in de Amerikaanse bodem. Eerder gemaakte schattingen worden bovendien voortdurend naar beneden aangepast.

De US Energy Information Administration (EIA) heeft in haar jaarlijkse „energy outlook" voor 2012 de schatting van technisch winbare reserves teruggeschroefd naar 482 biljoen kubieke voet. Dit is een daling van 42 % in één jaar tijd ten opzichte van het geschatte potentieel van 827 biljoen kubieke voet in 2011.

In januari 2012 verklaarde president Obama tijdens zijn toespraak „State of the Union" dat er, voornamelijk dankzij de schaliegasrevolutie, een voorraad voorhanden zou zijn waarmee Amerika tot 100 jaar vooruit kon. Recente schattingen ramen echter een voorraad voor slechts 11 tot maximaal 23 jaar. Bovendien worden er vaak schattingen gemaakt van theoretisch potentieel, wat nog helemaal niet betekent dat deze reserves ook economisch gezien interessant zijn om te exploiteren.

Welke informatie heeft de Commissie momenteel ter beschikking aangaande het schaliegaspotentieel en de mogelijke reserves in Europa?

Heeft de Commissie een algemeen Europees overzicht, of enkel schattingen van een aantal lidstaten? Zijn deze gegevens reeds beschikbaar?

Wordt er bij het maken van deze schattingen onderscheid gemaakt tussen theoretisch potentieel en economisch haalbaar potentieel? Indien ja, met welke aspecten wordt daarbij rekening gehouden?

Welke studies worden momenteel nog uitgevoerd op Europees niveau of op het niveau van de lidstaten betreffende mogelijke reserves en wanneer worden de resultaten hiervan verwacht?

Antwoord van de heer Oettinger namens de Commissie
(5 september 2013)

Voor zover de Commissie bekend, bestaan er momenteel geen betrouwbare ramingen van de economisch rendabel te exploiteren schaliegasreserves in Europa. Dergelijke ramingen kunnen over het algemeen alleen worden gemaakt als een voldoende groot aantal exploratieprojecten is afgerond. De ramingen van de beschikbare hoeveelheden in de gasbronnen in Europa zijn doorgaans ramingen van het aanwezige gasvolume of van het technisch winbare gasvolume. In de studie „Unconventional Gas: Potential Energy Market Impacts in the European Union", die op 7 september 2012 door het Gemeenschappelijk Onderzoekscentrum is gepubliceerd ([1]), is een systematisch litteratuuronderzoek opgenomen waarbij gebruik is gemaakt van de in 2011 beschikbare relevante bronnen, en daarin wordt geconcludeerd dat de beste raming voor Europa 16 biljoen kubieke meter technisch winbaar schaliegas is. Sindsdien zijn er verscheidene nieuwe ramingen bekendgemaakt voor specifieke bekkens, lidstaten of regio's. Dat zijn onder meer studies door de Energy Information Administration en de Geological Survey (beide uit de VS), en geologische onderzoeken door de EU-lidstaten ([2]). Volgens de informatie van de betrokken regeringen worden in 2014 voor Polen en in 2015 voor Duitsland geactualiseerde ramingen verwacht. Het Gemeenschappelijk Onderzoekscentrum werkt ook aan een uitbreiding van de studie uit 2012 om het economisch haalbare potentieel per land te ramen.

Het feitelijke gebruik van schaliegas zal niet alleen afhangen van de economische haalbaarheid, maar ook van andere factoren, zoals de maatschappelijke acceptatie, de milieu-effecten, de ruimtelijke beperkingen en de marktbelemmeringen. De benutting van het economische potentieel wordt ook beïnvloed door de aanloopperiodes, de maximale groeipercentages van de winning en het groeipercentage van de kapitaalsector.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/jrc/downloads/jrc_report_2012_09_unconventional_gas.pdf
([2]) http://www.eia.gov/analysis/studies/worldshalegas/;
http://pubs.usgs.gov/fs/2012/3102/;
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bowland-shale-gas-study;
https://www.pgi.gov.pl/en/dokumenty-in/doc_view/769-raport-en.html;
http://www.bgr.bund.de/DE/Themen/Energie/Projekte/laufend/NIKO/NIKO_projektbeschreibung.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008687/13
to the Commission
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Estimates of European reserves of shale gas

Although the commercial exploitation of shale gas in the USA has been under way for years, much uncertainty persists regarding the estimated reserves of shale gas in US territory. Moreover, previous estimates are constantly being revised downwards.

In its annual 'energy outlook' for 2012, the US Energy Information Administration (EIA) reduced its estimate of technically recoverable reserves to 482 bn cubic feet. This was a reduction of 42% in a single year, as the potential estimated in 2011 had been 827 bn cubic feet.

In January 2012, President Obama said in his State of the Union address that, particularly thanks to the shale gas revolution, America had sufficient reserves available to supply it for 100 years. However, recent estimates suggest that the reserves are sufficient for only 11 to 23 years, at most. Moreover, estimates often relate to theoretical potential, which in no way implies that it would also be economically viable to exploit these reserves.

What information does the Commission currently have concerning shale gas potential and the possible reserves in Europe?

Does the Commission have a general overview for Europe, or merely estimates for a number of Member States? Are these data already available?

In compiling these estimates, is any distinction made between theoretical potential and economically viable potential? If so, what aspects are taken into account?

What studies are currently still being performed at European or Member-State level regarding possible reserves, and when are the findings expected?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(5 September 2013)

According to the information available to the Commission, currently there are no reliable estimates for economically recoverable reserves of shale gas in Europe. Such estimates generally depend on the completion of a sufficient number of exploration projects. Available resource estimates for Europe usually provide estimates for 'gas in place' or technically recoverable resources. The study 'Unconventional Gas: Potential Energy Market Impacts in Europe' published on 7 September 2012 by the Joint Research Centre ([1]) includes a systematic literature review using relevant sources available in 2011 and concludes that the best estimate for Europe is 16 trillion cubic meters of technically recoverable resources of shale gas. Since then several new estimates have been published covering specific basins, Member States or regions. These include studies by the U.S. Energy Information Administration, the U.S. Geological Survey and the geological surveys of Member States ([2]). According to information from the respective governments, updated assessments are expected for Poland by 2014 and for Germany by 2015. The JRC is also working on an extension of the 2012 study to estimate the economically viable potential at country level.

The actual deployment will not only depend on its economic viability, but also on other factors such as social acceptance, environmental impacts, spatial constraints and market barriers. The deployment of the economic potential is also influenced by lead times, maximum deployment growth rates and the growth rate of the capital industry.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/jrc/downloads/jrc_report_2012_09_unconventional_gas.pdf
([2]) http://www.eia.gov/analysis/studies/worldshalegas/; http://pubs.usgs.gov/fs/2012/3102/; https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bowland-shale-gas-study; https://www.pgi.gov.pl/en/dokumenty-in/doc_view/769-raport-en.html; http://www.bgr.bund.de/DE/Themen/Energie/Projekte/laufend/NIKO/NIKO_projektbeschreibung.html

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008688/13
aan de Commissie
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(15 juli 2013)

Betreft: Europees schaliegas in het kader van de energie- en klimaatsdoelstellingen

Een onderwerp dat niet meer weg te denken is uit de huidige energiediscussies is de winning van schaliegas. Zowel de exploitatie in de VS als de mogelijke winning in Europa zorgt voor opschudding en speculatie.

De Amerikaanse gasindustrie heeft meer dan een decennium nodig gehad om de zogenaamde „fracking"-techniek te optimaliseren. De eerste toepassingen dateren zelfs al van de jaren 50.

Geologen en internationale experts geven aan dat het commercieel gebruik van schaliegas in de overgrote meerderheid van de lidstaten nog minstens 10 jaar of langer op zich zal laten wachten. Bovendien is de geografische en demografische situatie in Europa complexer dan die in de VS en zijn noch de nodige infrastructuur, noch de nodige expertise momenteel aanwezig. Hierdoor lijkt mogelijke schaliegaswinning op Europese schaal pas ten vroegste commercieel haalbaar in 2025.

Tegen 2050 streeft Europa naar een reductie van de broeikasgasuitstoot van 80 tot 95 % ten opzichte van de niveaus van 1990. In het stappenplan voor een concurrerende, koolstofarme economie tegen 2050 stelt de Commissie ook tussentijdse mijlstenen voor om dit doel te bereiken: een reductie van 40 % tegen 2030 en van 60 % tegen 2040. In haar stappenplan energie 2050 stijgt het aandeel hernieuwbare energie trouwens fors in alle scenario's tot minstens 55 % tegen 2050, 45 % hoger dus dan de huidige 10 %. In het scenario met veel hernieuwbare energie stijgt de elektriciteitsconsumptie gebaseerd op hernieuwbare energie zelfs tot 97 %.

Aangezien de meeste productie-installaties een jarenlange investering- en opstartfase hebben en een gemiddelde levensduur van 30 jaar, bepalen de beslissingen van vandaag hoe het energielandschap er in 2050 uit zal zien.

Gegeven bovenstaande doelstellingen inzake hernieuwbare energie en broeikasgasuitstoot, de levensduur van installaties en de verwachting dat commercieel gebruik van Europees schaliegas pas in 2025 mogelijk zal zijn, in welke mate en op welke manier vindt de Commissie dat Europees schaliegas deel kan uitmaken van het toekomstige energielandschap?

Antwoord van de heer Oettinger namens de Commissie
(13 september 2013)

In het kader van de verbintenis van de EU om haar energiesector CO_2-vrij te maken, is aardgas in het Stappenplan Energie 2050 ([1]) aangewezen als brandstof die bij de transformatie van het energiesysteem een rol kan spelen. Uit de scenario's die in het kader van het Stappenplan Energie 2050 zijn ontwikkeld, komt naar voren dat het aandeel aardgas in het primaire-energieverbruik in 2030 22,5 % tot 25,2 % zal bedragen en in 2050 18,6 % tot 25,9 %. Niettemin zal de conventionele aardgasproductie in de EU naar verwachting afnemen. Nieuwe inheemse aardgasbronnen als schaliegas zouden deze teruggang althans ten dele kunnen compenseren.

Voor aanvullende informatie verwijst de Commissie de geachte Afgevaardigde graag naar haar antwoord op schriftelijke vraag E-008599/2013 van mevrouw Romana Jordan.

([1]) COM(2011) 885 definitief.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008688/13
to the Commission
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: European shale gas and energy and climate targets

One inescapable topic in the current energy debate is the extraction of shale gas. Both its exploitation in the USA and its possible extraction in Europe are causing commotion and speculation.

It took the US gas industry more than a decade to optimise 'fracking' technology. Indeed, its first applications date from as long ago as the 1950s.

Geologists and international experts indicate that it will take at least another 10 years — or even longer — for commercial exploitation of shale gas to begin in the vast majority of Member States. Moreover, the geographical and demographic situation in Europe is more complex than in the USA, and neither the requisite infrastructure nor the requisite expertise currently exists. As a result, shale gas extraction on a European scale is unlikely to be commercially feasible before 2025.

Europe aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by between 80 and 95% of the 1990 levels by 2050. In its Roadmap for achieving a competitive, low-carbon economy by 2050, the Commission also proposes interim milestones for attaining this target: reductions of 40% by 2030 and 60% by 2040. In its Energy Roadmap for 2050, incidentally, the proportion of renewable energy rises steeply in all scenarios, to at least 55% by 2050 — i.e. 45 percentage points more than the present 10%. In the scenario with large amounts of renewable energy, consumption of electricity derived from renewable energy even rises to 97%.

As most production plant requires years for the investment and start-up phases, and has an average life of 30 years, the decisions taken today will determine the make-up of the energy landscape in 2050.

In view of the above targets for renewable energy and greenhouse gas emissions, the life of plant and the expectation that commercial exploitation of shale gas in Europe will only be possible in 2025, to what extent, and how, does the Commission believe that European shale gas can form part of the future energy landscape?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(13 September 2013)

Within the context of the EU commitment to decarbonise its energy sector, natural gas was identified by the Energy Roadmap 2050 ([1]) as having a role to play in the transformation of the energy system. The scenarios developed in the context of the Energy Roadmap 2050 suggest the share of natural gas in primary energy consumption of between 22.2-25.2% in 2030 and 18.6- 25.9% in 2050. However, conventional production of natural gas in the EU is expected to decline. New indigenous sources of natural gas like shale gas could, at least partially, compensate for this decline.

For additional information, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-008599-2013 by Ms Romana Jordan.

([1]) COM(2011) 885 final.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008689/13
aan de Commissie
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(15 juli 2013)

Betreft: Goedkope steenkool vervangt aardgas in Europa

De grootschalige winning van schaliegas in de VS heeft de Amerikaanse vraag naar steenkool verminderd en bijgevolg de prijs ervan doen dalen. Deze goedkope steenkool komt vervolgens terecht op de Europese markt en in steeds meer gevallen wordt het gebruik van aardgas erdoor vervangen. Dit heeft nefaste gevolgen voor milieu en klimaat, gezien de hogere CO_2-uitstoot van steenkool in vergelijking met die van aardgas. Door de huidige lage prijs per ton CO_2, gecombineerd met de hogere prijs van aardgas in vergelijking met die van steenkool, kiezen toch steeds meer producenten voor steenkool in plaats van voor gas.

Deze huidige verschuivingen in het gebruik van grondstoffen zijn dus duidelijk in conflict met de Europese klimaatsdoelstellingen.

Op welke manier zal de Commissie de gewijzigde handelssituatie en de gevolgen die dit heeft op de klimaatsdoelstellingen, meenemen in haar onderhandelingen met de VS over het vrijhandelsakkoord?

Welke mechanismen plant de Commissie te hanteren om dit probleem aan te pakken?

Antwoord van de heer De Gucht namens de Commissie
(30 augustus 2013)

Bij de voorbereiding van de onderhandelingen over het Trans-Atlantisch handels- en investeringspartnerschap (Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership — TTIP) heeft de Commissie mogelijke gevolgen voor het milieu van de toekomstige overeenkomst in overweging genomen. In een onafhankelijke studie van maart 2013 ([1]) worden de gevolgen voor de CO_2-uitstoot in de VS, de EU en de rest van de wereld alsook voor de intensiteit van het gebruik van natuurlijke hulpbronnen beoordeeld. Uit de studie blijkt dat de gevolgen voor het milieu wat de CO_2-uitstoot en de intensiteit van het gebruik van natuurlijke hulpbronnen betreft, verwaarloosbaar zijn.

Hoewel de nadruk in het TTIP hoofdzakelijk zal liggen op handel en investeringen, zullen de onderhandelingen ook milieuaangelegenheden betreffen die in een handelscontext van bijzonder belang zijn. Het TTIP is echter een handels- en investeringsovereenkomst en heeft dan ook niet tot doel rechtstreeks klimaatveranderingsaangelegenheden te regelen. De EU zal deze aangelegenheden blijven behandelen in haar wetgeving op het gebied van klimaat en milieu, zoals de EU-regeling voor de emissiehandel. Het TTIP zal de mogelijkheden van de EU om op die gebieden wetgevend op te treden niet beperken.

De oorspronkelijke voorstellen van de Commissie voor de onderhandelingen op het gebied van grondstoffen en energie zijn online beschikbaar ([2]). De Commissie stelt onder meer voor dat het TTIP handel en mondiale governance in duurzame energie moet bevorderen, aangezien het om een gedeelde bezorgdheid van de EU en de VS gaat. Een op regels gebaseerde, open internationale markt zou innovatie bevorderen, banen scheppen en een belangrijke bijdrage leveren tot de realisatie van milieudoelstellingen en de bestrijding van de klimaatverandering. De opheffing van invoer- en uitvoerrechten en andere belemmeringen van de invoer of uitvoer van energie (waaronder aardgas) wordt eveneens als een belangrijke doelstelling genoemd.

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/march/tradoc_150737.pdf
([2]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/july/tradoc_151624.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008689/13
to the Commission
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Cheap coal replacing natural gas in Europe

Large-scale extraction of shale gas in the USA has reduced demand for coal there, causing its price to fall. The resultant cheap coal is ending up on the European market, where it is increasingly replacing the use of natural gas. This has a disastrous impact on the environment and climate, as coal emits more CO_2 than natural gas does. Because of the current low price per ton of CO_2, combined with the fact that natural gas costs more than coal, more and more producers are nonetheless opting for coal instead of gas.

These current changes in the use of raw materials manifestly conflict with Europe's climate targets.

How will the Commission, in its negotiations with the USA on the free trade agreement, take into account the changes in the commercial situation and the impact which they will have on the climate targets?

What methods will the Commission adopt to tackle this problem?

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

In preparing negotiations for the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), the Commission has considered possible environmental impacts of the future agreement. A March 2013 independent study ([1]) assesses the impact on CO_2 emissions in the US, the EU and the rest of the world as well as on the intensity of natural resources use. The study shows negligible environmental effects in terms of CO_2 emissions and use of natural resources.

While the TTIP will primarily focus on trade and investment, negotiations will also address environmental issues of specific relevance in a trade context. Yet, as a trade and investment agreement the TTIP does not aim at regulating climate change issues directly. The EU will continue to address these through its climate and environment legislation, such as the EU Emissions Trading System. The TTIP will not restrict the EU's ability to legislate in these areas.

The initial positions of the Commission for the negotiations in the area of raw materials and energy are available online ([2]). Inter alia, it is suggested that the TTIP should promote trade and global governance in sustainable energy as it is a shared EU/US concern. A rules-based, open international market would foster innovation, create jobs and make an important contribution towards achieving environmental objectives and combating climate change. The elimination of import and export duties and other restrictions relating to import or export of energy (including natural gas) is also mentioned as an important objective.

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/march/tradoc_150737.pdf
([2]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/july/tradoc_151624.pdf .

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008690/13
aan de Commissie
Judith Sargentini (Verts/ALE)
(15 juli 2013)

Betreft: eCall autochip

1. Is de Commissie bekend met het bericht „Nieuwe chip maakt auto doelwit" in het Technisch Weekblad van 29 juni 2013 ([1])?

2. Klopt het dat auto's, wanneer zij vanaf 2015 verplicht voorzien zijn van eCall, voortdurend in verbinding zullen staan met zendmasten van mobieletelefoonaanbieders?

3. Klopt het dat ook commerciële diensten gebruik zullen kunnen maken van de eCall-infrastructuur voor aanvullende diensten?

4. Krijgen die commerciële diensten daarmee ook toegang tot de locatie van de auto? Zo ja, onder welke voorwaarden?

5. Klopt het dat de software van eCall op afstand kan worden bijgewerkt door de leverancier, met name in geval van updates? Zo ja, hoe garandeert de Commissie dat hiervan geen misbruik kan worden gemaakt?

6. Is het denkbaar dat onbevoegden zich toegang kunnen verschaffen tot de software en daarmee van afstand instructies naar de auto kunnen verzenden?

7. Is de Commissie bereid haar toezegging gestand te doen dat auto's niet te traceren zullen zijn, zoals aangegeven in haar mededeling over de Digitale Agenda: „Aangezien eCall normaal gezien in slaapstand is, laat het niet toe dat voertuigen getraceerd worden indien er geen sprake is van een noodgeval." ([2])?

Antwoord van mevrouw Kroes namens de Commissie
(21 augustus 2013)

De eCall-technologie maakt gebruik van openbare mobielecommunicatienetwerken. Wanneer het voertuig wordt gestart, zal het boordsysteem zich aanmelden bij het netwerk met de best beschikbare dekking, maar er wordt alleen een verbinding tot stand gebracht wanneer eCall wordt ingeschakeld, hetzij automatisch, hetzij manueel. In artikel 6 van het voorstel voor een verordening inzake typegoedkeuringseisen voor de uitrol van het eCall-boordsysteem en houdende wijziging van Richtlijn 2007/46/EG ([3]) zijn de voorschriften inzake de bescherming van privacy en gegevens vastgesteld. Het voertuig kan derhalve niet worden getraceerd; de positiegegegevens worden alleen doorgegeven wanneer een eCall tot stand wordt gebracht.

Indien de eigenaar van het voertuig dat met eCall is uitgerust, opteert voor aanvullende diensten die door derden worden aangeboden, kan hij ervoor kiezen dat de positie van het voertuig wordt doorgegeven, maar alleen wanneer hij daartoe besluit. Het is zeer onwaarschijnlijk dat onbevoegden toegang verkrijgen tot de software van het voertuig, aangezien de opslag en de doorgifte van gegevens zal worden geëncrypteerd en tegen misbruik zal worden beschermd.

([1]) http://www.technischweekblad.nl/nieuwe-chip-maakt-auto-doelwit.336834.lynkx.
([2]) https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/ecall-time-saved-lives-saved.
([3]) COM(2013) 316.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008690/13
to the Commission
Judith Sargentini (Verts/ALE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: eCall chip for cars

1. Is the Commission aware of the report 'Nieuwe chip maakt auto doelwit' [New chip makes cars a target] in the Technisch Weekblad of 29 June 2013 ([1])?

2. Is it true that, as from 2015, when the requirement enters into force for cars to be equipped with eCall, they will constantly be in communication with the transmission masts of mobile telephony providers?

3. Is it true that commercial service-providers will also be able to make use of the eCall infrastructure to provide supplementary services?

4. Will this give commercial service-providers access to a car's location? If so, under what conditions?

5. Is it true that the eCall software can be adjusted remotely by the supplier, particularly to provide updates? If so, how will the Commission guarantee that this cannot be abused?

6. Is it conceivable that unauthorised persons may gain access to the software and thus be able to send instructions to the car remotely?

7. Will the Commission honour its commitment to ensure that cars cannot be traced, as indicated in its communication on the Digital Agenda: 'As eCall normally "sleeps", it does not allow vehicle tracking outside emergencies' ([2])?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(21 August 2013)

eCall technology makes use of public mobile communication networks. When the vehicle is started the in-vehicle system (IVS) will register in the network with best coverage reachable, but communication will take place only in case an eCall is triggered, either automatically or manually. Article 6 of the proposal for a regulation concerning type-approval requirements for the deployment of the eCall in-vehicle system and amending Directive 2007/46/EC ([3]) sets the rules on privacy and data protection. No tracing of the vehicle may thus take place; position data are transmitted only when an eCall is issued.

If the owner of the vehicle equipped with eCall system has opted for supplementary services provided by third parties, he might opt for transmission of the vehicle's position but only through his own decision. It is very unlikely that unauthorised persons gain access to vehicles' software as data storage and its communication will be encrypted and protected against misuse.

([1]) http://www.technischweekblad.nl/nieuwe-chip-maakt-auto-doelwit.336834.lynkx
([2]) https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/ecall-time-saved-lives-saved
([3]) COM(2013)0316.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008691/13
a la Comisión
Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D)
(15 de julio 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.

La situación económica de la planta de Galmed, según reflejan las cuentas anuales auditadas presentadas por la propia empresa, refleja beneficios en cada uno de los años anteriores incluso en los momentos de crisis del 2008 al 2012.

De igual modo que en 2002 la Unión Europea obligó a la venta de TK Galmed al grupo Thyssen Krupp, se hace necesario que también en este caso se proceda de manera similar, al objeto de que no se obstaculice la competencia efectiva, puesto que otros inversores siderúrgicos deberían poder optar lo mismo que lo hizo este grupo en 2002.

Existen indicios de que los grandes productores de acero están cerrando empresas sin ponerlas a la venta. Ante esta realidad, ¿qué acciones piensa emprender la Comisión para garantizar la competencia efectiva en el mercado de los productos del acero?

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

El 21 de noviembre de 2001, la Comisión autorizó la fusión de Aceralia, Arbed y Usinor para formar Arcelor, previa venta de una serie de activos de producción y distribución de acero, por ejemplo, el 75,5 % de las acciones de Aceralia y Usinor en Galmed ([1]). Esta venta, que se tradujo en la adquisición por ThyssenKrupp del 100 % de la propiedad de Galmed, era necesaria para despejar las dudas de la Comisión sobre la competencia real en el mercado de acero galvanizado, amenazada por la concentración.

No obstante, el cierre TK Galmed anunciado recientemente no entra en el ámbito de aplicación de la política de competencia de la Comisión.

A fin de garantizar que las empresas compiten en condiciones equitativas y leales en los mercados europeos del acero, la Comisión hace pleno uso de sus competencias en virtud de los artículos 101 a 109 del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea en los ámbitos de los acuerdos anticompetitivos y abusos de posición dominante, las fusiones y el control de las ayudas estatales. La aplicación por la Comisión de las normas de competencia en los mercados del acero es plenamente coherente con su política industrial, cuyo objetivo es aumentar la competitividad de la industria europea del acero ([2]). De hecho, la Comisión Europea ha presentado hace poco un plan de acción [COM(2013) 407] para la industria europea del acero que ayudará a este sector a hacer frente a los retos actuales y a sentar las bases de su futura competitividad gracias al fomento de la innovación, el crecimiento y el empleo.

([1]) Asunto ESCS.1351 Usinor/Arbed/Aceralia, véase comunicado de prensa y decisión de 21 noviembre de 2001. La Comisión precisa que la decisión de autorización no estaba supeditada a la venta de la participación en Galmed a ThyssenKrupp o a cualquier otra empresa concreta.

([2]) Véase el comunicado de prensa de 11 de junio de 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008691/13
to the Commission
Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Closure of TK Galmed

On 8 February 2013, it emerged that TK Galmed, a galvanising plant in Sagunto owned by the multinational company ThyssenKrupp AG, was to be shut down.

According to the audited annual accounts published by the company, the plant has shown profits year after year, including since the start of the economic crisis in 2008.

In 2002, the European Union insisted that TK Galmed be sold to the ThyssenKrupp group. In keeping with the principle of genuine competition, other steel industry investors should be given the same opportunity the ThyssenKrupp group was afforded in 2002.

There are also signs of a wider trend of large steelmakers closing businesses down instead of putting them up for sale.

Given the above, what action does the Commission intend to take to guarantee genuine competition on the steel market?

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

On 21 November 2001, the Commission authorised the merger of Aceralia, Arbed and Usinor to form Arcelor, subject to the sale of a number of steel production and distribution assets, such as Aceralia and Usinor's 75.5% shareholding in Galmed ([1]). This sale, which led to ThyssenKrupp acquiring 100% ownership of Galmed, was necessary to alleviate the Commission's concerns that effective competition in the market for galvanised steel could be jeopardised by the merger.

The recently announced closure of TK Galmed does not, however, fall within the remit of the Commission's competition policy.

To ensure that all companies compete equally and fairly in European steel markets, the Commission makes full use of the powers it derives from Articles 101 to 109 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, in the areas of anti-competitive agreements and abuses of dominance, mergers and state aid control. The Commission's enforcement of competition rules in steel markets is also fully consistent with its industrial policy, aimed at boosting the European steel industry's competitiveness ([2]). In fact, the Commission has recently put forward an action plan (COM(2013) 407) 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.

([1]) Case ESCS.1351 Usinor/Arbed/Aceralia, see press release and decision of 21 November 2001. The Commission would clarify that the authorisation decision was not conditional on the sale of the shareholding in Galmed to ThyssenKrupp or to any other specific undertaking.

([2]) See press release of 11 June 2013.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008693/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(15 Ιουλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Διάβρωση των ακτών από αμμοχαλικοληψίες για την κατασκευή της Ολυμπίας Οδού

Ανάμεσα στα 181 έργα προτεραιότητας του ΕΣΠΑ βρίσκεται η Ολυμπία Οδός, η οποία σχεδιάζεται να ολοκληρωθεί στο σύνολό της ως το τέλος του 2015 ([1]). Στην Περιφέρεια Δυτ. Ελλάδας κατατέθηκε Μελέτη Περιβαλλοντικών Επιπτώσεων (ΜΠΕ) για την έγκριση συμπλήρωσης των αναγκών σε πρώτες ύλες, του έργου κατασκευής του αυτοκινητόδρομου Κόρινθος-Πάτρα, που αποτελεί τμήμα της Ολυμπίας Οδού. Ζητείται η έγκριση της απόληψης επιπλέον 5 383 062 m^3, εκ των οποίων περίπου 600 000 m^3 σχεδιάζεται να ληφθούν από τις κοίτες των ποταμών της Αιγιάλειας, Μεγανίτη, Σελινούντα και Κράθι ([2]). Αν λειτουργούσαν προγράμματα ανακύκλωσης των αποβλήτων εκσκαφών, κατεδαφίσεων και κατασκευών, μεγάλο μέρος των αναγκών θα μπορούσαν να καλυφθούν από εκεί. Η έκταση των αμμοχαλικοληψιών από τα φυσικά οικοσυστήματα θα προκαλέσει ολέθριες συνέπειες στα ποτάμια και στις ακτές της βόρειας Πελοποννήσου, όπως τεκμηριώνεται από γνωμάτευση του ΕΛΚΕΘΕ ([3]). Η διάβρωση των ακτών αυτών προχωράει με γοργούς ρυθμούς και οφείλεται κατά κύριο λόγο στο ελλειμματικό ισοζύγιο φερτών υλικών που δημιουργείται στις ακτές επειδή τα ποτάμια και οι χείμαρροι δεν μεταφέρουν τις αντίστοιχες ποσότητες αμμοχάλικου που διαβρώνει ο κυματισμός της θάλασσας. Η παράκτια αυτή περιοχή θα είναι, επίσης, πιο ευάλωτη σε ακραία φαινόμενα που συνοδεύουν την κλιματική αλλαγή ([4]). Η ΜΠΕ της εταιρείας προβλέπει αναπλήρωση μετά από 20 χρόνια των λάκκων που θα ανοίξουν στις περιοχές εξόρυξης της κοίτης των ποταμών. Οι οικολογικές οργανώσεις της περιοχής εκτιμούν ότι θα χρειαστούν πολλά περισσότερα χρόνια για να φτάσουν τα υλικά στην ακτή και να τη διαμορφώσουν ([5]).

Συμφωνεί η Επιτροπή ότι οι αναγκαίες για την ολοκλήρωση του συγκεκριμένου έργου ποσότητες αμμοχάλικου δεν πρέπει να θέσουν σε κίνδυνο τα ποτάμια συστήματα και να υπονομεύσουν τις ακτές της βόρειας Πελοποννήσου; Αν ναι, προτίθεται να ζητήσει απαγόρευση των αμμοχαλικοληψιών από τις ενεργές κοίτες των 3 ποταμών της Αιγιάλειας και να αναζητήσει διαφορετικές λύσεις με εξεύρεση εναλλακτικών τοποθεσιών για την απόληψη φερτών υλικών, όπως για παράδειγμα ιδιωτικές ή δημόσιες εκτάσεις όπου στο μακρινό παρελθόν οι κοίτες των ποταμών είχαν επιστρώσει με φερτές ύλες;

Απάντηση του κ. Potočnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(20 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Σύμφωνα με την οδηγία-πλαίσιο για τα ύδατα (ΟΠΥ, 2000/60/ΕΚ ([6])), τα κράτη μέλη οφείλουν να λαμβάνουν μέτρα για την πρόληψη της υποβάθμισης της κατάστασης των επιφανειακών και υπόγειων υδάτων. Σημαντικές υδρομορφολογικές αλλοιώσεις μπορεί να μεταβάλουν την κατάσταση των υδάτων και να επηρεάσουν τα συναφή οικοσυστήματα.

Σύμφωνα με την ΟΠΥ, οι τροποποιήσεις στα φυσικά χαρακτηριστικά των συστημάτων επιφανειακών υδάτων οι οποίες ενδέχεται να προκαλέσουν υποβάθμιση της κατάστασής τους επιτρέπονται μόνον εφόσον πληρούνται οι απαιτήσεις του άρθρου 4 παράγραφοι 7 και 8 της οδηγίας-πλαισίου για τα ύδατα 2000/60/ΕΚ. Στις εν λόγω απαιτήσεις περιλαμβάνεται η λήψη όλων των πιθανών μέτρων για τον μετριασμό των δυσμενών επιπτώσεων στην κατάσταση των υδάτων, η εκτίμηση του κατά πόσον το έργο υπαγορεύεται από λόγους επιτακτικού δημόσιου συμφέροντος και του κατά πόσον τα οφέλη για την κοινωνία είναι σημαντικότερα από την περιβαλλοντική υποβάθμιση, καθώς και η επαλήθευση της απουσίας εναλλακτικής λύσης που θα ήταν προτιμότερη από περιβαλλοντική άποψη, λόγω τεχνικής αδυναμίας ή δυσανάλογου κόστους. Εναπόκειται στα κράτη μέλη να εξασφαλίζουν την τήρηση των εν λόγω απαιτήσεων.

([1]) http://www.espa.gr/el/Documents/PriorityProjects/ypaan_120116_espa_projects.pdf
([2]) http://www.chrysogelos.gr/images/Chrysogelos/OLYMPIA%20ODOS/MPE-places_quantities.pdf
([3]) http://goo.gl/EjnNA
([4]) http://postgrasrv.hydro.ntua.gr/gr/edmaterial/education/doukakis/coastal_zone.pdf
Σύμφωνα με έρευνες του κ. Ευστράτιου Δουκάκη, αναπληρωτή καθηγητή ΕΜΠ, Τμήμα Αγρονόμων-Τοπογράφων, στη Βόρεια και Δυτική Πελοπόννησο αναμένεται οπισθοχώρηση της ακτογραμμής από 250 έως 1 300 m μέχρι το τέλος του αιώνα, λόγω μόνο των κλιματικών αλλαγών και απώλειας χερσαίας ζώνης από 400 έως 760 εκτάρια, ενώ αναμένεται να πληγούν 300 m^2/μέτρο μήκους ακτογραμμής με την εκδήλωση φαινομένων τσουνάμι παρόμοιων με αυτό του 1963. Αστικές περιοχές, οδικές αρτηρίες και υδροβιότοποι κινδυνεύουν εξίσου από τις κλιματικές αλλαγές και τα τσουνάμι.
([5]) http://www.aigialeia24.gr/news_61_1704.htm
([6]) ΕΕ L 327 της 22.12.2000.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008693/13
to the Commission
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Erosion of shores caused by removal of sand and gravel for the construction of the Olympia Road

The 181 priority NSRF projects include the Olympia road, which is scheduled for completion by the end of 2015 ([1]). An environmental impact study was carried out in the region of Western Macedonia for the purpose of obtaining approval to remove the additional raw materials required for the Corinth-Patras motorway, which forms part of the Olympia Road. Approval is being sought for the removal of an additional 5 383 062 m^3, of which approximately 600 000 m^3 is to be taken from the bed of the Rivers Meganiti, Selinounta and Krathi in Aigialeia ([2]). If there were excavation, demolition and construction waste recycling schemes, most of the material required could be obtained that way. The quantities of sand and gravel being removed from natural ecosystems will cause serious damage to the rivers and shores of the northern Peloponnese, as illustrated in an expert opinion by the Hellenic Centre for Marine Research ([3]). Those shores are being eroded extremely quickly, mainly due to the lack of shore sedimentation, because rivers and streams are not delivering enough sand and gravel to compensate for erosion by the sea. This coastal area will also be more vulnerable to extreme weather conditions caused by climate change ([4]). The company's environmental impact study states that the pits in the areas of the river beds being excavated will be filled in after 20 years. Ecological organisations in the area estimate that it will take much longer for the material to reach and landscape the shore ([5]).

Does the Commission agree that the quantities of sand and gravel needed in order to complete this particular project should not put river systems at risk and undermine the shores of the northern Peloponnese? If so, does it intend to request a ban on the removal of sand and gravel from the active beds of the three rivers in Aigialeia and alternative solutions in the form of different sites for the removal of sediment, such as privately or publicly owned land on which river beds were coated with sediment in the distant past?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(20 September 2013)

The Water Framework Directive (WFD, 2000/60/EC ([6])) requires Member States to take measures to prevent the deterioration of the status of surface water and groundwater bodies. Significant hydro morphological alterations can alter water status and impact associated ecosystems.

Under the WFD, modifications to the physical characteristics of surface water bodies that would deteriorate water status are allowed only if the requirements under Article 4(7) and 4(8) of the Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC are met. These include taking all possible measures to mitigate the adverse impact on water status, assessing whether the project is of overriding public interest and whether the benefits to society outweigh the environmental degradation and verifying that, for reasons of technical feasibility or disproportionate cost, no better environmental option is available. It is the responsibility of Member States to ensure the fulfilment of these requirements.

([1]) http://www.espa.gr/el/Documents/PriorityProjects/ypaan_120116_espa_projects.pdf
([2]) http://www.chrysogelos.gr/images/Chrysogelos/OLYMPIA%20ODOS/MPE-places_quantities.pdf
([3]) http://goo.gl/EjnNA
([4]) http://postgrasrv.hydro.ntua.gr/gr/edmaterial/education/doukakis/coastal_zone.pdf
According to research by Mr Efstratios Doukakis, assistant professor in the School of Rural and Surveying Engineering at the National Technical University of Athens, the coastline in the northern and western Peloponnese is expected to recede by between 250 and 1300 m by the end of the century, solely as a result of climate change and the loss of a shore zone of between 400 and 760 hectares, and 300 m2/metre of coastline are expected to be damaged by tsunamis similar to that which occurred in 1963. Urban areas, roads and wetlands are at similar risk from climate change and tsunamis.
([5]) http://www.aigialeia24.gr/news_61_1704.htm
([6]) OJ L 327, 22.12.2000.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008694/13
an die Kommission
Julie Girling (ECR), Britta Reimers (ALDE) und George Lyon (ALDE)
(15. Juli 2013)

Betrifft: Technische Definition geringfügiger Spuren von genetisch verändertem Material in Saatgut und Lebensmitteln

Im Juni 2011 befasste sich die Kommission mit dem zufälligen Vorhandensein von GVO, für die es noch keine EU-Zulassung für Futtermitteleinfuhren in die EU gibt. Gemäß der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 619/2011 ist ein Anteil von 0,1 % aus technischer Sicht zu vernachlässigen. Bisher gibt es keine entsprechenden Verordnungen für Lebensmittel.

Kommissionsmitglied Borg hat den Bedarf an einer technischen Lösung für Lebensmittel in seiner Antwort vom 31. Januar auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-011187/12 von MdEP Britta Reimers (geringfügige Spuren von genetisch verändertem Material in Saatgut und Lebensmitteln, 7. Dezember 2012) anerkannt. Seither hat sich diesbezüglich jedoch nichts getan.

Angesichts der zunehmenden Gefahr einer Unterbrechung der Lebensmittelkette mit erheblichen Folgen für die Wirtschaft ergeben sich folgende Fragen:

1. Welche technischen Unterschiede zwischen Lebens- und Futtermitteln gibt es auf der Ebene landwirtschaftlicher Rohstoffe (Mais, Sojabohnen usw.), die für die Weiterverarbeitung im Sinne der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 619/2011 genutzt werden?

2. Wann gedenkt die Kommission, die technische Lösung/Verordnung auf Lebensmittel auszuweiten, und wie sieht sie die Verfahren — beispielsweise in Bezug auf zeitliche Rahmen, Wechselwirkungen und Ablauf?

3. Wann gedenkt die Kommission, die technische Lösung/Verordnung auf Saatgut auszuweiten, und wie sieht sie den Ablauf der Verfahren in Bezug auf zeitliche Rahmen, und Wechselwirkungen?

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

1. Technisch gesehen gibt es keine Unterschiede zwischen Lebens- und Futtermitteln auf Ebene der landwirtschaftlichen Rohstoffe. In Bezug auf die Verordnung (EU) Nr. 619/2011 ist zu sagen, dass die Mehrzahl der Rohstoffe, die GVO enthalten könnten, für den Futtermittelsektor bestimmt sind, so dass die größere Gefahr einer Unterbrechung der Handelskette in diesem Sektor besteht, wenn die Mitgliedstaaten unterschiedliche Vorschriften für amtliche Kontrollen anwenden. Zum Zeitpunkt der Annahme der Verordnung schien es daher angebracht, den Anwendungsbereich auf den Futtermittelsektor zu beschränken, in dem im Vergleich zu anderen mit der Erzeugung von Lebensmitteln verknüpften Sektoren eine höhere Wahrscheinlichkeit für die Präsenz von GVO besteht.

2. Da es sehr wichtig ist, die möglichen Auswirkungen sorgfältig zu prüfen und die Meinung der Interessenträger zu berücksichtigen, hat die Kommission beschlossen, Vorschläge nicht ohne Folgenabschätzung vorzulegen. Zur Vorbereitung der Folgenabschätzung wird Ende 2013 von einem externen Berater eine unabhängige Bewertung der verfügbaren Daten über einen Zeitraum von sechs Monaten vorgenommen. Auf der Grundlage des Ergebnisses der Folgenabschätzung wird die Kommission dann über weitere Schritte entscheiden.

3. Eine Regelung für Saatgut würde in einer späteren Phase, im Anschluss an die Lebensmittel, behandelt.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008694/13
to the Commission
Julie Girling (ECR), Britta Reimers (ALDE) and George Lyon (ALDE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Technical definition of low-level presence of genetically modified material in seeds and foods

In June 2011, the Commission addressed the adventitious presence of GM events which are not yet EU-approved in EU feed imports. Regulation (EC) No 619/2011 defined the level of 0.1% as representing the technical zero. No corresponding regulations are yet in place for foodstuffs.

The need for a technical solution for food was recognised by Commissioner Borg in his answer of 31 January 2013 to Written Question E-011187-12 by Britta Reimers MEP (low-level presence of genetically modified material in seeds and foods, 7 December 2012). However, no developments have been seen in the meantime.

In light of the growing risk of disruption to the food supply chain with major economic consequences:

1. What are the technical differences between food and feed at the level of the agricultural raw materials (maize, soybeans, etc.) used for further processing with reference to Regulation (EC) No 619/2011?

2. When does the Commission plan to extend the scope of the technical solution/regulation to food, and how does it see the procedures — for example, with regard to timelines, correlation and unfolding?

3. When does the Commission plan to extend the scope of the technical solution/regulation to seeds and how does it see the procedures — regarding timelines and correlation — unfolding?

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

1. There is no technical difference between food and feed at the level of agricultural raw materials. With reference to Regulation 619/2011 the majority of the commodities likely to contain GMOs are destined for the feed sector thereby entailing a higher risk of trade disruption for that sector in cases where Member States apply different rules for official controls. It therefore appeared appropriate at the time of adoption to limit the scope of this regulation to the feed sector, which in comparison with other sectors related to the production of foodstuffs, has a higher likelihood for GM presence.

2. Given the importance of carefully considering potential impacts and of taking into account stakeholder views, the Commission has decided that any proposal put forward would have to be informed by an Impact Assessment. In preparation for the impact assessment an independent evaluation of the available data will be performed by an external consultant end of 2013, for a 6 month period. Depending on the impact assessment outcome the Commission would then decide on the next steps.

3. The issue of seed would be dealt with in a step wise manner and would follow on from food.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008695/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(15 Ιουλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Από τη δεκαετία του 1970, η Τουρκία έχει ενισχύσει τον προϋπολογισμό του αποσχιστικού καθεστώτος με 4 δισεκατομμύρια δολάρια

Στις 13 Ιουλίου 2013, η τουρκοκυπριακή καθημερινή εφημερίδα Kibris ανέφερε ότι ο φερόμενος ως υπουργός οικονομικών του αποσχιστικού καθεστώτος στην κατεχόμενη ζώνη της Δημοκρατίας της Κύπρου, Zeren Mungan, δήλωσε ότι τα χρήματα που αποστέλλει η Τουρκία στην «ΤΔΒΚ» για τους λεγόμενους «αμυντικούς σκοπούς και επενδύσεις» αποτελούν δωρεά, ενώ η συνεισφορά της Τουρκίας στον «δημόσιο» τομέα και στην πραγματική οικονομία αποτελούν δάνειο. Ο Mugan αναφέρθηκε στο «πρωτόκολλο» 2013-15 που υπεγράφη μεταξύ της Τουρκίας και του καθεστώτος και υποστήριξε ότι το «πρωτόκολλο» αυτό είναι μία διεθνής συμφωνία, η οποία έχει γίνει αποδεκτή από τις δύο «χώρες».

Εν τω μεταξύ, οι οικονομολόγοι παρατηρούν ότι το συνολικό χρηματικό ποσό που έχει δοθεί εδώ και πολλά χρόνια από την Τουρκία στο καθεστώς ανέρχεται στα τέσσερα δισεκατομμύρια δολάρια και σημειώνουν πως οι πιστώσεις αυτές αντιμετωπίζονται ως εξωτερικό χρέος και πως οι Τουρκοκύπριοι είχαν ανέκαθεν χρέος απέναντι στην Τουρκία, για το οποίο ωστόσο δεν έχουν πληρώσει τίποτα μέχρι σήμερα. Υποστηρίζουν επίσης ότι έχει παρέλθει η περίοδος της είσπραξης τουρκικών χρημάτων και διανομής τους.

Δεδομένου ότι η Τουρκία είναι υποψήφια χώρα για ένταξη στην ΕΕ:

1. Είναι πολιτικά ορθό για μία υποψήφια για ένταξη χώρα, η οποία λαμβάνει προενταξιακή χρηματοδότηση, να ξοδεύει τόσα πολλά χρήματα για την υποστήριξη ενός παράνομου καθεστώτος, μη αναγνωρισμένου από οποιονδήποτε διεθνή οργανισμό ή κράτος;

2. Αναγνωρίζει η ΕΕ το λεγόμενο «πρωτόκολλο» 2013-15 που υπεγράφη μεταξύ της Τουρκίας και του καθεστώτος στο κατεχόμενο τμήμα της Κύπρου, ως μια διεθνή συμφωνία μεταξύ δύο «χωρών»;

Απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(5 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

1. Η Επιτροπή υπενθυμίζει τη θέση του Συμβουλίου, όπως διατυπώθηκε κατά την 51η σύνοδο του Συμβουλίου Σύνδεσης ΕΕ-Τουρκίας στις 27 Μαΐου 2013, σύμφωνα με την οποία αναμένεται από την Τουρκία να υποστηρίξει ενεργά τη διαδικασία με σκοπό τη δίκαιη, συνολική και βιώσιμη διευθέτηση του κυπριακού προβλήματος στο πλαίσιο του ΟΗΕ, σύμφωνα με τις σχετικές αποφάσεις του Συμβουλίου Ασφαλείας των Ηνωμένων Εθνών και τις αρχές στις οποίες βασίζεται η Ένωση. Η δέσμευση της Τουρκίας και η συμβολή της με συγκεκριμένες ενέργειες σε αυτή τη συνολική διευθέτηση έχει ζωτική σημασία.

Η Τουρκία, ως υποψήφια χώρα, είναι επιλέξιμη για συνδρομή στο πλαίσιο του ΜΠΒ ([1]) για τη σταδιακή ευθυγράμμισή της με τα πρότυπα και τις πολιτικές της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, καθώς και, όπου ενδείκνυται, με το κεκτημένο της ΕΕ εν όψει της ένταξής της.

2. Όχι, η Επιτροπή δεν αναγνωρίζει την πράξη στην οποία αναφέρεται το Αξιότιμο Μέλος.

([1]) Μηχανισμός Προενταξιακής Βοήθειας.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008695/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Turkey has sent over USD 4 billion to breakaway regime since the 1970s

On 13 July 2013, the Turkish Cypriot *Kibris* newspaper reported the self-styled finance minister of the breakaway regime in the occupied area of the Republic of Cyprus, Zeren Mungan, as saying that the money sent by Turkey to the 'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus' for so-called 'defence purposes and investments' was a donation, but that Turkey's contribution to the 'public' sector and the real sector of the economy were a loan. Mungan referred to the 2013-15 'protocol' signed between Turkey and the regime and claimed that this 'protocol' was an international agreement that had been approved by the two 'countries'.

In the meantime economists have stated that the total amount of money that Turkey has given to the regime over many years has reached USD 4 billion. They have also noted that these credits are treated as foreign debt, and that the Turkish Cypriots have always had a debt to Turkey, but have paid nothing until now. They also claim that the period of taking Turkish money and distributing it has come to an end.

Given that Turkey is a candidate for EU accession:

1. Is it politically correct for a candidate country that receives pre-accession funding to spend so much money on support for an illegal regime that is not recognised by any international organisation or state?

2. Does the EU recognise the so-called 2013-15 'protocol' signed between Turkey and the regime in the occupied part of Cyprus as an international agreement reached between two 'countries'?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(5 September 2013)

1. The Commission recalls the position of the Council as expressed at the 51st meeting of the EU-Turkey Association Council on 27 May 2013, which expects Turkey to actively support the process aimed at a fair, comprehensive and viable settlement of the Cyprus problem within the UN framework, in accordance with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions and in line with the principles on which the Union is founded. Turkey's commitment and contribution in concrete terms to such a comprehensive settlement is crucial.

Turkey, as a candidate country, is eligible for IPA ([1]) assistance in its progressive alignment with the standards and policies of the European Union, including where appropriate the EU acquis, with a view to membership.

2. No, the Commission does not recognise the act the Honourable Member refers to.

([1]) Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008696/13
à la Commission
Sophie Auconie (PPE)
(15 juillet 2013)

Objet: Information des consommateurs à travers la mise en œuvre des profils nutritionnels

L'article 4 du règlement (CE) n° 1924/2006 relatif aux allégations nutritionnelles et de santé dispose que la Commission européenne adoptera au plus tard le 19 janvier 2009 les profils nutritionnels que les denrées ou catégories de denrées devraient respecter pour donner lieu à des allégations nutritionnelles et de santé.

Nous sommes en juillet 2013 — soit 4 ans et demi après la date limite — et malgré les propositions faites, aucun texte final n'a été adopté jusqu'ici, alors que la liste des allégations «génériques» autorisées est désormais finalisée (règlement (UE) n° 432/2012).

Les multiples demandes de collègues parlementaires n'ont pas encore permis d'obtenir une réponse claire sur les raisons qui motivent ce blocage, alors même que cette situation est susceptible de nuire à la bonne information du consommateur et d'encourager la prolifération de systèmes nationaux d'étiquetages nutritionnels dont la compatibilité avec la règlementation européenne et le marché unique seraient problématiques (voir le cas britannique).

Quand la Commission prévoit-elle de reprendre ses travaux sur les profils nutritionnels? Quand la version définitive pourra-t-elle être adoptée par la Commission?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(2 septembre 2013)

Les profils nutritionnels sont nécessaires pour garantir que les allégations fournies au consommateur ne sont pas de nature à induire celui-ci en erreur quant à la valeur nutritionnelle globale des produits. Compte tenu de l'intérêt politique considérable et de l'intense débat suscité par cette mesure clé, le délai prévu dans le règlement relatif aux allégations nutritionnelles et de santé ([1]) n'a pu être respecté. Toutefois, l'établissement des profils nutritionnels demeure une obligation légale pour la Commission.

À ce stade, la Commission n'est pas en mesure de fournir un calendrier définitif en ce qui concerne leur adoption.

([1]) Règlement (CE) n° 1924/2006 concernant les allégations nutritionnelles et de santé portant sur les denrées alimentaires.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008696/13
to the Commission
Sophie Auconie (PPE)
(15 July 2013)

Subject: Improving consumer information with the introduction of nutrient profiling

Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006 on nutrition and health claims made on foods stipulates that the Commission should have, by 19 January 2009 at the latest, introduced nutrient profiles that foods or categories of foods would have to comply with if producers wished to make nutrition or health claims about them.

It is now July 2013 — four and a half years after the deadline — and despite the proposals, no law on nutrient profiling has yet been adopted, even though the list of permitted 'general' claims has been agreed (in Regulation (EU) No 432/2012).

Despite repeated requests from other MEPs, no clear explanation has yet been given as to the reasons for the delay, though this situation is likely to prevent consumers from having access to good information and might lead to the proliferation of national nutrition labelling systems which might not be compatible with EU legislation and the single market (see the case of the UK, for example).

1. When does the Commission intend to resume its work on nutrient profiling?

2. When will the final version be ready to be adopted by the Commission?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(2 September 2013)

Nutrient profiles are necessary to ensure that the claims delivered to the consumer are not misleading as to the overall nutritional value of products. Given the considerable political interest and the intense debate this key measure has raised, the deadline foreseen in the Claims Regulation ([1]) could not be met. However, the setting of nutrient profiles remains a legal obligation for the Commission.

The Commission is not at this stage in a position to provide a definitive timeframe regarding their adoption.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006 on nutrition and health claims made on foods.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008698/13
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: European Union aid to Egypt I

Could the Commission provide data showing (a) how it intended to spend aid in Egypt and (b) how the Morsi government actually spent EU aid?

Question for written answer E-008699/13
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: European Union aid to Egypt II

It is alleged by multiple news outlets that EU aid to Egypt did little to promote democracy and human rights (Fox News, 18 June 2013, 'EU's 1 billion euro aid to Egypt ineffective'). On the contrary, it fuelled wasteful spending and corruption (Reuters, 18 June 2013, 'EU mismanaging 1 billion euro aid programme to Egypt — report'). What investigation has the Commission launched into these allegations, and what steps will the Commission take to improve oversight and ensure that aid is better spent in Egypt?

Question for written answer E-008700/13
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: European Union aid to Egypt III

Has the Commission already taken any steps to change its aid oversight policies?

Question for written answer E-008701/13
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: European Union aid to Egypt IV

Could the Commission provide data showing how much aid it will allocate to Egypt over the next 10 years?

Question for written answer E-008702/13
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: European Union aid to Egypt V

What specific criteria does the Commission use to measure the success of its aid schemes?

Joint answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(9 September 2013)

EU financial assistance to Egypt follows the cycle of Multi-annual Financial Frameworks. Under the current 2011-2013 National Indicative Programme, the EU has earmarked EUR 449 million for Egypt from the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument. Three priority areas have been identified for EU support: 1) Democracy, Human Rights and Justice, 2) Competitiveness and productivity of the economy and 3) Sustainability of development and better management of human and natural resources.

Following the election of President Morsi, the EU decided in September and November 2012 on 3 new programmes worth EUR 132 million from the amount mentioned above, supporting water, sanitation, job creation and vocational training.. No new programmes have yet been adopted in 2013.

Financial allocations under the new European Neighbourhood Instrument that will cover the 2014-2020 period have not yet been decided and will take into account the Foreign Affairs Council conclusions of 21 August 2013 ([1]).

To measure the performance of its aid programmes the Commission has tools that allow it to draw lessons from past experience. In addition to system and financial audits on each project it funds, the Commission, in line with the Project Cycle Management methodology, conducts regular independent results-oriented monitoring exercises as well as mid-term, final and *ex-post* evaluations. Five dimensions are systematically assessed: Relevance, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Impact and Sustainability.

For the questions related to the recent European Court of Auditors' report on Egypt, the Honourable Member is referred to the Commission's reply to parliamentary questions (E-007098/2013, E-007109/2013, E-007124/2013, E-007261/2013 and E-007646/2013). ([2])

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/138599.pdf
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/fr/parliamentary-questions.html;jsessionid=987EC3257DF4C7A682B41123ABBD3EED.node1

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008703/13
to the Commission
Phil Prendergast (S&D)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: National Car Testing Service

Could the Commission clarify under which specific EU public procurement provisions Ireland is allowed to award its National Car Testing Service to a single contractor, nationwide?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(16 September 2013)

The situation referred to by the Honourable Member has so far not been brought to the attention of the Commission, who is therefore not in a position to comment on the legal framework applicable to it.

Notwithstanding this, the Commission would like to confirm that, from a public procurement perspective, the contracting authorities remain free to design the manner in which public services are run, provided that EU public procurement rules are respected. The freedom of contracting authorities in this respect includes the possibility to award a public services contract either to one or several contractors for the national territory.

Moreover, please note that the contractor's market behaviour can be subject to the EU rules on competition (in particular Articles 101 and 102 TFEU).

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-008704/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Joanna Senyszyn (S&D)
(16 lipca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – posiedzenie ministerialne UE-RWPZ

Wysoka Przedstawiciel uczestniczyła niedawno w posiedzeniu ministerialnym UE-RWPZ, które odbyło się w dniu 30 czerwca 2013 r. w Bahrajnie. Parlament jasno wyraził zaniepokojenie stałym nękaniem i prześladowaniem obrońców praw człowieka i systematycznym łamaniem wolności słowa, wolności zrzeszania się i pokojowego zgromadzania się w krajach Rady Współpracy Państw Zatoki (RWPZ). Nieco ponad rok temu UE przyjęła nowe strategiczne ramy i plan działania w dziedzinie praw człowieka i demokracji, w których zobowiązała się do promowania praw człowieka, demokracji i praworządności we wszystkich bez wyjątku dziedzinach działań zewnętrznych UE oraz oświadczyła, że prawa człowieka będą dla UE „centralnym elementem stosunków ze wszystkimi państwami trzecimi, również z jej partnerami strategicznymi".

Pragnę zauważyć, że po tym posiedzeniu ministerialnym Wysoka Przedstawiciel oświadczyła, że odbyły się na nim szczere i otwarte dyskusje na tematy takie jak prawa człowieka. Czy Wysoka Przedstawiciel mogłaby sprecyzować, jakie konkretnie obawy dotyczące praw człowieka zostały omówione z partnerami z RWPZ na posiedzeniu ministerialnym?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(6 września 2013 r.)

W wypowiedziach przedstawicieli UE podczas posiedzenia ministerialnego UE-RWPZ w Manamie w dniu 30 czerwca 2013 r. podkreślano kluczowe znaczenie praw człowieka w stosunkach UE z partnerami zewnętrznymi. Poruszano pełen zakres kwestii budzących zaniepokojenie UE co do sytuacji w państwach Zatoki Perskiej w dziedzinie praw człowieka, uwzględnianych w licznych wystąpieniach publicznych oraz w corocznym sprawozdaniu UE na temat praw człowieka i demokracji na świecie, w tym zagadnienia praw kobiet, wolności słowa i wolności zrzeszania się.

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca wydała również specjalne oświadczenie dotyczące stanowiska UE względem sytuacji w Bahrajnie
(http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/137678.pdf).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008704/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Joanna Senyszyn (S&D)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — EU-GCC Ministerial meeting

The High Representative recently participated in the EU-GCC Ministerial meeting that took place on June 30 2013 in Bahrain. Parliament has made clear its concerns about the continuing harassment and persecution of human rights defenders and systematic violations of freedoms of expression, association, and peaceful assembly in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. Just over one year ago the EU adopted a new EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy, pledging that human rights, democracy, and the rule of law will be promoted 'in all areas of the EU's external actions without exception' and that the EU will 'place human rights at the centre of its relations with all third countries, including strategic partners'.

I note that after this ministerial meeting the High Representative stated: 'we do have honest and open discussions on issues, for example on human rights'. Could the High Representative specify which specific human rights concerns were raised with GCC counterparts during the ministerial meeting?

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

The EU interventions during the EU-GCC Ministerial meeting of 30 June 2013 in Manama emphasised the central importance of Human Rights in EU relations with third partners. They reflected the range of EU concerns at the Human Rights situation in Gulf countries, as evidenced in numerous public statements and in the EU Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World, including women's rights, freedom of expression and association.

The HR/VP also issued a specific statement reflecting the EU's position as regards the situation in Bahrain (http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/137678.pdf).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008705/13
to the Commission
James Elles (ECR)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: Pig Welfare Directive

The Pig Welfare Directive includes a partial sow stall ban. Only 10 countries, accounting for 10% of all EU production, were fully compliant at the start of this year, including the UK. Although infringement proceedings have been initiated by the Commission against some of the countries involved, British production is still being undermined by pork imports from EU countries that have not complied with the directive.

1. What immediate steps will the Commission take so that the UK and other compliant countries do not find their production undermined?

2. What additional action does the Commission plan to take to ensure the full and timely implementation of the directive by non-compliant countries?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to parliamentary questions E-007401/2013 and E-004418/2013 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008706/13
to the Commission
James Elles (ECR)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: Welfare of Laying Hens Directive

It is understood from the information made available, that following the entry into force of the Welfare of Laying Hens Directive on 1 January 2012, there are still four Member States that are non-compliant, and the Commission has not disclosed which four countries are involved.

What steps does the Commission plan to take to ensure full transparency, and that the countries involved comply fully with the directive without delay?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to parliamentary Question E-004763/2013 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008707/13
to the Commission
James Elles (ECR)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: Food and Veterinary Office

The Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) is the body designated to ensure that Union legislation on food safety, animal welfare and animal health is implemented and enforced. It has been understood that the FVO has no intention of carrying out inspections to check that EU Member States are complying with both the Pig Welfare Directive and the Welfare of Laying Hens Directive.

Is this understanding correct? If so, why is the FVO not fulfilling its mandate by not carrying out these essential checks?

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

In respect of legislation on the welfare of laying hens and of pigs, the Commission has been checking on the progress being made in the phasing out of unenriched battery cages and sow stalls, through inspections and audits carried out by the Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) in Member States over the last several years. These checks were instrumental in bringing attention to the lack of progress in certain Member States and the need for corrective actions.

The Commission has taken a number of initiatives, including in some cases the initiation of infringement proceedings, to improve the level of compliance in Member States. The FVO is well informed of the situation in the Member States on the state of compliance with the two Directives mentioned. In the light of the progress made and the current state of knowledge on implementation it is considered that resources are best directed towards other priorities in the field of animal welfare. If any information is supplied to the FVO which indicates that the information supplied on a regular basis by the Member States is incorrect, appropriate steps will be taken including, if necessary, an audit.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008713/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(16 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: Supresión de líneas de transporte escolar en Aragón

La Consejería de Educación del Gobierno Autonómico de la Comunidad de Aragón ha anunciado el pasado 9 de julio la decisión de suprimir 25 líneas de transporte escolar que serán asignadas a las actuales empresas privadas que prestan servicios de transporte regular de pasajeros.

Esta decisión, que obligaría a dichas compañías a reservar las plazas que necesiten los escolares en sus autobuses regulares, se toma justo cuando la Comisión Europea ha abierto un expediente a la Junta de Castilla y León por el mismo asunto. Según el expediente abierto por la Comisión a España, la medida que ha desarrollado la Junta de Castilla y León implica la discriminación en el proceso de contratación de los servicios de transportes, debido a que se asignan los servicios de transporte de viajeros especiales directamente a las compañías actualmente contratadas.

Este procedimiento de infracción supone la violación de la Directiva 2004/18/CE referente a los procedimientos de adjudicación de los contratos públicos de obras, de suministro y de servicios. Esta infracción puede suponer una multa con cargo a los fondos públicos de España y, sin embargo, el Gobierno Autonómico de Aragón no se da por enterado y trata de imponer la misma decisión. Este recorte va mucho más allá de los problemas que pueda generar a la competencia puesto que toda la comunidad educativa y las alcaldías de las zonas afectadas están en pie de guerra para defender un adecuado acceso al derecho a la educación de sus niños.

¿Conoce la Comisión la decisión del Gobierno Autonómico de Aragón?

¿Considera que dicha decisión puede suponer un caso similar al anteriormente citado relacionado con la Junta de Castilla y León?

¿No cree la Comisión que el Gobierno de Aragón viola la Directiva 2004/18/CE referente a los procedimientos de adjudicación de los contratos públicos de obras, de suministro y de servicios?

¿Piensa comunicarse con las autoridades españolas para tratar de evitar la decisión de suprimir dichos servicios de transporte?

¿Piensa abrir un nuevo expediente a las autoridades españolas si la Consejería de Educación del Gobierno de Aragón mantiene su decisión?

Respuesta del Sr. Barnier en nombre de la Comisión
(6 de septiembre de 2013)

El caso que menciona Su Señoría no ha sido señalado a la Comisión, la cual no se halla por consiguiente en situación de pronunciarse sobre la compatibilidad de la decisión de la Consejería de Educación del Gobierno Autonómico de Aragón con las normas sobre contratación pública de la UE, ni sobre sus similitudes con el caso en el que está implicada la Junta de Castilla y León.

En caso de que Su Señoría decida facilitar a la Comisión nueva información sobre este asunto, la Comisión la estudiará debidamente.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008713/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: Scrapping of school bus routes in Aragon

On 9 July 2013, the Aragon Regional Government's Department of Education announced that it would scrap 25 school bus routes and assign them to the private companies that currently provide scheduled passenger transport services.

This decision, which would force these companies to reserve the seats that students need on their scheduled buses, comes just as the Commission has opened proceedings against the Castile-Leon Regional Government for doing the same thing. The Commission's proceedings against Spain, for the Castile-Leon Regional Government's actions, were opened on the grounds of discrimination in the procurement of transport services, as special passenger transport services have been assigned directly to currently contracted companies.

Those infringement proceedings concern a breach of Directive 2004/18/EC on the coordination of procedures for the award of public works contracts, public supply contracts and public service contracts. The breach may lead to a fine being imposed on Spain. However, the Aragon Regional Government is not taking any notice and is trying to enforce this decision. This cutting of services goes far beyond potential competition issues, as the entire educational community and the local authorities of the affected areas are fighting to protect their children's access to the right to education.

Is the Commission aware of the Aragon Regional Government's decision?

Does it believe that this decision is similar to the aforementioned case involving the Castile-Leon Regional Government?

Does it believe that the Aragon Regional Government is in breach of Directive 2004/18/EC on the coordination of procedures for the award of public works contracts, public supply contracts and public service contracts?

Will it contact the Spanish authorities to try to block the decision to scrap these transport services?

Will it open new proceedings against the Spanish authorities should the Aragon Regional Government's Department of Education uphold its decision?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(6 September 2013)

The case referred to by the Honourable Member has not been brought to the attention of the Commission, who is therefore not in a position to comment neither on the compatibility of the decision by the Department of Education of the Aragon Regional Government with the EU public procurement rules, nor on its similarity with the case involving Castile-Leon Regional Government.

Should the Honourable Member provide the Commission with further information about the case at stake, the Commission will duly examine it.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008714/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(16 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Crisi del settore industriale degli elettrodomestici in Italia — Caso Whirpool di Spini di Gardolo, Trento

Nell'ambito della ristrutturazione aziendale portata avanti dalla multinazionale Whirlpool in Italia, lo stabilimento di Spini di Gardolo a Trento verrà dismesso e la sua produzione spostata in parte nello stabilimento di Cassinetta di Biandronno in provincia di Varese e in quello di Wroclaw in Polonia.

Aperto nel 1970, la produzione annua dello stabilimento si attesta attualmente attorno ai 400.000 pezzi e, come sopra descritto verrà spostata in altri stabilimenti, mettendo a rischio il posto di lavoro di ben 468 dipendenti.

Può la Commissione riferire:

1. se è a conoscenza dei fatti sopra esposti;

2. vista la risposta alle mie precedenti interrogazioni E-001178/2013 «Crisi del settore industriale della produzione di elettrodomestici in Italia» e E-001315/2013 «Crisi del settore industriale degli elettrodomestici in Italia — Il caso Electrolux», nella quale la Commissione ha affermato che *«nel dicembre 2012 la Commissione ha intrapreso uno studio sulla competitività dell'industria elettrica ed elettronica per esaminarne la struttura, le catene di valore, la competitività e le sfide cui sarà esposta in futuro»*, se può riferire i risultati di tale studio;

3. considerato che sempre nella medesima risposta afferma che *«gli effetti combinati della pressione fiscale, della mancanza della manodopera qualificata e di un contesto normativo gravoso possono portare a delocalizzare un'attività economica»*, se può fornire una valutazione di quanto incidono gli altri fattori indicati nelle operazioni di riassetto industriale che spingono le multinazionali alla delocalizzazione posto che nel caso di specie e per tutto il settore degli elettrodomestici in Italia non è ravvisabile una sofferenza dovuta alla mancanza di manodopera qualificata;

4. ritiene possibile l'attivazione del Fondo europeo di adeguamento alla globalizzazione (FEG) per i lavoratori dello stabilimento Whirpool di Spini di Gardolo?

Risposta di Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(2 settembre 2013)

1. Anche se la Commissione non è a conoscenza del caso specifico menzionato dall'onorevole deputata, essa è ben consapevole della problematica legata alla delocalizzazione della produzione. In effetti, la preoccupazione principale è data dalla delocalizzazione al di fuori dell'UE in paesi terzi e dalla conseguente perdita di posti di lavoro nell'UE, fenomeno che si verifica per diversi motivi, tra cui minori costi di fabbricazione nonché costi di trasporto più contenuti allorché si produce più vicino a certi mercati al consumo.

2. Lo studio è in corso e dovrebbe essere completato entro il quarto trimestre del 2013. Subito dopo esso sarà pubblicato sul sito web della Commissione.

3. I fattori che influiscono sulle imprese allorché queste decidono dove ubicare la loro produzione sono in parte dovuti a considerazioni interne e in parte rispecchiano il contesto imprenditoriale. È impossibile conoscere il peso relativo di questi fattori in relazione alle singole decisioni di produzione. Obiettivo della Commissione è migliorare il contesto imprenditoriale nei singoli stati membri riducendo gli oneri amministrativi,agevolando l'accesso ai finanziamenti, migliorando e rendendo più reattiva l'amministrazione pubblica e aprendo mercati per far sì che l'Europa nel suo insieme e ciascuno dei suoi Stati membri diventino un luogo interessante dove produrre e investire. La Commissione ha analizzato a fondo l'economia italiana in questa ottica ([1]).

4. Se gli esuberi di lavoratori sono una conseguenza della globalizzazione del commercio, l'Italia può decidere di chiedere sostegno al Fondo europeo di adeguamento alla globalizzazione (FEG).

([1]) Raccomandazione del Consiglio sul programma nazionale di riforma 2013 dell'Italia e che formula un parere del Consiglio sul programma di stabilità dell'Italia 2012-2017; Esame approfondito per l'Italia, SWD(2013) 118 final; Member States competitiveness performance and policies 2012, SWD(2012)298.

L'onorevole deputata può mettersi in contatto con il referente del FEG in Italia per informarsi se è prevista una domanda a sostegno dei lavoratori messi in esubero nel settore degli elettrodomestici. Gli estremi per contattare detto referente sono reperibili sul sito web del FEG ([2]).

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=581&langId=it.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008714/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: Crisis in the electrical appliance industry in Italy — Whirpool factory in Spini di Gardolo, Trento

As part of the corporate restructuring undertaken by the multinational company Whirlpool in Italy, the factory in Spini di Gardolo, Trento will be closed and its production partly relocated to the factory in Cassinetta di Biandronno in the province of Varese, and to the factory in Wrocław in Poland.

Opened in 1970, the factory's annual production currently stands at approximately 400 000 units and, as mentioned above, it will be moved to other factories, putting as many as 468 jobs at risk.

1. Is the Commission aware of the above facts?

2. In view of the answer to my previous Questions E-001178/2013 'Crisis in the electrical appliance manufacturing sector in Italy' and E-001315/2013 'Crisis in the electrical appliance industry in Italy — Electrolux', in which the Commission stated that 'in December 2012 the Commission launched a study on the competitiveness of the electrical and electronics engineering industry to look into its structure, value chains, competitiveness and challenges ahead', can the Commission report the results of this study?

3. Considering that, in the same answer, it stated that 'the combined effects of tax burden, lack of skilled labour force and burdensome regulatory environment can lead to relocation of an economic activity', can the Commission provide an assessment of the impact of the other factors indicated in industrial reorganisation operations which encourage multinationals to relocate, given that in the case in question and for the whole of the electrical appliance sector in Italy, there are no difficulties due to a lack of skilled labour?

4. Does the Commission believe it may be possible to mobilise the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF) for the workers at the Whirlpool factory in Spini di Gardolo?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(2 September 2013)

1. Despite the Commission is not aware of the specific case mentioned by the Honourable Member, it is well aware of the issue of production relocation. Indeed the main concern is relocation outside the EU to third countries — and the subsequent loss of EU jobs — which happens for a number of reasons including lower manufacturing costs as well as reduced transport costs by producing closer to some consumer markets.

2. The study is in progress and should be finalised by the fourth quarter of 2013. It will be published on the Commission website soon after.

3. The factors influencing companies when deciding the location of their production are partially internal to them and partially reflect the business environment. It is impossible to know the relative weight of these factors in each production decision. The goal of the Commission is to improve the business environment in each Member States by reducing administrative burden, facilitating access to finance, improving and speeding up public administration, and opening up markets so that Europe as a whole and each of its Member States would be an attractive location for production and investment. The Commission has exhaustively analysed the Italian economy in this regard ([1]).

4. If the workers' redundancies are linked to trade related globalisation, Italy may decide to apply for support from the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF).

The Honourable Member may wish to communicate with the EGF Contact Person in Italy, should she wish to know whether an application is being planned in support of workers made redundant in the manufacturing of domestic appliances sector. The relevant contact details can be found on the EGF website ([2]).

([1]) Council recommendation on Italy's 2013 national reform programme and delivering a Council opinion on Italy's stability programme for 2012-2017; In-depth review for Italy, SWD(2013) 118 final; Member States competitiveness performance and policies 2012, SWD(2012) 298.

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=581&langId=it

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008715/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(16 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Crisi della grande distribuzione veneta: licenziamenti e trasferimenti per i dipendenti

In Italia la crisi economica ha raggiunto anche la grande distribuzione organizzata (GDO). La regione più colpita è il Veneto, dove il rapporto fra superficie destinata alla grande distribuzione e abitanti è il più alto a livello nazionale con 484,6 metri quadri ogni mille abitanti rispetto ai 466,4 della Lombardia e ai 414,6 del Piemonte.

Negli ultimi sei mesi Auchan, Carrefour, Mercatone Uno e Feltrinelli hanno avviato misure di licenziamento per più di mille dipendenti. Ad agosto l'Auchan di Mestre trasferirà quasi 300 dipendenti su 350, mentre 200 su 235 sono già stati spostati al Carrefour di Marcon dopo una cassa integrazione in deroga a rotazione di 34 mesi e a Verona 172 su 210 sono in contratto di solidarietà al 12,75 %. Dal primo gennaio 2013 anche Carrefour ha stabilito il contratto di solidarietà per 400 lavoratori delle sedi di Marcon e Portogruaro e lo stesso ha deciso Felitrinelli per 105 dipendenti di otto punti vendita tra Verona, Vicenza, Padova, Treviso e Venezia. Per i dipendenti di Mercatone Uno sono previsti 66 esuberi, la chiusura a fine agosto dei tre punti vendita di Badia Polesine, Mogliano Veneto e Valli di Chioggia e la fine dei contratti di solidarietà in scadenza il prossimo ottobre.

Può la Commissione riferire:

1. se è informata dei fatti;

2. considerato che l'apertura incontrollata di centri commerciali non favorisce il buon andamento delle vendite, se ritiene necessaria una revisione delle disposizioni della direttiva Bolkestein 2006/123/CE del 12 dicembre 2006;

3. considerato l'impatto dei trasferimenti e dei licenziamenti sui dipendenti veneti e sulle loro famiglie, quali misure ritiene opportuno adottare per tutelare la loro condizione;

4. considerato che in Italia esistono in media 47 punti di vendita ogni 10.000 abitanti, contro i 21 della Spagna, i 13 della Gran Bretagna e i 19 della Germania e della Francia, come valuta il divario del sistema distributivo italiano rispetto ai livelli di sviluppo della distribuzione europea?

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(5 settembre 2013)

1) La Commissione è a conoscenza della situazione del settore al dettaglio nella regione Veneto ma non ha poteri per interferire nelle decisioni specifiche delle imprese. Essa le incoraggia tuttavia ad applicare le buone pratiche per una gestione socialmente responsabile delle ristrutturazioni. A seguito del suo Libro verde del gennaio 2012 ([1]) e dell'adozione ad opera del Parlamento europeo, il 15 gennaio 2013, della relazione Cercas, la Commissione proporrà una comunicazione finalizzata ad istituire un quadro di qualità che farà il punto sulla legislazione e sulle iniziative dell'UE in materia di ristrutturazioni e presenterà le pratiche ottimali che tutti gli stakeholder dovrebbero applicare.

2) L'articolo 49 del TFUE vieta qualsiasi restrizione alla libertà di stabilimento che non sia giustificata, necessaria e proporzionata. In proposito, l'articolo 14 della direttiva «Servizi» riporta il novero di disposizioni particolarmente restrittive per lo stabilimento che la CGE ha già giudicato incompatibili con l'articolo 49 del TFUE e che quindi gli Stati membri dovranno espungere dalla loro legislazione.

3) Si noti che la normativa dell'UE stabilisce l'obbligo per i datori di lavoro di informare e consultare i rappresentanti dei lavoratori prima di decidere di procedere a licenziamenti collettivi ([2]) come anche quando prevedono di adottare misure nei confronti dei loro lavoratori in relazione a un trasferimento di imprese ([3]).

4) La Commissione è consapevole del fatto che i mercati al dettaglio differiscono tra gli Stati membri.

([1]) Cfr. le risposte e una sintesi all'indirizzo: http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=8908&langId=en.

([2]) In particolare la direttiva 98/59/CE del Consiglio, del 20 luglio 1998, concernente il ravvicinamento delle legislazioni degli Stati membri in materia di licenziamenti collettivi, GU L 225 del 12.8.1998.

([3]) Direttiva 2001/23/CE del Consiglio, del 12 marzo 2001, concernente il ravvicinamento delle legislazioni degli Stati membri relative al mantenimento dei diritti dei lavoratori in caso di trasferimenti di imprese, di stabilimenti o di parti di imprese o di stabilimenti, GU L 82 del 22.3.2001.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008715/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: Crisis in the large-scale retail sector in the Veneto region: redundancies and employee transfers

In Italy, the economic crisis has also spread to the large-scale retail sector. The region hit hardest is Veneto, where the ratio of surface area intended for large-scale retail to the number of inhabitants is the highest in Italy, at 484.6 m^2 per 1 000 inhabitants, compared with 466.4 in Lombardy and 414.6 in Piedmont.

In the last six months, Auchan, Carrefour, Mercatone Uno and Feltrinelli have begun redundancy procedures for over 1 000 employees. In August, Auchan in Mestre will transfer almost 300 employees out of a total of 350, whereas 200 out of a total of 235 have already been moved to Carrefour in Marcon following exceptional use of the wages guarantee fund on a rotation basis of 34 months, and in Verona, 172 employees out of a total of 210 are subject to a job-security agreement (with a salary cut of 12.75%). Since 1 January 2013, Carrefour has also had a job-security agreement in place for 400 workers at the Marcon and Portogruaro sites, and Feltrinelli has decided to do the same for 105 of its employees at eight retail outlets in Verona, Vicenza, Padua, Treviso and Venice. Mercatone Uno plans to make 66 of its employees redundant, to close its three stores in Badia Polesine, Mogliano Veneto and Valli di Chioggia at the end of August, and to terminate the job-security agreements which expire in October 2013.

1. Is the Commission aware of these facts?

2. Considering that the uncontrolled opening of shopping centres does not stimulate sales, does the Commission believe it necessary to revise the provisions of Directive 2006/123/EC of 12 December 2006 (Bolkestein Directive)?

3. In view of the impact of the transfers and redundancies on employees and their families in the Veneto region, what steps does the Commission think it should take to protect them?

4. Considering that in Italy there are on average 47 retail outlets for every 10 000 inhabitants, compared with 21 in Spain, 13 in Great Britain and 19 in Germany and France, how does the Commission view the disparity between the Italian retail sector and the development of the sector in the EU?

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

1. The Commission is aware of the situation of retail sector in the Veneto region, but has no powers to interfere in a specific company's' decisions. It encourages them however, to follow good practices in 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.

2. Article 49 TFEU prohibits any restrictions on establishment which are not justified, necessary and proportionate. In this regard, Article 14 of the Services Directive lists the number of particularly restrictive requirements for establishment, which the ECJ have already found to be incompatible with Article 49 TFUE and which had to be removed by the Member States from their legislation.

3. It should also be noted that, EC law provides that employers must inform and consult employees' representatives before they decide to effect collective redundancies ([2]) as well as when they envisage to take measures with regard to their workers in relation to a transfer of undertakings ([3]).

4. The Commission is aware that the retail markets differ between Member States.

([1]) See the replies and a summary under http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=8908&langId=en.
([2]) In particular, Council Directive 98/59/EC of 20 July 1998 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to collective redundancies, OJ L 225, 12.8.1998.
([3]) Council Directive 2001/23/EC of 12 March 2001 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the safeguarding of employees' rights in the event of transfers of undertakings, businesses or parts of undertakings or businesses, OJ L 82, 22.3.2001.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008716/13
alla Commissione
Sergio Gaetano Cofferati (S&D)
(16 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Procedure di infrazione — Aiuti di Stato SA.33083 e SA.35083

Nel 2011 la Commissione ha avviato un'indagine d'ufficio con il riferimento SA.33083 su una serie di leggi italiane emanate negli anni 2002-2003 e 2007 che introducono aiuti di Stato (sotto forma di una riduzione del 90 % delle imposte nonché dei contributi previdenziali e dei premi assicurativi obbligatori) connessi al terremoto che ha colpito la Sicilia orientale nei giorni 13-16 dicembre 1990 e alle alluvioni del novembre 1994 in Italia settentrionale.

Il 2 luglio 2012 l'Italia ha notificato (comunicazione protocollata con il riferimento SA.35083) la misura d'aiuto che prevede riduzioni fiscali e contributive a seguito del terremoto del 2009 in Abruzzo. A tal proposito la Commissione aveva già chiesto informazioni il 19 giugno 2012. Con lettera del 17.10.2012 la Commissione ha ingiunto all'Italia di sospendere tutti gli aiuti illegali concessi nell'ambito dei casi di aiuto di Stato SA.33083 (2012/NN) e SA.35083 (2012/NN) fino a quando la Commissione non avrà preso una decisione in merito alla compatibilità dell'aiuto con il mercato interno (ingiunzione di sospensione).

Alla luce della gravità delle calamità prese in considerazione, del gravissimo impatto che la sospensiva ha avuto per le imprese interessate e del potenziale pesantissimo effetto che la decisione di considerare incompatibili gli aiuti avrebbe sia per le imprese sia per i territori coinvolti, può la Commissione riferire a che punto del processo decisionale essa si trovi rispetto a tali procedure di infrazione, quando renderà pubblica la sua decisione finale su di esse e in che modo terrà conto delle conseguenze occupazionali e sociali di una sua eventuale decisione quanto all'illegittimità degli aiuti?

Ai sensi dell'articolo 107, paragrafo 2, lettera b), e paragrafo 3, lettere a) e c) del TFUE, stante che i danni per le imprese di una zona colpita da calamità naturale non consistono solamente in danni diretti, ma anche in danni che derivano dall'operare in un ambiente con gravi difficoltà dal punto di vista infrastrutturale e dei servizi e che la ripresa di una zona colpita da calamità passa necessariamente da quella delle attività economiche sul suo territorio, come la Commissione intende tener conto di queste considerazioni nel valutare se le misure prese dall'Italia siano effettivamente destinate «ad ovviare ai danni arrecati dalle calamità naturali»?

Risposta di Joaquín Almunia a nome della Commissione
(11 settembre 2013)

Nel 2012 la Commissione ha avviato un'indagine formale per esaminare la compatibilità di alcune misure di aiuto a favore delle imprese situate in zone colpite da calamità naturali. Considerata la complessità del caso, le valutazioni sono ancora in corso.

Gli aiuti destinati a ovviare ai danni arrecati dalle calamità naturali sono compatibili con il mercato interno ai sensi dell'articolo 107, paragrafo 2, lettera b), del trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea. Tuttavia gli aiuti concessi sembrano aver oltrepassato i limiti di questa disposizione del trattato, in quanto sono andati a beneficio di imprese che non avevano subito danni diretti. Rappresentando un'eccezione al divieto generale di concedere aiuti di Stato, l'articolo 107, paragrafo 2, lettera b), del TFUE deve essere interpretato in maniera restrittiva. In particolare, come confermato dalla Corte di giustizia dell'Unione europea nella sentenza del 29 aprile 2004 nella causa C-278/00, esso non consente di autorizzare misure di aiuto che vadano al di là della compensazione per i danni subiti. Le riduzioni fiscali e di versamento dei contributi sociali, oggetto dell'indagine formale, possono rappresentare aiuti al funzionamento, poiché vanno oltre l'indennizzo dei danni subiti dalle singole imprese. D'altro canto, gli aiuti al funzionamento possono essere considerati compatibili sulla base delle disposizioni in materia di aiuti regionali di cui all'articolo 107, paragrafo 3, lettere a) e c), del TFUE. Secondo gli orientamenti della Commissione in materia di aiuti di Stato a finalità regionale, che forniscono un'interpretazione di queste disposizioni del trattato, gli aiuti al funzionamento possono essere approvati, in circostanze eccezionali, soltanto per le zone dichiarate ammissibili agli aiuti a finalità regionale ai sensi dell'articolo 107, paragrafo 3, lettera a), del TFUE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008716/13
to the Commission
Sergio Gaetano Cofferati (S&D)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: Infringement procedures — State Aid No SA.33083 and No SA.35083

In 2011, the Commission launched an own-initiative investigation under reference No SA.33083 regarding a series of Italian laws issued in 2002-2003 and 2007 introducing state aid (in the form of a 90% reduction in taxes and compulsory social security and occupational insurance contributions) linked to the earthquake that struck eastern Sicily on 13-16 December 1990, as well as the floods which occurred in northern Italy in November 1994.

On 2 July 2012, Italy notified the Commission (under reference No SA.35083) of the state aid measure to reduce taxes and contributions following the 2009 earthquake in Abruzzo. In this regard, the Commission had already requested information on 19 June 2012. By a letter dated 17 October 2012, the Commission ordered Italy to suspend any unlawful aid referred to in cases SA.33083 (2012/NN) and SA.35083 (2012/NN) until the Commission had taken a decision on the compatibility of the aid with the internal market (suspension injunction).

Given the severity of the disasters in question, the profound impact that the suspension measure has had on the businesses involved and the potentially dramatic effect that deeming the aid incompatible would have on both the businesses and the regions concerned, can the Commission state what stage it has reached in the decision-making process with regard to these infringement procedures, when it will make its final decision on the procedures public, and how it will take into account the employment and social consequences in the event that it decides that the aid is unlawful?

In accordance with Article 107(2)(b) and Article 107(3)(a) and (c) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, given that damage to businesses in an area hit by a natural disaster does not consist solely of direct damage, but also damage caused by operating in an extremely difficult situation in terms of infrastructure and services, and given that the recovery of a disaster-stricken area depends on the recovery of local economic activities, how does the Commission intend to take into account these considerations when assessing whether the measures taken by Italy are indeed intended to 'make good the damage caused by natural disasters'?

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

The Commission opened a formal investigation in 2012 to examine the compatibility of certain aid measures in favour of undertakings located in areas hit by natural disasters. Given the complexity of the case, the assessment is still ongoing.

Aid to make good the damage caused by natural disasters is compatible with the internal market pursuant to Article 107(2)(b) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. However, the aid granted appears to have gone beyond the limits of this Treaty provision as it benefitted firms which had not suffered direct damages. As an exception to the general prohibition of state aid, Article 107(2)(b) TFEU ought to be interpreted narrowly. In particular, as confirmed by the European Court of Justice in its judgment of 29 April 2004 in Case C-278/00, it does not allow authorisation of aid measures that go beyond the compensation of undertakings for damage suffered. The tax and social security contribution reductions which are the subject of the formal investigation may constitute operating aid, insofar as they go beyond the compensation of damage suffered by individual undertakings. On the other hand, operating aid may be declared compatible on the basis of the provisions regarding regional aid laid down in Articles 107(3) (a) and (c) TFEU. According to the Commission's Regional Aid Guidelines, which give an interpretation of these Treaty provisions, operating aid could be approved, under exceptional circumstances, only in areas declared eligible for regional aid pursuant to Article 107(3)(a) TFEU.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008717/13
aan de Commissie
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(16 juli 2013)

Betreft: Gemeenschappelijke aanpak drugshandel

Artikel 2 van Kaderbesluit 2004/757/JBZ van de Raad van 25 oktober 2004 betreffende de vaststelling van minimumvoorschriften met betrekking tot de bestanddelen van strafbare feiten en met betrekking tot straffen op het gebied van de illegale drugshandel, verplicht iedere lidstaat de nodige maatregelen te nemen opdat het aanbieden, te koop stellen, distribueren, verkopen, afleveren en verhandelen van drugs bestraft wordt wanneer daarvoor geen rechtvaardigingsgrond aanwezig is.

Artikel 4 bepaalt dat de lidstaten de nodige maatregelen dienen te nemen om ervoor te zorgen dat de in artikel 2 bedoelde feiten strafbaar worden gesteld met een maximumstraf van ten minste 1 tot 3 jaar gevangenis.

In Nederland wordt de handel in softdrugs via coffeeshops echter gedoogd op basis van specifieke richtlijnen van het Openbaar Ministerie (OM) waarmee invulling wordt gegeven aan het opportuniteitsbeginsel met betrekking tot strafvervolging.

In het verslag van 2009 over de implementatie van het kaderbesluit erkent de Commissie dat het nakomen van de strafmaten die in het kaderbesluit zijn vastgelegd, geen indicatie geeft over de juridische praktijk. Ze concludeert dan ook dat, terwijl het kaderbesluit de eerste steen gelegd heeft voor een gemeenschappelijke aanpak voor het bestrijden van drugshandel op Europees niveau, er nog belangrijke vooruitgang moet worden geboekt.

Hoe beoordeelt de Commissie het Nederlandse gedoogbeleid in het licht van het kaderbesluit en het verslag over de implementatie?

Op welke manier meent de Commissie vooruitgang te kunnen boeken in een gemeenschappelijke aanpak voor het bestrijden van drugshandel op Europees niveau?

Overweegt de Commissie stappen te ondernemen op basis van artikel 83 van het Verdrag betreffende de werking van de Europese Unie (VWEU), dat voorziet in een verdere harmonisatie op het gebied van het strafrecht met betrekking tot drugs?

Antwoord van mevrouw Reding namens de Commissie
(6 september 2013)

In het verslag van de Commissie van 2009 over de tenuitvoerlegging van Kaderbesluit 2004/757/JBZ ([1]) van de Raad en het bijbehorende werkdocument van de diensten van de Commissie ([2]) wordt geconcludeerd dat de Nederlandse wetgeving voldoet aan artikel 4, lid 1, van het kaderbesluit. Voorts wordt daarin opgemerkt dat het Nederlandse gedoogbeleid ten aanzien van coffeeshops verband houdt met het beginsel van opportuniteit van vervolging, dat buiten het toepassingsgebied van het kaderbesluit valt.

Zoals is aangegeven in de mededeling „Naar een sterker Europees antwoord op de drugsproblematiek" ([3]) van 2011, is de Commissie voornemens een herziening voor te stellen van het kaderbesluit betreffende de drugshandel, om het toepassingsgebied van de strafrechtelijke bepalingen waarin het voorziet, uit te breiden naar de meest schadelijke nieuwe psychoactieve stoffen die gezondheids- en sociale risico's met zich brengen die vergelijkbaar zijn met die van illegale drugs.

De EU werkt ook aan de totstandbrenging van een gemeenschappelijke aanpak ter bestrijding van drugshandel, in de context van de EU-drugsstrategie en de EU-beleidscyclus voor georganiseerde en zware internationale criminaliteit.

In de EU-drugsstrategie 2013-2020 zijn de doelstellingen en belangrijkste prioriteiten in verband met de verschillende aspecten van het drugsbeleid opgenomen, die in het EU-drugsactieplan 2013-2016 in specifieke maatregelen zijn omgezet. De EU-strategie versterkt het EU-model inzake drugsbeleid, op basis van een evenwichtige aanpak, waarbij de vraag naar en het aanbod van drugs even krachtig moeten worden aangepakt.

([1]) COM(2009) 669 definitief.
([2]) SEC(2009) 1661 definitief.
([3]) COM(2011) 689 definitief.

De eerste EU-beleidscyclus 2011-2013 omvatte acht prioriteiten, waarvan vier betrekking hadden op of verband hielden met drugshandel en verder zijn omgezet in jaarlijkse operationele actieplannen. Naar verwachting zullen de nieuwe prioriteiten van de cyclus 2013-2017 eveneens betrekking hebben op drugshandel, al zullen de prioriteiten anders worden geformuleerd om rekening te houden met de evolutie van de criminele wereld.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008717/13
to the Commission
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: Common approach to tackling drugs trafficking

Article 2 of Council Framework Decision 2004/757/JHA of 25 October 2004 laying down minimum provisions on the constituent elements of criminal acts and penalties in the field of illicit drug trafficking makes it compulsory for every Member State to take the measures required to ensure that offering, offering for sale, distributing, selling, delivering and dealing in drugs is punishable when committed without right.

Article 4 stipulates that Member States should take the necessary measures to ensure that the offences referred to in Article 2 are punishable by penalties of a maximum of at least between one and three years' imprisonment.

However, in the Netherlands, the sale of soft drugs in coffee shops is tolerated based on specific directives from the Public Prosecution Service where the expediency principle is deployed in terms of pursuing criminal prosecution.

In the 2009 report on the framework Decision's implementation, the Commission acknowledges that applying the penalties set out in the framework Decision is not an indication of legal practice. It also concludes that, although the framework Decision lays the foundation for a common European approach to tackling drug trafficking, significant progress still needs to be made.

What is the Commission's view of the Netherlands' policy of tolerance in light of the framework Decision and the implementation report?

How does the Commission intend to be able to make progress in establishing a common European approach to tackling drug trafficking?

Is the Commission considering taking measures based on Article 83 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), ensuring further harmonisation of criminal law in relation to drugs?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(6 September 2013)

The 2009 Commission report on the implementation of Council Framework Decision 2004/757/JHA ([1]) and the accompanying staff working document ([2]) conclude that the Dutch legislation complies with Article 4(1) of the framework Decision. These reports also note that the Dutch tolerance policy towards coffee-shops relates to the principle of discretionary proceedings, which is outside the scope of application of the framework Decision.

As expressed in the 2011 Communication 'Towards a Stronger European Response to Drugs' ([3]), the Commission intends to propose a revision of the framework Decision on drug trafficking, to widen the application of its criminal law provisions to the most harmful new psychoactive substances posing health and social risks similar to those of illicit drugs.

The EU is also working on the establishment of a common approach to tackle drug trafficking in the context of the EU Drug Strategy and the EU Policy Cycle for organised and serious transnational crime.

The EU Drugs Strategy 2013-2020 sets the objectives and main priorities of the various strands of drugs policy, which have then been translated into specific measures in the EU Action Plan on Drugs 2013-2016. The EU Strategy consolidates the EU model on drugs policy, based on the balanced approach, under which drug demand and drug supply need to be tackled with equal vigour.

([1]) COM(2009) 669 final.
([2]) SEC(2009) 1661 final.
([3]) COM(2011) 689 final.

The first EU Policy Cycle 2011-2013 retained eight priorities, four of which concern or relate to drug trafficking, and have been further translated into annual Operational Action Plans. The new priorities of the cycle 2013-2017 are expected to retain drug trafficking priorities as well, albeit in a new formulation so as to take into account the evolution of the criminal scene.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008718/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(16 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Incêndios no distrito de Bragança

Na passada semana o distrito de Bragança foi assolado por um incêndio numa enorme extensão do seu território, o maior incêndio do ano em Portugal. Este incêndio durou cerca de 3 dias e atingiu 4 concelhos do distrito. São já estimados prejuízos de milhões de euros em áreas agrícolas e de floresta, uma vez que foram destruídos milhares de hectares de terrenos e uma grande área de olival e amendoal tradicional foi dizimada. Os agricultores perderam ainda vários animais, forragens, rações e equipamentos agrícolas. A Associação de Agricultores de Trás-os-Montes considerou já este incêndio como «uma das maiores catástrofes agrícolas de sempre na zona do Baixo Sabor».

Os produtores e agricultores desta região enfrentam, assim, uma situação dramática e procuram soluções para o seu futuro.

Assim, solicitamos à Comissão que nos informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Que medidas de emergência e apoios excecionais às zonas afetadas no distrito de Bragança e às populações atingidas por esta catástrofe podem ser desde já mobilizados?

2. Que programas e medidas poderão apoiar a recuperação e a reflorestação das áreas florestais ardidas?

3. Que programas e medidas poderão apoiar os agricultores afetados e a recuperação, tão rápida quanto possível, do potencial produtivo das áreas agrícolas afetadas?

4. Que apoios sociais podem ser mobilizados para apoiar as famílias dos agricultores e produtores, que perderam o seu meio de subsistência?

5. Foi, até à data, efetuada alguma diligência por parte do governo junto da Comissão, tendo em conta a ocorrência desta catástrofe?

Resposta dada por Dacian Cioloş em nome da Comissão
(10 de setembro de 2013)

1-2-3. A Comissão remete os Senhores Deputados para as respostas às perguntas E-10899/2012 e E-007976/2012 ([1]).

4. A Comissão pode prestar ajuda aos Estados-Membros, a seu pedido, mediante a ativação do mecanismo de proteção civil da UE, após uma catástrofe natural. Pode facilitar a mobilização de assistência em géneros destinados à população afetada no período imediato após a ocorrência de situações de emergência.

5. Até à data, o Governo português não apresentou qualquer pedido de assistência do Fundo de Solidariedade da UE, que, em qualquer caso, só pode intervir em determinadas operações públicas de emergência, não para compensar danos agrícolas.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008718/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: Fires in the district of Bragança

Last week, a substantial part of the district of Bragança was ravaged by fire, the largest in Portugal this year. The fire lasted around three days and spread to four municipalities in the district. Losses in agricultural and forest areas have already been put at millions of euros, as thousands of hectares of land were destroyed and a large area of traditional olive and almond groves was decimated. Farmers also lost a number of animals, fodder, feed and farm equipment. The Trás-os-Montes Farmers' Association has said that the fire is one of the worst agricultural disasters ever in the Baixo Sabor area.

Producers and farmers in the region are therefore facing a desperate situation and are seeking solutions for their future.

1. What emergency measures and exceptional support can be mobilised now for the affected areas in the district of Bragança and for the people affected by this disaster?

2. What programmes and measures could support the rehabilitation and reforestation of burned forest areas?

3. What programmes and measures could support the farmers affected and the fastest possible recovery of the productive potential of the agricultural areas affected?

4. What social support can be mobilised to support the families of farmers and producers who have lost their livelihood?

5. Has the government, along with the Commission, taken any action to date in view of this disaster?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(10 September 2013)

1, 2 and 3. The Commission would refer to its answers to the questions from the Honourable Member, E-10899/2012 and E-007976/2012 ([1]).

4. The Commission can assist Member States upon their request by activating the EU Civil Protection Mechanism after a natural disaster. It can facilitate the mobilisation of in-kind assistance destined to affected population in the immediate aftermath of an emergency.

5. To date the Portuguese Government has not applied for assistance from the EU Solidarity Fund which, in any event, may intervene for certain public emergency operations only, not to compensate agricultural damage.

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

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008719/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(16 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Monopólios estatais, mercados vínicos e aguardentes/etanol agrícola e industrial na UE

Tendo em conta:

— A existência, em finais da década de 90 e inícios da década passada (ver, por exemplo, a Recomendação CE de 19 de junho de 2002), na Alemanha, de um monopólio estatal de aguardente de cereais e ajudas de cerca de 100 milhões de euros anuais, consagrados à subvenção dos produtores de álcool agrícola/aguardentes à base de milho, frutas e batata;

— Que o monopólio estatal comprava a aguardente a um preço superior aos preços de mercado e vendia-a a um preço inferior à indústria, para que ela pudesse concorrer com álcoois industriais;

— Que o setor farmacêutico alemão estava obrigado a adquirir apenas álcool agrícola;

Solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Qual a situação hoje na Alemanha relativamente às questões atrás referidas? Reembolsou o Estado Alemão, como era reclamação da Comissão, as subvenções anuais distribuídas nas décadas de 1990 e 2000?

2. Continua o setor farmacêutico alemão obrigado a adquirir apenas álcool agrícola? O que justifica este entrave ao mercado?

3. Há outros casos de monopólios estatais no setor de produtos vínicos, inclusive álcool, noutros Estados-membros? Quais e que funções desempenha cada um deles?

4. Existem outros Estados-Membros com restrições no comércio de álcool agrícola, nomeadamente, a obrigatoriedade de setores industriais ou outros apenas consumirem álcool de origem agrícola? Quais as situações existentes?

Resposta dada por Dacian Cioloș em nome da Comissão
(20 de agosto de 2013)

Em 2010, a exceção que permitia à Alemanha conceder auxílios estatais a pequenos produtores de álcool ao abrigo do monopólio alemão do álcool foi prorrogada pelo artigo 182.°, n.° 4, do Regulamento (CE) n.° 1234/2007 do Conselho ([1]). Foi acordada uma supressão progressiva, que impôs, em especial, limites às quantidades de álcool subsidiadas, que diminuíram de 540 000 hl para 180 000 hl em 2013. A partir de 2014 e até ao termo da exceção em 2017, o auxílio só pode ser concedido a produtores muito pequenos de álcool de frutos e a produção anual não pode exceder 60 000 hl. Todos os auxílios pagos ao abrigo do monopólio cessam em 31 de dezembro de 2017.

A Alemanha acordou também em eliminar as restrições ao acesso ao álcool vendido pelo monopólio a empresas estrangeiras e em garantir que o álcool comercializado pelo monopólio não seja vendido abaixo dos preços de mercado. Desde 1 de janeiro de 2011, as indústrias de cosméticos e farmacêutica na Alemanha deixaram de estar limitadas a utilizar apenas álcool de origem agrícola.

A Comissão acompanha de perto a aplicação pela Alemanha do regime de supressão progressiva acordado. Em 16 de julho de 2013, a Comissão transmitiu ao Parlamento Europeu e ao Conselho o relatório anual apresentado pela Alemanha, que incluía, em especial, a descrição das medidas tomadas para abolir este regime de auxílios estatais e o plano para a sua supressão progressiva em 2014-2017 ([2]).

Não existem nos outros Estados-Membros regimes similares para os produtores de álcool. A Comissão não está ciente de outras restrições à venda de álcool de origem agrícola.

([1]) JO L 299 de 16.11.2007.
([2]) Ref: ARES (2013) 2660442.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008719/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: State monopolies, wine markets and spirits/agricultural and industrial ethanol in the EU

In the late 1990s and early 2000s (see, for example, the Commission recommendation of 19 June 2002), the German State monopoly on grain spirits meant that each year around EUR 100 million in subsidies was allocated to producers of agricultural alcohol/spirits made from corn, fruit and potato.

The State monopoly purchased spirits at above-market prices and sold them at a price lower than the industry, so they could compete with industrial alcohol.

The German pharmaceutical industry was forced to purchase agricultural alcohol only.

1. What is the current situation in Germany with regard to these issues? Has the German State repaid the annual subsidies distributed during the 1990s and 2000s, as per the Commission's claim?

2. Is the German pharmaceutical industry still obliged to purchase agricultural alcohol only? What justification is there for this barrier to the market?

3. Are there any other cases of State monopolies in the wine products sector, including alcohol, in the other Member States? In which Member States, and what are their functions in each?

4. Do any other Member States place restrictions on the sale of agricultural alcohol? In particular, do they force industries or other sectors to purchase agricultural alcohol only? What are the current situations?

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

In 2010 the derogation, which allowed Germany to grant state aid to small alcohol producers under the German alcohol monopoly was extended under Article 182(4) of Council Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 ([1]). A detailed gradual phasing-out scheme was agreed, which in particular imposed limits on subsidised quantities of alcohol decreasing from 540 000 hl to 180 000 hl in 2013. As from 2014 till the end of the derogation in 2017 the aid may only be granted to the very small producers of fruit alcohol and the annual production may not exceed 60 000 hl. All aid payments under the Alcohol Monopoly will end by 31 December 2017.

Germany also agreed to eliminate the restrictions in the access to the alcohol sold by the Monopoly to foreign companies and to guarantee that alcohol commercialised by the Monopoly is not sold below market prices. As from 1 January 2011 the cosmetics and pharmaceutical industries in Germany are no longer limited to use only agricultural alcohol.

The Commission closely monitors the implementation of the agreed phasing-out scheme by Germany. On 16 July 2013 the Commission transmitted to the European Parliament and the Council the annual report submitted by Germany, which included in particular the description of the measures undertaken to abolish this state aid scheme and the plan for the phasing-out in 2014-2017 ([2]).

No similar state aid scheme for alcohol producers exists in other Member States. The Commission is not aware of other restrictions on the sale on agricultural alcohol.

([1]) OJ L 299, 16.11.2007.
([2]) Letter ref: ARES(2013)2660442.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008720/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(16 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Monopólio estatal de aquisição e comercialização de vinho e outros produtos alcoólicos (II)

Tendo em conta a existência de um monopólio estatal de aquisição e comercialização de vinho e outros produtos alcoólicos destinados ao consumo humano na Suécia, solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Quais as condições e funções do monopólio estatal sueco de produtos vínicos?

2. Qual o destino das suas receitas?

3. Existem outros países da União Europeia com derrogações semelhantes?

Resposta dada por Antonio Tajani em nome da Comissão
(17 de setembro de 2013)

No que diz respeito às duas primeiras questões, caso o Senhor Deputado pretenda obter informações gerais sobre o funcionamento do «systembolaget», o monopólio estatal na Suécia, poderá abordar essas questões junto das autoridades suecas — Ministério da Saúde e dos Assuntos Sociais (Socialdepartementet) ([1]). O papel da Comissão consiste em examinar a compatibilidade de questões específicas suscitadas pelos monopólios estatais com a legislação da UE.

No que se refere à terceira questão, a Comissão tem conhecimento de que existe um sistema semelhante na Finlândia no âmbito do qual o direito exclusivo de venda a retalho de certos produtos alcoólicos foi atribuído à Alko, uma empresa detida pelo Governo finlandês.

([1]) http://www.government.se/sb/d/2061

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008720/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: State monopoly on the purchase and marketing of wine and other alcoholic products (II)

In view of the Swedish State monopoly on the purchase and marketing of wine and other alcoholic products for human consumption:

1. What are the conditions and functions of the Swedish State monopoly on wine products?

2. Where does this revenue go?

3. Do any other EU countries have similar derogations?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(17 September 2013)

As regards the first two questions, in the case where the Honourable Member wishes to obtain general information as to the functioning of systembolaget, the Swedish state monopoly, he might wish to address these questions to the Swedish authorities — Ministry of Health and Social Affairs (Socialdepartementet) (http://www.government.se/sb/d/2061). The role of the Commission would be to examine the compatibility of specific issues arising out of state monopolies with EC law.

As regards the third question, the Commission is aware that a similar system exists in Finland where the exclusive right to the retail sale of certain alcoholic products was granted to Alko, a company owned by the Finnish government.

(České znění)

Otázka k písemnému zodpovězení P-008721/13
Komisi
Zuzana Roithová (PPE)
(16. července 2013)

Předmět: Genetická modifikace hospodářských zvířat

Uměle chovaný losos byl geneticky upraven tak, aby rostl dvakrát rychleji než normální losos. To vedlo u některých ryb k deformacím těla, problémům s přijímáním potravy a dýcháním a snížilo to jejich schopnost plavat a odolnost k chorobám.

Domnívá se Komise, že v akvakultuře v EU je používání geneticky modifikovaného lososa přijatelné?

Některá hospodářská zvířata jsou geneticky upravována, aby se zvýšila jejich odolnost k chorobám. V mnoha případech jde o choroby, které souvisejí s průmyslovou živočišnou výrobou. Evropská léková agentura uvedla, že k výskytu a šíření infekčních chorob dochází především v systémech živočišné výroby s vysokou koncentrací zvířat.

Souhlasí Komise s tím, že by bylo lepší snížit výskyt těchto chorob chovem zvířat v méně intenzivních systémech než je geneticky upravovat, aby byla schopna lépe zvládat úskalí průmyslové výroby?

Vědci také vytvořili geneticky modifikovanou krávu, která nemá rohy. Je si Komise vědoma toho, že k vytvoření bezrohých krav nepotřebujeme genetickou modifikaci, protože toho lze již dosáhnout běžnými šlechtitelskými metodami?

Uznává Komise, že možnost využívání geneticky modifikovaných zvířat v zemědělství EU je téma, které si zaslouží, aby se k němu náležitě vyjádřili občané EU?

Odpověď Tonia Borga jménem Komise
(27. srpna 2013)

Stávající právní předpisy EU v oblasti dobrých životních podmínek zvířat se rovněž vztahují na geneticky modifikovaná zvířata, pokud by měl být jejich chov v EU povolen. Tyto právní předpisy by se zabývaly problémy, které by vznikly např. v souvislosti s výrobním systémem, intenzitou chovu a nákazami. Existují také veterinární právní předpisy, jež se týkají tlumení a eradikace hlavních původců nákaz postihujících hospodářská zvířata.

Chov zvířat je hospodářskou činností, kde zisk rovněž závisí na konkurenčních výhodách v celosvětovém měřítku a kde jsou obchodní omezení možná pouze v rámci našich WTO-SPS závazků.

Právní rámec upravující geneticky modifikované potraviny a krmiva v EU je založen na vědeckých důkazech a vztahuje se na geneticky modifikovaná zvířata určená pro účely chovu i pro konečnou spotřebu. Cílem tohoto právního rámce je zajistit ochranu lidského zdraví, zdraví a dobrých životních podmínek zvířat a životního prostředí.

V současné době nebyla žádná geneticky modifikovaná zvířata v EU schválena. Jakákoliv žádost bude předmětem zvláštního posouzení rizik, které provede Evropský úřad pro bezpečnost potravin. Podle ustanovení článku 24 směrnice 2001/18/ES musí v průběhu rozhodovacího procesu o žádosti Komise vyzvat veřejnost k předložení připomínek. Tento proces by umožnil nezbytnou širší diskusi se zúčastněnými stranami o různých aspektech chovu geneticky modifikovaných zvířat včetně možných implikací souvisejících s jejich dobrými životními podmínkami.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-008721/13
to the Commission
Zuzana Roithová (PPE)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: Genetic modification of farm animals

Farmed salmon have been genetically engineered to grow twice as quickly as conventional salmon. This has led in some fish to deformities, feeding and breathing difficulties, reduced swimming abilities and lower tolerance to disease.

Does the Commission believe that the use of genetically modified (GM) salmon is acceptable in EU aquaculture?

Some farm animals are being genetically engineered for increased disease resistance. In many cases the diseases that will be targeted are those that are inherent in industrial livestock production. The European Medicines Agency has said that in animal production systems with a high density of animals, the development and spread of infectious diseases is favoured.

Does the Commission agree that it would be better to address such diseases by keeping animals in less intensive systems rather than genetically engineering them to be better able to withstand the rigours of industrial production?

Researchers are also creating a GM cow that has no horns. Does the Commission recognise that we do not need GM to develop hornless cows, as this can already be done by conventional breeding methods?

Does the Commission acknowledge that the possible use of GM animals in EU farming is a subject that merits a proper debate by EU citizens?

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

Existing EU animal welfare legislation applies equally to genetically modified animals should they be permitted farmed in the EU. This legislation would address problems arising due to e.g. production system, stocking density and disease. Animal health legislation is also in place aimed at controlling and eradicating major disease agents affecting farmed animals.

Farming animals is an economic activity where profits also depend on competitive advantages in the world scale and where trade restrictions are only possible within our WTO-SPS commitments.

The legal framework regulating genetically modified (GM) food and feed in the EU is based on science and is applicable both to GMO animals for farming and for final consumption. This framework pursues the objective of ensuring protection of human health, animal health and welfare and environment.

Currently no genetically modified animals have been approved in the EU. Any application would be subject to a specific risk assessment by the European Food Safety Authority. There is provision under Article 24 of the directive 2001/18/EC for the Commission to invite comments from the public during the application decision making process. This process would allow for the necessary broad discussion with interested parties on the various aspects of farming a genetically modified animal including the possible welfare implications.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub P-008722/13
lill-Kummissjoni
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(16 ta' Lulju 2013)

Suġġett: Armonizzazzjoni tal-Liġi tat-Titoli fl-Ewropa

B'referenza għall-proġett tal-Kummissjoni Ewropea għall-ħolqien ta' suq uniku tas-servizzi finanzjarji, sikur u li jiffunzjona b'mod effiċjenti, u għall-għan li jitneħħew l-ostakoli fis-swieq tat-titoli Ewropej, il-Kummissjoni tista':

1. Tagħti aġġornament dwar l-istatus attwali tal-proposta għal Direttiva dwar il-Liġi tat-Titoli fl-Ewropa?

2. Tistqarr jekk hix biħsiebha toħroġ il-proposta sa tmiem din is-sena?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Barnier f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(7 ta' Awwissu 2013)

Il-Kummissjoni għal diversi snin eżaminat il-liġijiet dwar it-titoli bil-għan li jinħoloq suq intern ġenwin għat-titoli. Il-kriżi finanzjarja flimkien mar-rispons regolatorju li wieġeb għall-kriżi fil-livell Ewropew u internazzjonali, madankollu, ħolqu l-ħtieġa ta' riflessjoni ulterjuri dwar ir-rispons regolatorju l-aktar adattat fil-qasam tal-liġi tat-titoli.

Sa mill-2010, il-Kummissjoni rriflettiet fuq it-tagħlimiet meħuda mill-kriżi finanzjarja, kif ukoll analizzat l-opinjonijiet miġbura mill-partijiet interessati kollha, inklużi l-Istati Membri u l-Parlament Ewropew. B'mod partikolari, il-Kummissjoni organizzat fl-2011 konsultazzjoni pubblika dwar l-aspetti legali marbutin mal-liġi tat-titoli tal-UE ([1]), u fl-2012 ħarġet *Green Paper*, dwar is-sistema bankarja parallela, li tat ukoll bidu għal konsultazzjoni pubblika dwar dan is-suġġett ([2]). Il-Kummissjoni kienet ukoll qed tipparteċipa fi gruppi ta' ħidma internazzjonali dwar kif il-qafas regolatorju dwar is-self ta' titoli kif ukoll il-ftehim ta' riakkwist jista' jittejjeb. Dawn l-iżviluppi għandhom jippermettu lill-Kummissjoni tiżviluppa proposta li tissodisfa b'mod xieraq l-isfidi regolatorji identifikati.

Huwa importanti li jiġi enfasizzat, madankollu, li x-xogħol f'dan il-qasam huwa estremament kumpless u tekniku, kif ukoll jolqot ħafna aspetti tal-liġi nazzjonali. Għaldaqstant, filwaqt li l-preparazzjoni tal-proposta leġiżlattiva tal-Kummissjoni tinsab fi stat avvanzat, għad hemm aktar xogħol xi jsir qabel mal-Kummissjoni tkun f'pożizzjoni li tadotta proposta għal leġiżlazzjoni. Wieħed jittama li l-Kummissjoni tkun kapaċi tippreżenta proposta qabel tmiem is-sena.

([1]) C.f. Anness 5, http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/consultations/2010/securities_en.htm
([2]) COM(2012) 102 finali.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-008722/13
to the Commission
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: Harmonisation of securities law in Europe

With reference to the Commission's intention to create a safe and well functioning single market for financial services and its aim of removing barriers in the European securities markets, can the Commission:

1. Provide an update on the current status of the proposal for a directive on securities law in Europe?

2. State whether it intends to issue the proposal by the end of the year?

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

The Commission has been reviewing securities laws for several years with a view to creating a genuine internal market for securities. The financial crisis together with regulatory responses to the crisis at the European and international level have, however, necessitated further reflection on the most appropriate regulatory response in the area of securities law.

Since 2010, the Commission has been reflecting on the lessons learnt from the financial crisis as well as analysing the views collected from all stakeholders, including Member States and the European Parliament. In particular, the Commission organised a public consultation on the legal aspects of EU securities law ([1]) in 2011 and issued a Green Paper on shadow banking in 2012 which also launched a public consultation on the same subject ([2]). The Commission has also been participating in international working groups on how the regulatory framework for securities lending and repos could be improved. These developments should enable the Commission to develop a proposal that appropriately meets all the regulatory challenges identified.

It is important to underline, however, that work in this area is extremely complex and technical and touches upon many areas of national law. Thus while the Commission is at an advanced state in the preparation of a legislative proposal, further work remains to be done before the Commission is in a position to adopt a proposal for legislation. It is hoped that the Commission will be able to present a proposal before the end of the year.

([1]) C.f. Annex 5, http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/consultations/2010/securities_en.htm
([2]) COM(2012) 102 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008723/13
to the Commission
Julie Girling (ECR)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: Safer Internet across the EU

The UK Safer Internet Centre has been working with young people and parents across the United Kingdom to ensure the online Internet environment is as safe as possible for young people. Currently, there are websites hosted across the EU, in particular www.ask.com hosted in Latvia, which are cited as being responsible for a number of incidents of self-harming and suicide amongst young people.

Is the Commission aware of these websites? Does the Commission have any plans to take any pan-European action against these websites?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(21 August 2013)

The Commission is aware that young people are a particularly vulnerable group online that needs special protection measures from any kind of harmful conduct or content such as websites that are cited as being responsible for incidents of self-harming and suicide amongst minors. Since 2004, it co-funds a pan-European network of Safer Internet Centres in all Member States, whose main task is to raise awareness among young people, teachers and parents, regarding the possible risks children may encounter online and empower them to deal with these risks. The Centres run helplines from which parents and children can obtain advice on how to deal with any issue related to their online use, including exposure to harmful websites. Helplines also take reports on harmful conduct and content which they forward to the appropriate body for action.

In addition, in 2012 the Commission presented a strategy to make the Internet Better for Children ([1]). The proposed actions which aim at giving children the digital skills and tools they need to benefit fully and safely from the digital world are to be undertaken jointly by the Commission, Member States and industry. One of the objectives of this strategy is to give both parents and children the technical tools necessary for ensuring the online protection of children including simple and efficient mechanisms for reporting content that seem harmful to children.

Up to now the implementation of this strategy relies on the existing Safer Internet Programme 2009-2013. From 2014, the creation of an EU-wide interoperable service infrastructure to support the Safer Internet Centres is foreseen under the Connecting Europe Facility ([2]).

([1]) Communication from the Commission — European Strategy for a Better Internet for Children, COM(2012)0196.
([2]) Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Connecting Europe Facility, COM(2011)0665.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008724/13
to the Commission
David Martin (S&D)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: Single supplement charge for occupancy in hotels and cruise liners

It has long been the practice of hotels, holiday companies and cruise ships to charge a 'single supplement' for the lone traveller or occupant. Understandably these companies have to operate at a profit, and a room occupied by one person, instead of two people, would otherwise result in considerable loss of profit in a competitive environment. However, it is increasingly being reported that single travellers are being forced to pay this supplement for what is quite obviously a room too small for double occupancy and containing only a single bed.

Is the Commission aware of this practice? Given that the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive (2005/29/EC) states that consumers must be provided with truthful and complete information concerning the price of the service, does it consider this to be misleading or fraudulent?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(9 September 2013)

The Commission is aware that single travellers throughout the EU are often requested by hotels, holiday companies and cruise ships to pay supplementary charges. There are, however, no EU rules which prohibit such practice. These companies are in general free to determine the price of their services. The prices set for these services are most likely a result of many factors, such as the expected costs and income related to the booking.

The market is, however, responding to the increasing demand of tourist services by single persons. Many tour operators and hotels regularly offer package deals or accommodation without any supplementary charges on solo travellers. Some companies also specialise in holidays for single persons.

On this background, and as long as providers of accommodation and tour operators provide clear information to their customers regarding the prices of their services, in compliance with the requirements of the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive 2005/29/EC ([1]), there is no basis under EC law to intervene against their pricing policies.

([1]) OJ L 149, 11.6.2005.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008726/13
to the Council
Andrew Henry William Brons (NI)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: European Agency for Fundamental Rights — simple definition

With reference to your reply of 28 May 2013 (E-002952/2013) there is a reference to incitement to violence but the context and cases that have come before the courts suggest that incitement to hatred is a wider concept than incitement to violence. What sort of words would be covered by the former that do not extend to the latter?

The answer also makes reference to the words 'racism' and 'xenophobia'. This would seem to mean that, in the opinion of the Council, the two words mean the same thing. If they do, why have two words for the same offence?

Xenophobia means literally fear of strangers. Is it possible and, if it is, is it desirable to legislate against a state of mind? There are a number of difficulties:

1. How do you prove what a person's thoughts are? Perhaps the Orwellian concept of face crime would suffice.

2. States of mind, as distinct from actions and words are involuntary states. Would we wish to penalise people for something over which they have no control?

3. Does a state of mind have any anti-social consequences that we would wish to prevent?

The word 'racism' is just as problematic.

There is an academic definition used by sociologists and which appears in their dictionaries — referring to ideologies about racial differences — but the word is rarely used in this sense and is certainly not confined to this meaning.

To many — perhaps most — it is used to mean being motivated by racial hatred, a concept that seems to extend beyond incitement to racial violence, but we are not told how far it extends beyond it. These might appear to some to be nit-picking points but we are talking of creating criminal offences for the use of words, as distinct from acts, that might lead to the speaker or writer (usually speaking or writing in a political context) being sent to prison. Before that happens, we need to have defined the offence so clearly that nobody could commit it unintentionally. Furthermore, the lack of clarity might lead to people erring on the side of caution and simply not talking about immigration, ethnicity or related matters.

Why should incitement to hatred be restricted to circumstances in which the victim is defined by: race/ethnicity/nationality; sex or sexuality; religion or denomination? Could there not simply be an offence of incitement to hatred of people on any ground, including incitement to hatred because of political opinion?

Reply
(16 October 2013)

As stated in the Council's reply to the Honourable Member's Question E-002952/2013, 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 defines offences concerning both racism and xenophobia in Article 1 (1)(a)-(d).

It is not for the Council to interpret these provisions or to comment on court rulings.

Furthermore, it is not Council policy to answer hypothetical questions.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008727/13
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: EU Mission to the UN

Does the Commission intend to expand its personnel on the EU mission to the UN?

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

The three Delegations of the European Union to the UN (in Geneva, Vienna and New York, respectively) will see some small changes in the types of posts allocated to them but overall minor changes in total numbers.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008728/13
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: EU Mission to the UN

How many and what grade are the personnel of the EU mission to the UN?

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

The EU has 3 delegations accredited to the UN in New York, Geneva and Vienna (delegation also accredited to the OSCE). The staff breakdown is as follows:

— New York: 47 staff (42 EEAS and 5 Commission)

— Geneva: 24 staff (21 EEAS and 3 Commission)

— Vienna: 7 staff (6 EEAS and 1 Commission)

There are also 12 seconded national experts (who are employed not by the EU, but by their national administration) in New York, 4 in Geneva, and 5 in Vienna.

The grade of the Head of delegation in New York is AD15, in Geneva AD14 and Vienna AD13.

The grading of other staff members follows the normal rules under the Staff regulations.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008729/13
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) negotiations

On 10 July 2013, Jean-Luc Demarty addressed Parliament's Committee on International Trade. He spoke at length about a series of issues, including the TTIP negotiations. However, because of time constraints, he did not adequately address four questions. Could the Commission respond to these four questions?

1. How does the Commission provide representation to Customs Union countries during its trade negotiations? Does the Commission have specific mechanisms in place for Turkey?

2. Will Turkish officials be present during the TTIP negotiations?

3. How will Turkish interests be represented during the TTIP negotiations?

4. Could the Commission provide data showing how the TTIP will affect Turkey?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(12 September 2013)

The Commission has informed the United States Trade Representative (USTR) about the EU-Turkey Customs Union and will continue to support Turkey's request to also negotiate a Free Trade Agreement with the US. Furthermore, the Commission has already established a trade dialogue with Turkey, and Turkey will be informed of Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) developments. This trade dialogue is complementary to the formal meetings that take place within the institutional bodies set up under the EU-Turkey Customs Union Agreement.

TTIP negotiations are carried out by Commission and US officials. However, Turkey will be able to inform the Commission on its offensive and defensive interests, as part of the established trade dialogue. Such information will be considered to the extent possible.

An independent study released in March 2013 ([1]) concluded that liberalising trade between the EU and the US would have a positive impact on worldwide trade and income. If the EU and the US were to succeed in lowering respective tariffs and reducing regulatory divergence, some of the reductions achieved in the cost of doing trade will also benefit other partners. Furthermore, a sustainable impact assessment will soon be carried out by independent researchers, with a particular reference to the impact on Turkey.

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/march/tradoc_150737.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008730/13
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: EU Customs Union

1. How does the EU provide representation for or encompass the interests of Customs Union countries during its trade negotiations with other countries?

2. Are there any formal mechanisms in place to accomplish this task?

3. Are there any informal mechanisms in place to accomplish this task?

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

The EU has currently 3 customs unions with third countries, namely with Andorra, San Marino and Turkey.

As regards the Customs Union between the EU and respectively Andorra and San Marino, the Commission seeks to introduce in its FTAs a joint declaration whereby the products originating in San Marino and in Andorra covered by the Custom Union with the EU are declared to be as originating in the EU.

Concerning the EU-Turkey Custom Union, the Commission refers to the answer to Written Question E-8729/13 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008731/13
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: EU work in the Isles of Scilly

A constituent has made me aware of how difficult it is to work amidst EU regulations. As a contractor, he worries that the EU is not spending money wisely, especially when it doles out grants. In his experience, most projects cost twice as much and waste precious money. They also require hundreds of forms to be filled out and force many professionals out of business.

Can the Commission assuage these concerns? In particular, could it answer the following four questions?

1. Who oversees EU grants and ensures that grant money is not wasted?

2. What specific criteria does this overseer use for (a) issuing grants and (b) monitoring grants?

3. Will the Commission do anything in the near future to bolster its oversight of grant monies?

4. Will the Commission do anything to lessen the regulatory burden on contractors?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(5 September 2013)

Under the cohesion policy shared management principle, Member States have primary responsibility for the selection of and awarding funding to projects and assisting projects during implementation, including ensuring that they are fully compliant with national and EU rules and regulations and in line with the principles laid down in the adopted programming documents. Therefore the Commission may not intervene in the selection of projects (except for major projects).In addition Member States have to set up a monitoring committee at the level of each Structural Funds programme.

The managing authority responsible for selecting, awarding and monitoring European Regional Development Fund funding in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly is the Department for Communities and Local Government ([1]). For the European Social Fund the managing authority is the Department for Work and Pensions ([2]).

EU regulations also require both the Member States and the Commission to carry out a number of checks and balances to ensure the legality and regularity of expenditure. The Commission and the European Court of Auditors have put in place a comprehensive audit and control system through which they verify the effectiveness of expenditure.In addition, the Commission has developed an anti-fraud strategy with particular emphasis on fraud prevention ([3]).

The Commission has proposed a number of simplifications in relation to 2014-2020 cohesion policy. These include the harmonisation of rules across European funds, increased flexibility, use of simplified costs, increased proportionality and less paper work through digitalisation of documents and processes. These will lessen the regulatory burden at all levels, including contractors.

([1]) https://www.gov.uk.
([2]) European Social Fund Division, Rockingham House, West Street, Sheffield S1 4ER. www.dwp.gov.uk.
([3]) When irregularities are established, actions will be taken to recover unduly paid funds and to impose the necessary financial corrections. Should there be concrete allegations of fraud in relation to EU funds, they may be investigated by the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF).

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-008732/13
aan de Commissie
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE)
(16 juli 2013)

Betreft: Herzien tijdschema voor FATCA en intergouvernementele overeenkomsten

Onlangs hebben vijf EU-lidstaten in een brief aan de Commissie blijk gegeven van hun belangstelling voor een experimentele overeenkomst inzake de uitwisseling van inlichtingen op het gebied van de belastingen (EU-FATCA), naar het voorbeeld van de intergouvernementele overeenkomsten met de VS ([1]).

Intussen lijkt het wederzijdse karakter waarvan in deze intergouvernementele overeenkomsten inzake informatie-uitwisseling sprake is echter een probleem te vormen, zowel voor de leden van het Amerikaans Congres als voor de Amerikaanse banken ([2]). Zo werd de vraag gesteld of het Ministerie van Financiën wel bevoegd is om rechtstreeks met buitenlandse regeringen te onderhandelen en intergouvernementele overeenkomsten te sluiten. Er werd ook gepleit voor een moratorium op de toepassing van de FATCA en op onderhandelingen over bijkomende intergouvernementele overeenkomsten ([3]).

Op 12 juli 2013 hebben de Amerikaanse belastingautoriteiten aangekondigd dat de toepassing van de FATCA voor zes maanden wordt opgeschort, onder meer omdat de aanhoudende onzekerheid of een intergouvernementele overeenkomst in een bepaald rechtsgebied al dan niet geldig is buitenlandse financiële instellingen en belastingambtenaren belet om de zorgvuldigheidseisen en andere geldende procedures toe te passen. De lijst van rechtsgebieden waarvoor ervan wordt uitgegaan dat een intergouvernementele overeenkomst van kracht is, zal ook gebieden omvatten waar een dergelijke overeenkomst werd ondertekend, maar nog niet in werking is getreden. Indien de overeenkomst niet binnen een redelijke termijn van kracht wordt, kunnen deze gebieden van de lijst worden geschrapt ([4]). Er wordt dan van uitgegaan dat de buitenlandse financiële instellingen in dat rechtsgebied in overtreding zijn, en er zullen sancties worden opgelegd.

1. Is de Commissie op de hoogte van de bovengenoemde problemen in verband met FATCA en de intergouvernementele overeenkomsten?

2. Is er een moratorium op intergouvernementele overeenkomsten en meent de Commissie dat een dergelijk moratorium noodzakelijk is?

3. Wat wordt beschouwd als een „redelijke termijn" voor de inwerkingtreding van een intergouvernementele overeenkomst? Zal die „redelijke termijn" worden vastgesteld in bepalingen van de intergouvernementele overeenkomst, of eenzijdig door de VS-autoriteiten?

4. Wat is de wettelijke status van de intergouvernementele overeenkomst en kan de VS deze eenzijdig en op gelijk welk moment wijzigen of intrekken?

5. Is het wenselijk de intergouvernementele overeenkomsten met betrekking tot de FATCA als model te nemen voor de uitwisseling van inlichtingen op het gebied van de belastingen op EU-niveau, gezien de tekortkomingen die het systeem heeft wat proportionaliteit en gegevensbescherming betreft?

Antwoord van de heer Šemeta namens de Commissie
(20 augustus 2013)

De Commissie is zich bewust van de punten die het geachte Parlementslid zorgen baren. Er dient te worden opgemerkt dat de IGO Model 1A niet alleen een verplichting inhoudt voor de VS om wederkerige inlichtingen te verstrekken en te streven naar volledige wederkerigheid ([5]), maar tevens een herzieningsclausule bevat op basis waarvan de partijen de intergouvernementele overeenkomst (IGO) kunnen wijzigen om de vorderingen op het gebied van gedane toezeggingen te weerspiegelen ([6]). Dergelijke wederkerigheid is een belangrijke factor voor de lidstaten van de EU.

([1]) Brief aan commissaris Šemeta van Frankrijk, Duitsland, Italië, Spanje en het VK, 9 april 2013. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/208068/g5_letter_to_european_commission_090413.pdf
([2]) Emerging Money, 12 juli 2013, „US offshore banking industry strikes back at FATCA IGAs". http://emergingmoney.com/bank/79984.
([3]) Brief van Congreslid Bill Posey aan minister van Financiën Jack Lew, 1 juli 2013. ttp://www.repealfatca.com/downloads/Posey_letter_to_Sec._Lew_July_1,_2013.pdf
([4]) Notice on the Revised Timeline and Other Guidance Regarding the Implementation of FATCA, 12 July 2012. http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-drop/n-13-43.pdf
([5]) Artikel 6, lid 1, van de IGO Model 1A.
([6]) Artikel 10, lid 3, van de IGO Model 1A.

De Commissie is niet op de hoogte van een moratorium op IGO's. Het Amerikaanse ministerie van Financiën heeft onlangs bekendgemaakt dat het met meer dan tachtig landen in gesprek is over IGO's en uitgelegd dat het besluit om het begin van sommige FATCA-vereisten uit te stellen bedoeld is om meer tijd te laten voor de voltooiing van IGO's met buitenlandse rechtsgebieden en om buitenlandse financiële instellingen de nodige tijd te gunnen om aan FATCA te voldoen ([7]).

Aangezien de Commissie geen partij is bij de IGO-onderhandelingen ([8]), is het aan de landen om het begrip „een redelijke termijn" met het Amerikaanse ministerie van Financiën te preciseren.

De wettelijke status van een IGO zal afhangen van het betreffende rechtsstelsel van elk betrokken land. In de Model-IGO's is bepaald dat een IGO met schriftelijke wederzijdse goedkeuring van beide partijen kan worden gewijzigd ([9]) en dat elke partij een IGO kan beëindigen door de andere partij daarvan schriftelijk op de hoogte te stellen ([10]).

De EU maakt al gebruik van automatische uitwisseling van inlichtingen als het gaat om inkomsten uit spaargelden ([11]) en zal hiervan met ingang van 2015 ook gebruikmaken waar het gaat om andere inkomsten- en vermogenscategorieën ([12]). Een ruimere, voor de hele EU geldende norm voor de uitwisseling van inlichtingen in fiscale aangelegenheden zal aan de gegevensbeschermingswetgeving van de EU moeten voldoen en de Commissie zal erop toezien dat dit ook effectief het geval is.

([7]) http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/jl2012.aspx
([8]) Zie het antwoord op vraag E-001271/2013.
([9]) Artikel 8, lid 2 van de IGO Model 1A en Model 1B (laatst gewijzigd op: 12 juli 2013).
([10]) Artikel 10, lid 2 van de IGO Model 1A en Model 1B.
([11]) Op grond van de spaarrenterichtlijn (PB L 157 van 26.6.2003, blz. 38).
([12]) Op grond van de richtlijn betreffende de administratieve samenwerking (PB L 64 van 11.3.2011, blz. 1).

(English version)

Question for written answer P-008732/13
to the Commission
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: Revised timeline for FATCA and IGAs

Recently, in a letter to the Commission, five EU Member States announced their interest in a pilot agreement for the multilateral exchange of information on tax matters (EU FATCA) based on the intergovernmental agreements (IGAs) concluded with the US ([1]).

At the same time, the 'reciprocity' stipulated in exchange of information IGAs seems to become problematic for both members of the US Congress and US banks ([2]). Questions were raised about the Treasury's authority to negotiate directly with foreign governments and to sign IGAs. There were calls for 'a moratorium on FATCA enforcement and negotiations of additional IGAs' ([3]).

On 12 July 2013, the US IRS announced a postponement of the enforcement of FATCA by six months, citing, *inter alia*, 'continued uncertainty about whether an IGA will be in effect in a particular jurisdiction hinders the ability of foreign financial institutions (FFIs) and withholding agents to complete due diligence and other implementation procedures'. The list of jurisdictions treated as having an IGA in effect will also include jurisdictions that have signed but not yet brought into force an IGA and may be removed from this list if they fail to do so within a 'reasonable period of time' ([4]). In that case, the FFIs in that jurisdiction will be considered as non-compliant and will be confronted with sanctions.

1. Is the Commission aware of the above concerns relating to FATCA and the IGAs?

2. Is there a 'moratorium' on IGAs, and does the Commission consider such a moratorium to be necessary?

3. What would constitute 'a reasonable period of time' for bringing IGAs into force? Will the 'reasonable period of time' be decided by provisions in the IGAs, or unilaterally by the US authorities?

4. What is the legal status of IGAs and can the US change or repeal them unilaterally at any given time?

5. Should the IGAs on FATCA constitute a template for EU-wide exchange of information on tax matters, given its flaws regarding proportionality and data protection?

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

The Commission is aware of the concerns to which the Honourable Member refers. It should be noted that the Model 1A IGA not only commits the US to some reciprocal information provision and to achieve full reciprocity ([5]) but also contains a review clause ([6]) which enables the parties to amend the IGA, as necessary to reflect progress on the commitments taken. Such reciprocity is an important element for EU Member States.

The Commission is not aware of a moratorium on IGAs. The US Treasury has recently announced that it is engaged in IGA talks with more than 80 countries and explained that the decision to postpone the start of some FATCA requirements is aimed at allowing more time to complete IGAs with foreign jurisdictions and at providing foreign financial institutions with the time necessary to comply with FATCA ([7]).

As the Commission is not party to the IGA negotiations ([8]), countries would have to clarify the issue of a 'reasonable period of time' with the US Treasury.

([1]) Letter to Commissioner Šemeta from France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the UK, 9 April 2013. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/208068/g5_letter_to_european_commission_090413.pdf
([2]) Emerging Money, 12 July 2013, 'US offshore banking industry strikes back at FATCA IGAs'. http://emergingmoney.com/bank/79984
([3]) Letter from Congressman Bill Posey to Secretary of the Treasury Jack Lew, 1 July 2013. http://www.repealfatca.com/downloads/Posey_letter_to_Sec._Lew_July_1,_2013.pdf
([4]) Notice on the Revised Timeline and Other Guidance Regarding the Implementation of FATCA, 12 July 2012. http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-drop/n-13-43.pdf
([5]) Article 6(1) of Model 1A IGA.
([6]) Article 10(3) of Model 1A IGA.
([7]) http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/jl2012.aspx
([8]) See answer to Question E-001271/2013.

The legal status of an IGA will depend on the legal system of each country concerned. The Model IGAs state that an IGA may be amended by written mutual agreement of both parties ([9]) and that either party may terminate an IGA by giving notice, in writing, to the other party ([10]).

The EU already operates automatic exchange of information on savings income ([11]) and will, from 2015, do so for some other categories of income and capital ([12]). Any broader EU-wide standard of exchange of information in tax matters will have to comply with EU data protection law and the Commission will ensure that this is the case.

([9]) Article 8(2) of Model 1A and Model 1B IGA (last update: 12 July 2013).
([10]) Article 10(2) of Model 1A and Model 1B IGA.
([11]) Under the Savings Directive — OJ L 157, 26.6.2003, p. 38.
([12]) Under the directive on Administrative Cooperation — OJ L 64, 11.3.2011, p.1.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008733/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(16. Juli 2013)

Betrifft: Handelsdefizit Frankreich und die Folgen

Im Mai 2013 ist das Handelsdefizit Frankreichs nahezu sprunghaft um 1,5 Mrd. EUR gestiegen; die Exporte befinden sich auf einem ähnlich schlechten Stand wie 2011.

1. Wie bewertet die Kommission den Anstieg des französischen Handelsdefizits auf über 6 Mrd. EUR hinsichtlich der Wirtschafts- und Haushaltsentwicklung?

2. Hat dieses enorme Defizit einen Einfluss auf die Empfehlung der Kommission im Rahmen des Defizitverfahrens gegen Frankreich gehabt, die von der Kommission in der Antwort E-003908/2013 erwähnt wurde?

3. Wenn ja, inwiefern? Falls nein, warum hat die Kommission angesichts einer Beurteilung der gesamten Wirtschaftslage diesen Faktor nicht berücksichtigt?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(3. September 2013)

Die größte strukturpolitische Herausforderung für Frankreich ist, wie bei der 2013 für Frankreich durchgeführten eingehenden Überprüfung im Rahmen des Verfahrens bei einem makroökonomischen Ungleichgewicht festgestellt wurde, die rückläufige Wettbewerbsfähigkeit. Insbesondere die jüngsten Entwicklungen bei den Arbeitskosten haben dazu beigetragen, dass Kostenwettbewerbsfähigkeit und Rentabilität der französischen Unternehmen sinken, was wiederum zulasten möglicher Investitionen und Verbesserungen der nichtpreislichen Wettbewerbsfähigkeit ging.

Zwar wurden in den letzten Monaten Anstrengungen unternommen, um die Wettbewerbsfähigkeit zu stärken, nach Auffassung der Kommission sind jedoch weitere Maßnahmen erforderlich. Dies wurde in der länderspezifischen Empfehlung, die der Rat im Rahmen des diesjährigen Europäischen Semesters ([1]) auf Empfehlung der Kommission an Frankreich gerichtet hat, umfänglich berücksichtigt. In diesem Zusammenhang hat die Kommission, als sie Frankreich am 21. Juni im Verfahren bei einem übermäßigen Defizit eine Verlängerung um zwei Jahre gewährte, deutlich gemacht, dass diese zusätzliche Zeit in vollem Umfang genutzt werden sollte, um die vom Rat empfohlenen Strukturreformen zu beschleunigen.

([1]) Empfehlung des Rates vom 9. Juli 2013 zum nationalen Reformprogramm Frankreichs 2013 mit einer Stellungnahme des Rates zum Stabilitätsprogramm Frankreichs (ABl. C 217 vom 30.7.2013, S. 27).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008733/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: France's trade deficit and its consequences

In May 2013, France's trade deficit rose almost exponentially by EUR 1.5 billion, and its exports are in a similarly poor state to that of 2011.

1. What is the Commission's assessment of the increase in the French trade deficit to more than EUR 6 billion in relation to economic and budgetary developments?

2. Did this enormous deficit influence the Commission's recommendation with respect to France within the framework of the deficit procedure, as mentioned in the Commission's answer to Question E-003908/2013?

3. If so, to what extent? If not, why did it not take this factor into account when carrying out an assessment of the overall economic situation?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(3 September 2013)

As highlighted in the 2013 in-depth review for France under the Macroeconomic Imbalances Procedure, deteriorating competitiveness is the major challenge France is facing in the field of structural policies. In particular, past developments in the cost of labour have contributed to eroding the cost competitiveness and the profitability of French firms, against their ability to invest and to improve non-price competitiveness.

While efforts have been made in recent months to improve competitiveness, the Commission considers that further measures are needed. This was fully reflected in the country-specific Recommendation the Council addressed to France, on a recommendation from the Commission, under this year's European Semester ([1]). In that respect, when granting a two-year extension to France on 21 June under the Excessive Deficit Procedure, the Commission made it clear that this additional time should be fully exploited to speed- up the structural reforms recommended by the Council.

([1]) Council Recommendation of 9 July 2013 on the National Reform Programme 2013 and delivering a Council opinion on the Stability Programme of France (OJ C 217, 30.7.2013, p. 27).

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008734/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(16. Juli 2013)

Betrifft: Elektro-LKW

Elektroautos werden zunehmend im Alltag integriert. Der Siemens-Konzern entwickelt ein Projekt zu sogenannten „Oberleitungs-LKWs", den eHighway. Feldversuche zeigen, dass diese Verkehrslösung machbar ist.

1. Hat die Kommission Kenntnis von diesem Projekt?

2. Falls ja, werden die Forschungen des Siemens-Konzerns in diesem Bereich von der Europäischen Union gefördert? In welcher Höhe?

3. Wie hoch schätzt die Kommission die CO_2-Ersparnis ein, wenn die Hälfte des aktuellen europäischen LKW-Verkehrs auf eine derartige Alternative umgestellt würde?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(5. September 2013)

1. Der Kommission ist das Projekt bekannt.

2. Der Siemens-Konzern erhält für dieses Projekt keine Fördermittel aus dem EU-Haushalt.

Nach Artikel 7 des Entwurfs der Fazilität „Connecting Europe", des TEN-V-Finanzierungs-instruments, kann innerhalb des Kernnetzes die Einführung solcher neuen Technologien und Innovationen, darunter auch Infrastruktur für Elektrofahrzeuge, gefördert werden.

3. Ausgehend von einer CO_2-Intensität des europäischen Elektrizitätsnetzes von 430 g CO_2/kWh ([1]) würde die CO_2-Ersparnis im Vergleich zu den heutigen Fahrzeugen mit Benzin- oder Dieselmotor etwa 30 % betragen.

([1]) Bericht der Europäischen Sachverständigengruppe für künftige Kraftstoffe für den Verkehr, Januar 2011: http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/urban/cts/doc/2011-01-25-future-transport-fuels-report.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008734/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: Electric-powered HGV traffic

Electric vehicles are increasingly becoming part of everyday life. The Siemens Group is developing a concept for HGV traffic powered by overhead lines, the eHighway. Field trials indicate that this traffic solution is feasible.

1. Is the Commission aware of this project?

2. If so, is the European Union supporting the research in this area by the Siemens Group? How much funding has it been given?

3. How large would the Commission estimate the reduction in CO_2 emissions to be if half the current European HGV traffic switched to this kind of alternative?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(5 September 2013)

1. The Commission is aware of the project.

2. The Siemens Group does not receive funding from the EU budget to support the project.

In the draft Connecting Europe Facility (CEF), the TEN-T funding instrument, Article 7 makes eligible for grants the deployment on the Core Network of these new technologies and innovation, including infrastructure for electric vehicles.

3. On the basis of the CO_2 intensity of the European electricity grid of 430gCO_2/kWh ([1]), CO_2 emissions would be reduced by some 30% compared to current internal combustion engine vehicles using petrol or diesel.

([1]) Report of the European Expert Group on Future Transport Fuels of January 2011: http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/urban/cts/doc/2011-01-25-future-transport-fuels-report.pdf

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008735/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(16. Juli 2013)

Betrifft: Ökostrom — Nutzen und Konsequenzen

In Deutschland zeichnet sich ein einerseits sehr positiver, andererseits beunruhigender Trend ab. Immer mehr Kraftwerksbetreiber machen durch den hohen Anteil an Ökostrom zunehmend Verluste im Vertrieb, da die Erzeugungskosten über den Verkaufspreisen liegen. Grundsätzlich ist dieser Vorgang zu begrüßen, allerdings besteht die Sorge um die Versorgungssicherheit, da bis zu 20 % der Stromkapazität zur Disposition stehen.

1. Wie ist die Situation diesbezüglich in den übrigen Mitgliedstaaten der Union? Zeichnen sich in Gesamteuropa ähnliche Trends ab wie derzeit in Deutschland?

2. Welche Maßnahmen wird die Kommission ergreifen, sollte es zu Versorgungsengpässen kommen?

3. Inwieweit besteht angesichts der rasanten Entwicklungen im Bereich Ökostrom Aktualisierungsbedarf bei den Strategien des Grünbuchs (Abschlussbericht 2002) und der 2006 verabschiedeten Richtlinie 2006/32/EG zur Endenergieeffizienz und Energiedienstleistungen?

Antwort von Herrn Oettinger im Namen der Kommission
(5. September 2013)

1. Nach den EU-Vorschriften für den Energiebinnenmarkt ([1]) müssen die Mitgliedstaaten das prognostizierte Verhältnis zwischen Angebot und Nachfrage für den nächsten Fünfjahreszeitraum und die voraussichtliche Energieversorgungssicherheit in den kommenden fünf bis fünfzehn Jahren bewerten. ENTSO-E, das Europäische Netz der Übertragungsnetzbetreiber (Strom), erstellt auf der Grundlage der nationalen Vorlagen EU-weite Bewertungen zur Angemessenheit der Stromerzeugung. Laut dem Bericht 2013-2030 wird erwartet, dass die Angemessenheit der Stromerzeugung im gesamten Prognosezeitraum bis 2020 aufrechterhalten bleibt. Beim Vergleich dieser Ergebnisse mit denen des vorausgehenden Berichts ist keine Verschlechterung festzustellen ([2]).

2. Am 15. November 2012 setzte die Kommission die Koordinierungsgruppe „Strom" ein ([3]), um eine stärkere und intensivere Zusammenarbeit und Koordinierung zwischen den Mitgliedstaaten und der Kommission im Bereich des grenzübergreifenden Stromhandels und in Fragen der Versorgungssicherheit, einschließlich der Reaktionen bei potenziellen Versorgungskrisen, zu gewährleisten. Die Kommission überwacht daher (mit den Mitgliedstaaten) die Energieversorgungssicherheit in der EU sehr genau.

3. Am 10. November 2010 verabschiedete die Europäische Kommission ihre Mitteilung „Energie 2020 — Eine Strategie für wettbewerbsfähige, nachhaltige und sichere Energie", in der Energieprioritäten für dieses Jahrzehnt festgelegt wurden.

Am 27. März 2013 veröffentlichte die Europäische Kommission ein Grünbuch mit dem Titel „Ein Rahmen für die Klima- und Energiepolitik bis 2030" und initiierte eine öffentliche Konsultation zu möglichen Klima- und Energiezielen für 2030 und anderen wichtigen Aspekten der EU-Energiepolitik. Die Ergebnisse dieser Konsultation werden in die laufenden Vorarbeiten der Kommission zu konkreteren Vorschlägen für den Rahmen bis 2030 einfließen, die sie bis Ende 2013 vorzulegen gedenkt.

([1]) Artikel 4 der Richtlinie 2009/72/EG vom 13. Juli 2009 über gemeinsame Vorschriften für den Elektrizitätsbinnenmarkt und Artikel 7 der Richtlinie 2005/89/EG vom 18. Januar 2006 über Maßnahmen zur Gewährleistung der Sicherheit der Elektrizitätsversorgung und von Infrastrukturinvestitionen.
([2]) https://www.entsoe.eu/about-entso-e/system-development/system-adequacy-and-market-modeling/soaf-2013-2030/
([3]) Beschluss C(2012)8141 der Kommission.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008735/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: Green electricity — benefits and consequences

A positive — but worrying — trend is emerging in Germany. More and more power plant operators are incurring increasing operating losses due to the high proportion of green electricity, because production costs exceed the price charged. This approach is basically welcome, but security of supply is causing concern, as we are talking about up to 20% of generation capacity.

1. What is the situation in this respect in the other EU Member States? Are trends similar to the current trend in Germany emerging throughout Europe?

2. What measures will the Commission take should supply bottlenecks occur?

3. In light of the rapid developments in the green electricity sector, do the strategies set out in the Green Paper (Final Report 2002) and Directive 2006/32/EC on energy end-use efficiency and energy services adopted in 2006 need to be updated?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(5 September 2013)

1. Under the EU internal energy market rules ([1]), Member States are required to assess the projected balance of supply and demand for the next five year period and the prospects for security of electricity supply for the following five to fifteen year period. ENTSO-E, the Network of European Electricity Transmission System Operators, produces EU wide generation adequacy assessments built on national level assessments. According to the 2013-2030 report 'generation adequacy is expected to be maintained during the entire forecast period until 2020. When these results are compared to those of the previous [report], no deterioration is observed' ([2]).

2. On 15 November 2012 the Commission established the Electricity Coordination Group ([3]) to strengthen and intensify the cooperation and coordination between Member States and the Commission in the field of cross-border trade of electricity and security of supply issues, including reacting to potential supply crises. Therefore, the Commission (with the Member States) closely monitors the security of supply in the EU.

3. On 10 November 2010, the European Commission adopted the communication 'Energy 2020 — A strategy for competitive, sustainable and secure energy' defining energy priorities for this decade.

On 27 March 2013, the European Commission adopted a Green Paper on 'A 2030 framework for climate and energy policies' launching a public consultation on potential climate and energy targets for 2030, and other important aspects of EU energy policy. This will feed into the Commission's ongoing preparations for more concrete proposals for the 2030 framework which it intends to table by the end of 2013.

([1]) Article 4 of Directive 2009/72/EC of 13 July 2009 concerning common rules for the internal market in electricity and Article 7 of Directive 2005/89/EC of 18 January 2006 concerning measures to safeguard security of electricity supply and infrastructure investment.
([2]) https://www.entsoe.eu/about-entso-e/system-development/system-adequacy-and-market-modeling/soaf-2013-2030/.
([3]) Commission Decision C(2012) 8141.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008736/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(16. Juli 2013)

Betrifft: Ratingagenturen und europäische Politik

In ihrer Antwort auf die schriftlichen Anfragen E-001195/2012 und E-001558/2012 begründet die Kommission ihre ablehnende Haltung in der Frage der Errichtung einer europäischen Ratingagentur mit dem hohen Kostenaufwand. Einerseits ist diese Argumentation durchaus nachvollziehbar, andererseits steht die Glaubwürdigkeit von europäischen Entscheidungen auf dem Spiel, wenn nun die Ratingagentur Fitch den Rettungsfonds EFSF herunterstuft.

1. Wie bewertet die Kommission den Imageschaden, den das ohnehin in der Bevölkerung umstrittene Projekt des EFSF durch diesen Vorgang erleidet?

2. Für wie aussagekräftig hält die Kommission die Einschätzung amerikanischer Ratingagenturen für europäische finanzpolitische Instrumente?

3. Kann die Kommission im Zusammenhang mit der Aussage: „Die Kommission [begrüßt] jegliche private Initiative zur Einrichtung einer europäischen Ratingagentur" folgende Fragen beantworten:

— Welchen Stellenwert besitzen Transparenz und Objektivität bei der Arbeit von Ratingagenturen?

— Könnte dies nach Ansicht der Kommission durch eine „private Ratingagentur" gewährleistet werden?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(13. September 2013)

1. Die Kommission ist nicht der Auffassung, dass die Herabstufung des EFSF durch Fitch das Image des Fonds beschädigt hat, da der Grund dafür in der Herabstufung Frankreichs durch dieselbe Ratingagentur lag. Die Ratings des EFSF stützen sich auf die unwiderruflichen und unbedingten Garantien und Übergarantien der Mitgliedstaaten des Euro-Währungsgebiets. Somit führt jede Herabstufung Frankreichs fast automatisch auch zu einer Herabstufung des EFSF.

2. Die Kommission hat keinen Einfluss auf die Entscheidung des EFSF, auf die Ratings von Moody's, Standard & Poors und Fitch zu setzen. Der Grund für diese Entscheidung ist im Wesentlichen das starke Interesse der Anleger an Anleihen mit Rating.

3. Die Kommission ist der Auffassung, dass Transparenz für gut funktionierende Märkte und gegenseitiges Vertrauen der Marktteilnehmer unverzichtbar ist. Die Stärkung der Transparenz ist eines der übergeordneten Ziele der EU-Finanzreform.

Im Hinblick auf die Transparenz und Objektivität bei der Arbeit von Ratingagenturen lässt sich anführen, dass der Rechtsrahmen vor kurzem erheblich gestärkt worden ist ([1]). Im Einzelnen werden mit der Verordnung zusätzliche Transparenzverpflichtungen auferlegt, z. B. in Bezug auf Länderratings ([2]), Ratingmethoden ([3]), strukturierte Finanzinstrumente ([4]), eine europäische Ratingplattform ([5]) sowie die von den Ratingagenturen in Rechnung gestellten Gebühren ([6]). Diese neuen Maßnahmen zur Erhöhung der Transparenz werden wiederum zu einer stärkeren Objektivität der Ratings führen.

([1]) Verordnung (EU) Nr. 462/2013 (ABl. L 146 vom 31.5.2013, S. 1) und Richtlinie 2013/14/EU (ABl. L 145 vom 31.5.2013, S. 1).
([2]) Aus Gründen der Transparenz sollten Ratingagenturen bei der Veröffentlichung ihrer Länderratings in den dazugehörigen Pressemitteilungen oder Berichten die wesentlichen Faktoren erläutern, die den Ratings zugrunde liegen.
([3]) Die Ratingagenturen sind dazu verpflichtet, die Akteure zu neuen Ratingmethoden oder vorgeschlagenen Änderungen und zu deren Gründen zu konsultieren, Fehler in ihren Ratingmethoden oder bei deren Anwendung zu berichtigen und Erläuterungen zu den Methoden und den den Ratings zugrunde liegenden Annahmen vorzulegen.
([4]) Emittenten strukturierter Finanzinstrumente sind zu mehr Transparenz im Hinblick auf die diesen Instrumenten zugrunde liegenden Vermögenswerte verpflichtet: ein freier und zentralisierter Zugang zu Informationen für die Anleger.
([5]) Ein freier und zentralisierter Zugang zu allen Ratings für die Anleger.
([6]) Die Ratingagenturen müssen sicherstellen, dass ihre Gebühren diskriminierungsfrei sind, und die Europäische Wertpapier- und Marktaufsichtsbehörde (ESMA) über die einzelnen Gebühren informieren. Die ESMA muss die aggregierten Gebühren jährlich öffentlich bekannt machen.

Im Hinblick auf die Errichtung einer europäischen Ratingagentur wird die Kommission die Lage auf dem Ratingmarkt prüfen und dem Europäischen Parlament und dem Rat bis zum 31. Dezember 2016 darüber Bericht erstatten, ob die Unterstützung der Einrichtung einer europäischen Ratingagentur für die Bewertung der Bonität der Staatsanleihen der Mitgliedstaaten und/oder einer europäischen Ratingstiftung für alle sonstigen Ratings zweckmäßig und möglich ist.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008736/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: Rating agencies and European policy

In its reply to written questions E-001195/2012 and E-001558/2012, the Commission substantiated its reticence to the establishment of a European rating agency with the high cost involved. On the one hand, this argument is perfectly comprehensible; on the other hand, the credibility of European decisions is at stake, now that a rating agency (Fitch) has downgraded the EFSF rescue fund.

1. How does the Commission rate the damage to the EFSF's image in the eyes of the public as a result of this procedure, given that the EFSF itself has given rise to public controversy?

2. How pertinent does the Commission believe that US rating agencies are to European financial policy instruments?

3. Can the Commission say, further to its statement that the Commission would welcome any private initiative to establish a European rating agency:

— What priority is given to transparency and objectivity in the work of rating agencies?

— In its opinion, could this be guaranteed by a 'private rating agency'?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(13 September 2013)

1. The Commission does not believe that the downgrading of the EFSF by Fitch has damaged its image, because it was prompted by Fitch's own downgrading of France. EFSF's ratings rely on the irrevocable and unconditional guarantees and over-guarantees provided by euro area Member States and any downgrading of France leads nearly mechanically to the downgrading of the EFSF.

2. The Commission has no competence on the EFSF's decision to rely on ratings from Moody's, Standard & Poors and Fitch Ratings. Such decisions are motivated essentially by the investors' appetite for rated bonds.

3. The Commission considers that transparency is indispensable for well-functioning markets and trust and mutual confidence between market participants. Enhancing transparency is one of the overarching objectives of the EU's financial reform.

As regards to the transparency and objectivity in the work of rating agencies, the regulatory framework was recently significantly strengthened ([1]). Specifically, the regulation introduced additional transparency obligations, e.g., sovereign debt credit ratings ([2]), rating methodologies ([3]), structured finance instruments ([4]), European Rating Platform ([5]), fees charged by CRAs ([6]). These new transparency measures will in turn enhance the objectivity of ratings.

With regard to the establishment of European rating agency, the Commission will analyse the situation in the rating market and report by 31 December 2016 to the European Parliament and to the Council on the appropriateness and feasibility of supporting a European credit rating agency dedicated to assessing the creditworthiness of Member States' sovereign debt and/or a European Credit Rating Foundation for all other ratings.

([1]) Regulation 462/2013 (OJ L 146, 31.5.2013, p. 1-33) and Directive 2013/14/EC (OJ L 145, 31.5.2013, p. 1-3).
([2]) For the purpose of transparency, when publishing their sovereign ratings, credit rating agencies should explain in their press releases or reports the key elements underlying those credit ratings.
([3]) CRAs are required to consult the stakeholders on the new methodologies or the proposed changes and on their justification; correct errors in its methodologies or in their application; provide guidance on methodologies and underlying assumptions behind ratings.
([4]) Issuers of structured finance instruments are required to be more transparent on the underlying assets of these instruments: one stop access to information, freely available to investors.
([5]) One stop access to all credit ratings, freely available to investors.
([6]) CRAs are required to ensure that fees are not discriminatory and to disclose the individual fees to ESMA. ESMA is required to disclose publicly the aggregated fees annually.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008737/13
à la Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(16 juillet 2013)

Objet: Dauphins communs en Méditerranée

Il y a quelques décennies, les dauphins communs abondaient sur les côtes de la mer Méditerranée. Cependant, aujourd'hui, les populations de dauphins communs sont en déclin rapide et apparaissent profondément menacées. En cause, la pollution, qui touche de manière inquiétante la Méditerranée: plastiques, déchets toxiques. La mer Méditerranée est bel et bien en danger, selon le rapport «La pollution de la Méditerranée: état et perspectives à l'horizon 2030» du sénateur français Roland Courteau.

D'autre part, la pêche au filet dérivant continue d'être pratiquée en Méditerranée, en dépit de son interdiction formelle. En effet, un interdit mondial a été voté en 1992 par les Nations unies et en 2002 par l'Union européenne. Ces filets sont particulièrement dévastateurs, car ils ramènent un grand nombre de prises accidentelles, et menacent la survie d'espèces fragiles, comme le dauphin commun.

1. La Commission est-elle au courant de ces informations? La Commission entend-elle vérifier ces informations par le biais d'une étude approfondie?

2. La Commission entend-elle renforcer son engagement quant à la protection des dauphins communs en Méditerranée?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(30 août 2013)

La Commission renvoie l'Honorable Parlementaire aux réponses qu'elle a données aux questions écrites similaires E-002419/2013 et E-03794/2013 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008737/13
to the Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: Common dolphins in the Mediterranean

A few decades ago there was an abundance of common dolphins along the Mediterranean coast. Today, however, the common dolphin population is declining rapidly, and appears to be under serious threat. The reason for this is pollution in the form of plastics and toxic waste, which is having a worrying impact in the Mediterranean. The Mediterranean Sea is well and truly in danger, according to the report *La pollution de la Méditerranée: état et perspectives à l'horizon 2030* ['Pollution of the Mediterranean: current situation and outlook for 2030'] by the French senator Roland Courteau.

Secondly, drift nets are still being used to catch fish in the Mediterranean, even though they have officially been banned. Indeed, the United Nations voted for an international ban in 1992, as did the European Union in 2002. These nets are particularly devastating because they are responsible for a large number of by-catches and threaten the survival of fragile species such as the common dolphin.

1. Is the Commission aware of this information? Does it intend to verify this information through a detailed study?

2. Does it plan to step up its efforts to protect common dolphins in the Mediterranean?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to previous identical questions E-002419/2013 and E-03794/2013 ([1])

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

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008738/13
à la Commission
Rachida Dati (PPE)
(16 juillet 2013)

Objet: Soutenir le développement des énergies vertes au sud de la Méditerranée, un élément crucial pour l'avenir énergétique européen

L'énergie a été placée très haut dans l'agenda de la présidence lituanienne du Conseil de l'Union européenne. Devant les eurodéputés cette semaine, elle a notamment annoncé vouloir développer la dimension extérieure de notre politique énergétique: je salue cette ambition que j'ai maintes fois défendue. En effet, alors que le paysage énergétique mondial est en pleine mutation, l'Union européenne doit rapidement réagir pour se donner les moyens de faire entendre sa voix, afin de tirer parti au maximum de ces évolutions.

Pourtant, certains de nos partenaires les plus proches, au sud de la Méditerranée, s'inquiètent du manque de soutien, des hésitations dont nous faisons preuve pour les accompagner dans le développement des énergies renouvelables. Les énergies solaire et éolienne y sont pourtant en pleine expansion, comme par exemple au parc solaire de Ouarzazate ou avec la centrale d'Hassi R'Mel, ou encore au parc éolien d'Akhfennir, et bientôt dans la région de Tarfaya.

Favoriser le développement des énergies renouvelables sur la rive Sud de la Méditerranée, c'est une évidence pour l'Europe: tout d'abord, cela nous permettrait de maîtriser et de réduire nos coûts d'énergie, ce qui est un tremplin pour notre croissance, notre compétitivité et nos emplois. Ensuite, cela pourrait jouer un rôle clef dans la prospérité et la cohésion de la région, avec des bénéfices pour l'ensemble de leurs populations. Une énergie verte et abordable en provenance de partenaires de confiance, c'est ce que nous recherchons. Alors même que nous venons d'adopter une mesure que les Européens ne peuvent accepter, le backloading, qui pourrait augmenter les prix de l'énergie, il faut rapidement envoyer un message positif pour que la facture d'énergie puisse cesser de grimper.

La réunion ministérielle de l'Union pour la Méditerranée sur l'énergie de décembre 2013 devrait engager une discussion politique sur la possibilité de mettre en place une communauté européenne de l'énergie. Sans attendre décembre, nous voulons plus de transparence sur ses ambitions: quelles sont les idées et lignes directrices qui vont fonder cette réflexion?

Réponse donnée par M. Oettinger au nom de la Commission
(5 septembre 2013)

L'Union européenne soutient le développement des sources d'énergie renouvelables dans les pays du sud de la Méditerranée. La directive sur les énergies renouvelables [1] définit un cadre général d'action pour la collaboration entre les États membres et les pays tiers, notamment en permettant aux États membres de remplir en partie dans les pays tiers leurs objectifs contraignants concernant la part des sources d'énergie renouvelables, sous certaines conditions.

En ce qui concerne le soutien financier, l'Union européenne octroie des subventions aux projets d'investissement dans les secteurs de l'énergie solaire et éolienne par l'intermédiaire de la Facilité d'investissement pour le voisinage (FIV). L'aide de l'Union européenne prend également la forme d'un soutien à la conception de politiques, à la formation, au transfert de connaissances et aux réformes réglementaires par l'intermédiaire de projets régionaux, d'une assistance technique et de jumelages. L'octroi de fonds de l'Union pour le développement des sources d'énergie renouvelables dans la région méditerranéenne dépend des ressources financières allouées à cette fin par le budget de l'Union européenne ainsi que du nombre et de la qualité des projets proposés en vue d'un financement de l'Union.

La prochaine réunion ministérielle de l'Union pour la Méditerranée, prévue pour le 11 décembre 2013, sera l'occasion de discuter de l'évolution possible du partenariat euro-méditerranéen de l'énergie. La Commission est en faveur de l'intégration progressive des systèmes et des politiques énergétiques dans la région méditerranéenne en vue de l'établissement d'un cadre multilatéral ambitieux. Toutefois, les systèmes énergétiques au sein de la région méditerranéenne sont très variés et leur intégration constitue un processus à long terme qui exige une approche graduelle, globale et transparente.

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[1] Directive 2009/28/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 23 avril 2009 relative à la promotion de l'utilisation de l'énergie produite à partir de sources renouvelables et modifiant puis abrogeant les directives 2001/77/CE et 2003/30/CE, JO L 140 du 5.6.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008738/13
to the Commission
Rachida Dati (PPE)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: Supporting the development of renewable energy sources in the Southern Mediterranean, a key factor in securing Europe's future energy supply

Energy has been placed very high on the agenda of the Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union. Addressing the Members of the European Parliament this week, the Presidency announced in particular its intention to develop the external dimension of our energy policy: I applaud that ambition, which I have supported on numerous occasions. In a changing global energy landscape, the European Union must react quickly so that it can make its voice heard and take full advantage of the changes taking place.

However, some of our closest partners, in the Southern Mediterranean, are concerned about our lack of support and about our reluctance to help them develop renewable energy sources. Even so, the solar and wind energy sector there is booming; there is the Ouarzazate solar power plant, the Hassi R'Mel plant, the Akhfennir wind farm and, soon, the wind farm in the region of Tarfaya, to name but a few examples.

Clearly, Europe should support the development of renewable energy sources in the Southern Mediterranean. Firstly, it would enable us to contain and reduce our energy costs, which would act as a springboard for growth, competitiveness and employment in Europe. Secondly, it could play a key role in terms of increasing prosperity and cohesion in the region, benefiting all of the people in it. We want renewable and affordable energy from partners that we trust. Now that we have just approved a measure that Europeans cannot accept, namely backloading, which could cause energy prices to increase, we must send a positive message quickly so that energy bills stop rising.

The Union for the Mediterranean's ministerial meeting on energy, scheduled for December 2013, is due to start a political discussion on the possible creation of a European energy community. Before December, we want its ambitions to be made more transparent: what ideas and guidelines will underpin this discussion?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(5 September 2013)

The EU is supportive of the development of renewable energy in southern Mediterranean countries. The Renewable Energy Directive ([1]) provides a general policy framework for cooperation between Member States and third countries, notably by allowing Member States to fulfill a part of their binding targets for the share of renewable energy in third countries, subject to certain conditions.

In terms of financial support, the EU provides grants to investment projects in the solar and wind energy sector through the Neighborhood Investment Facility (NIF). EU aid comes also in the form of support to policy design, training, knowledge transfer and regulatory reforms through regional projects, technical assistance and twinnings. The allocation of EU funds to the renewable energy development in the Mediterranean depends on the financial resources made available for this purpose by the EU budget as well as on the number and the quality of the projects proposed for EU funding.

The upcoming Union for the Mediterranean Ministerial Meeting, scheduled for 11 December 2013, will provide the opportunity to discuss the possible future evolution of the Mediterranean energy partnership. The Commission is in favor of the progressive integration of the energy systems and policies across the Mediterranean with a view to establishing an ambitious multilateral framework. However, energy systems around the Mediterranean are very diverse and their integration is a long term process that requires a gradual, inclusive and transparent approach.

([1]) Directive 2009/28/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources and amending and subsequently repealing Directives 2001/77/EC and 2003/30/EC, OJ L 140, 5.6.2009.

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