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Parlamentul European

ÎNTREBĂRI SCRISE CU SOLICITARE DE RĂSPUNS

2014/C 237/01 Întrebări scrise adresate de deputații în Parlamentul European și răspunsurile oferite de instituțiile Uniunii Europene 1

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Notă în atenția cititorilor

Această publicație conține întrebări scrise adresate de deputații în Parlamentul European și răspunsurile oferite de instituțiile Uniunii Europene.

Pentru fiecare întrebare și răspuns, versiunea în limba originală figurează înainte oricărei posibile traduceri.

Este posibil ca, în unele cazuri, răspunsul să fie dat în altă limbă decât cea în care a fost redactată întrebarea. Acest lucru depinde de limba de lucru a comisiei de la care a fost solicitat răspunsul.

Aceste întrebări și răspunsuri sunt publicate în conformitate cu Articolele 117 și 118 din Regulamentul de procedură al Parlamentului European.

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

ABREVIERILE DENUMIRILOR GRUPURILOR POLITICE

PPE	Grupul Partidului Popular European (Creştin Democrat)
S&D	Grupul Alianței Progresiste a Socialiştilor şi Democraților din Parlamentul European
ALDE	Grupul Alianței Liberalilor şi Democraților pentru Europa
Verts/ALE	Grupul Verzilor/Alianța Liberă Europeană
ECR	Grupul Conservatorilor şi Reformiştilor Europeni
GUE/NGL	Grupul Confederal al Stângii Unite Europene/Stânga Verde Nordică
EFD	Grupul Europa Libertății şi Democrației
NI	Deputați neafiliați

IV

(Informări)

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PARLAMENTUL EUROPEAN

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(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001658/13
alla Commissione
Andrea Cozzolino (S&D)
(18 febbraio 2013)

Oggetto: Esercizio della professione di psicanalista in Italia: violazione della libera prestazione dei servizi

— Premesso che in maniera ormai costante agli psicanalisti, soggetti cioè che esercitano l'attività di psicanalisi, viene applicata la Legge 18 febbraio 1989 n. 56 «Ordinamento della professione di psicologo»;

— considerato che la suddetta legge è però relativa all'esercizio dell'attività di psicoterapeuta, intesa come attività sanitaria e pertanto diversa dalla psicanalisi, che consiste nella «cura di se stessi» e prescinde quindi dal paradigma medico-sanitario articolato sulla triade «diagnosi-prognosi-terapia»;

— considerate le pronunce dalla Corte di Cassazione penale italiana (Sez. III del 24 aprile 2008 e Sez. VI dell'11 aprile 2012) che, di fatto, hanno cancellato la distinzione esistente tra l'esercizio della psicanalisi e l'esercizio della psicoterapia;

— rilevato che simile applicazione fa sì che gli psicanalisti, artatamente equiparati agli psicoterapeuti, siano soggetti all'articolo 348 del codice penale italiano, che punisce con una pena fino a sei mesi di reclusione l'«abusivo esercizio di una professione»;

— considerati l'articolo 49 del TFUE in materia di libertà di stabilimento e l'articolo 56 del TFUE relativo alla libera prestazione dei servizi;

— vista la direttiva «servizi» 2006/123/CE (articolo 1, paragrafo 5, e articolo 9, paragrafo 1), e la direttiva «professioni» 2005/36/CE (articoli 5 e 6);

può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se è al corrente del fatto che gli psicanalisti dei diversi Stati membri che svolgono l'attività di psicanalisi nei loro Stati di appartenenza e intendono esercitare tale attività in Italia in libera prestazione dei servizi, anche saltuaria o occasionale, vengono sottoposti a procedimento penale ai sensi dell'articolo 348 del codice penale italiano se non hanno frequentato un corso quadriennale nella diversa specializzazione di natura sanitaria costituita dalla psicoterapia, specializzazione che deve poi esser seguita dall'inserimento negli appositi albi italiani predisposti dall'ordine dei medici o degli psicologi;

2. se intende prendere qualche provvedimento per impedire che, attraverso l'applicazione dell'articolo 348 del codice penale italiano che sanziona l'esercizio abusivo di una professione agli psicanalisti che non sono iscritti alle citate sezioni degli albi degli psicologi e/o dei medici, sia inibito in modo assoluto in Italia l'esercizio dell'attività di psicanalista?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(15 aprile 2013)

L'obiettivo della direttiva 2005/36/CE relativa al riconoscimento delle qualifiche professionali ([1]) è facilitare la libera circolazione dei professionisti nel mercato unico. La direttiva in sé non disciplina le professioni, compito lasciato alla discrezionalità degli Stati membri.

Ove uno Stato membro subordini l'accesso a una professione regolamentata o il suo esercizio nel suo territorio al possesso di determinate qualifiche professionali, la direttiva prevede norme secondo le quali tale Stato membro riconosce i titoli conseguiti in uno o più altri Stati membri.

La Commissione è a conoscenza del fatto che gli psicoanalisti si trovino ad affrontare problemi nel fornire servizi temporanei e occasionali in Italia o nello stabilirsi in questo paese e che potrebbero essere soggetti ad azioni penali a norma dell'articolo 348 del codice penale italiano per esercizio abusivo di una professione. I servizi della Commissione stanno attualmente valutando le denunce pertinenti alla luce della normativa applicabile dell'Unione europea e provvederanno ad informare a tempo debito l'onorevole parlamentare in merito all'esito di tale valutazione.

([1]) Direttiva 2005/36/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 7 settembre 2005, relativa al riconoscimento delle qualifiche professionali, GU L 255 del 30.9.2005, pag. 22.

Risposta complementare di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione

(21 giugno 2013)

La Commissione ha portato a termine la valutazione iniziale della denuncia sulla situazione problematica che stanno affrontando gli psicoanalisti stranieri nel fornire servizi temporanei e occasionali in Italia o nello stabilirsi in questo paese, e sulla possibilità che essi siano soggetti ad azioni penali a norma dell'articolo 348 del codice penale italiano per esercizio abusivo di una professione.

In questa fase, la Commissione contatterà le autorità italiane al fine di chiarire la situazione giuridica relativa agli psicoanalisti in Italia. In particolare, la Commissione intende verificare se la loro è considerata una professione regolamentata ai sensi della direttiva 2005/36/CE e quali sono le disposizioni nazionali legislative, amministrative o regolamentari applicabili in caso di stabilimento e libera prestazione di servizi da parte di psicoanalisti.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001658/13
to the Commission
Andrea Cozzolino (S&D)
(18 February 2013)

Subject: Practising as a psychoanalyst in Italy: violation of the freedom to provide services

Psychoanalysts who pursue their profession are now subject to Law No 56 of 18 February 1989 governing the profession of psychologist.

This law, however, concerns the pursuit of the activity of psychotherapist, interpreted as being a health-related activity and therefore different from psychoanalysis, which is 'looking after oneself' and is thus independent from the health paradigm 'diagnosis-prognosis-therapy'.

Judgments of the Italian Criminal Court of Cassation (Section III of 24 April 2008 and Section VI of 11 April 2012) have actually eliminated the existing distinction between the practice of psychoanalysis and that of psychotherapy.

This means that psychoanalysts are being artfully equated to psychotherapists and are thus subject to Article 348 of the Italian criminal code, which punishes the 'unlawful pursuit of a profession' with a sentence of up to six months' imprisonment.

In view of Article 49 TFEU on freedom of establishment and Article 56 TFEU on freedom to provide services, and given also the Services Directive 2006/123/EC (Article 1(5) and Article 9(1), and the 'Professions Directive' 2005/36/EC (Articles 5 and 6), can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Is it aware that psychoanalysts from various Member States who pursue the activity of psychoanalysis in their own countries and wish to pursue that same activity in Italy, under the freedom to provide services — even on a part-time or casual basis — are subject to criminal prosecution under Article 348 of the Italian criminal code unless they have attended a four-year course in the different health-related specialisation of psychotherapy — which then has to be followed by inclusion on the relevant Italian registers drawn up by the medical or psychological associations?

2. Will it take action to prevent this *de facto* ban on pursuing the activity of psychoanalyst in Italy through the application of Article 348 of the Italian criminal code, which punishes, for the unlawful practice of a profession, psychoanalysts who are not on the said registers of psychologists and/or doctors?

Preliminary answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(15 April 2013)

The objective of Directive 2005/36/EC on the recognition of professional qualifications ([1]) is to facilitate the free movement of professionals in the Single Market. The directive itself does not regulate professions; this is left to the Member States' discretion.

Where a Member State makes access to a profession in its territory contingent upon the possession of specific professional qualifications, the directive provides rules according to which that Member State recognises the qualifications awarded in one or more other Member States.

The Commission is aware of the claim that foreign psychoanalysts are facing problems in providing temporary and occasional services or establishing themselves in Italy and that they might be subject to criminal prosecution under Article 348 of the Italian criminal code for illegal exercise of a profession. The Commission services are currently assessing relevant complaints in the light of the applicable European Union law and will inform the Honourable Member of the result of this assessment in due course.

Supplementary answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(21 June 2013)

The Commission has finalised its initial assessment of the complaint claiming that foreign psychoanalysts are facing problems in providing temporary and occasional services or establishing themselves in Italy and that they might be subjects of criminal prosecution under Article 348 of the Italian criminal code for illegal exercise of a profession.

([1]) Directive 2005/36/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 September 2005 on the recognition of professional qualifications, OJ L 255, 30.9.2005, p. 22.

At this stage, the Commission will contact the Italian authorities to clarify the legal situation as regards psychoanalysts in Italy. In particular, the Commission will enquire whether the profession of psychoanalyst is considered a regulated profession under Directive 2005/36/EC and which are the national legislative, administrative or regulatory provisions applicable in case of establishment and free provision of services by psychoanalysts.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013060/13
to the Commission
Charles Tannock (ECR)
(15 November 2013)

Subject: Safety of endocrine-disrupting chemicals (EDCs) found in toiletries, when used in combination

Endocrine disruption can have wide-ranging effects, ranging from infertility to genital malformations in male foetuses. EU safety limits exist for individual chemicals such as the preservatives butylparaben and propylparaben, commonly found in toiletries, and ethylhexyl methoxycinnamate, a UV filter use in sun protection products. The World Health Organisation (WHO) has, however, recently expressed concern about the potential 'cocktail effects' of using these chemicals in combination.

What is the Commission's current thinking in this area and what research has it commissioned to assess the dangers?

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

Regarding endocrine disruptors, the Cosmetics Regulation ([1]) establishes that 'when Community or internationally agreed criteria for identifying substances with endocrine-disrupting properties are available, or at the latest on 11 January 2015, the Commission shall review this regulation with regard to substances with endocrine-disrupting properties.' ([2]) An impact assessment on horizontal criteria for the identification of those substances is currently on-going and results are expected in 2014.

Regarding the combination effects of chemical mixtures, the Commission published a communication ([3]) in 2012, which drew from a joint opinion of three scientific committees ([4]), and a major study financed by the Commission ([5]). The implementation of the communication foresees the following actions:

— Setting up an ad hoc Working Group across relevant Commission services, Agencies and Authorities to coordinate work on the integrated assessment of priority mixtures;

— Developing technical guidelines to promote a consistent approach for mixture assessment across different EU legislations;

— Improving the understanding of the chemical mixtures to which humans or the environment are exposed;

— Examining opportunities for addressing mixture-specific knowledge gaps;

— Promoting a consistent and science-based approach to the risk assessment of chemical mixtures at a global level.

The Seventh Framework Programme for Research addressed projects on the assessment of toxicity of chemicals to humans. Horizon 2020 ([6]), the new framework programme for research and innovation, will continue to support fundamental and applied research. The first work programme already offers several opportunities for this area. ([7])

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1223/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on cosmetic products, OJ 342, 22.12.2009, p. 59.
([2]) Article 15, paragraph 4, of Regulation (EC) No 1223/2009.
([3]) COM(2012) 252 final, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52012DC0252:EN:NOT
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/environmental_risks/docs/scher_o_155.pdf The three Committees are the Scientific Committee on Health and Environmental Risks (SCHER), the Scientific Committee on Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks (SCENIHR) and the Scientific Committee on Consumer Safety (SCCS).
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/chemicals/effects/pdf/report_mixture_toxicity.pdf
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/wp/2014_2015/main/h2020-wp1415-health_en.pdf, see in particular the topics PHC 1 — 2014 and PHC 33 — 2015.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013061/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(18 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Crescente numero di condanne a morte in Iraq

Un'importante organizzazione non governativa ha denunciato il numero crescente di condanne a morte in Iraq. Solo nel 2013 si contano 132 condanne, ma il numero effettivo potrebbe essere persino più alto, in quanto le autorità irachene non forniscono dati completi. Inoltre molti prigionieri attualmente nei bracci della morte rischiano di essere condannati entro la fine dell'anno. Si tratta del più alto numero di esecuzioni dal 2004, l'anno in cui l'Iraq reintrodusse la pena capitale. La problematica principale è rappresentata dal fatto che la pena di morte viene utilizzata come strumento per risolvere i problemi di sicurezza del paese: lo Stato giustifica processi sommari e l'uso della tortura come deterrenti agli attacchi terroristici che hanno gettato il paese nel caos. Infatti le esecuzioni hanno spesso luogo al termine di processi irregolari preceduti da torture e durante i quali gli imputati non hanno pieno accesso alla difesa.

Considerato che:

— l'Unione europea continua a fornire un supporto finanziario all'Iraq, che a partire dal 2003 ammonta ad almeno 1 miliardo di euro;

— esiste un programma, lo «European Union Integrated Rule of Law Mission for Iraq», il cui obiettivo è di rafforzare lo Stato di diritto e la promozione di una cultura di rispetto dei diritti umani, offrendo formazione per gli alti funzionari del sistema di giustizia penale iracheno;

— tra le finalità della «Joint Strategy for Iraq for the years 2011-2013» vi è il miglioramento del sistema di giustizia;

può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se è a conoscenza di quanto denunciato dall'organizzazione suddetta;

2. se ritiene che la Cassazione irachena, al momento della revisione delle pene, agisca nel pieno rispetto dell'articolo 14 del Patto internazionale sui diritti civili e politici;

3. se può fornire informazioni in merito ai progressi effettuati dall'Iraq nell'ambito della giustizia, in particolar modo per quanto riguarda la regolarità dei processi?

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

1. La Commissione europea e l'Alto Rappresentante/Vicepresidente sono a conoscenza del preoccupante aumento del ricorso alla pena di morte in Iraq nel 2013.

2. L'Iraq ha ufficialmente dichiarato all'Unione che tutte le sentenze di condanna alla pena capitale sono sottoposte ad un processo di controllo giudiziario più rigoroso rispetto alle altre condanne penali. L'UE è tuttavia particolarmente preoccupata per le carenze nei procedimenti giudiziari e regolarmente solleva la questione della pena di morte e del sistema della giustizia penale in Iraq con interlocutori iracheni al più alto livello; continuerà su questa strada anche nel contesto dell'accordo di partenariato e cooperazione UE-Iraq.

3. La missione civile PSDC dell'UE in Iraq, EU Just-Lex, ha svolto numerose attività di formazione e tutoraggio dei membri delle forze di polizia, della magistratura e dei servizi penitenziari. L'Iraq ha istituito un comitato interministeriale incaricato di attuare il piano d'azione nazionale sui diritti umani, che comprende molte delle 136 raccomandazioni accettate dall'Iraq durante il processo di riesame periodico universale in sede di Consiglio dei diritti umani nel 2010. L'Iraq ha inoltre informato l'UE dell'istituzione di un dipartimento specializzato nel ministero dell'Interno con l'incarico di monitorare gli abusi in materia di diritti umani nel quadro del proprio sistema di Stato di diritto. L'Unione europea continuerà a monitorare attentamente il sistema giudiziario dell'Iraq.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013061/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: Increased use of the death penalty in Iraq

A major NGO has reported an increased use of the death penalty in Iraq. This year alone, 132 people have been executed in Iraq; however, the true number could even be higher since Iraqi authorities do not publish full figures. Moreover, many death row prisoners risk being executed by the end of the year. This is the highest number of executions since Iraq reinstated capital punishment in 2004. The main problem is that the death penalty is used to resolve the country's security problems: the State justifies summary trials and torture as deterrents against the terrorist attacks which have thrown the country into chaos. The executions often take place following unfair trials (preceded by torture) during which the accused do not have access to proper legal representation.

Given that:

— the European Union continues to provide financial support to Iraq, amounting to at least EUR 1 billion since 2003;

— the European Union Integrated Rule of Law Mission for Iraq, which seeks to strengthen the rule of law and promote a culture of respect for human rights, offers training to senior officials in the Iraqi criminal justice system;

— one of the aims of the Joint Strategy Paper for Iraq (2011-2013) is to improve the justice system,

can the Commission state:

1. whether it is aware of the facts reported by the above organisation;

2. whether, when reviewing sentences, the Iraqi Court of Cassation complies in full with Article 14 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;

3. whether it is able to provide any information regarding Iraq's progress in the field of justice, and in particular regarding the due process of law?

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

1. The European Commission and the HR/VP are aware of the alarming increase in the use of the death penalty in Iraq throughout 2013.

2. Iraq has formally stated to the EU that all convictions leading to a death sentence pass through a process of judicial scrutiny that is stricter than for other criminal convictions. The EU is however particularly concerned with the shortcomings of the judicial proceedings and raises the issue of the death penalty and of Iraq's criminal justice system on a regular basis with Iraqi interlocutors at the highest level. The EU will continue to do so including in the context of the EU-Iraq Partnership and Cooperation Agreement.

3. The EU's civilian CSDP mission in Iraq, EU Just-Lex, has carried out extensive training and mentoring of members of the police force, judiciary and prison services. Iraq has set up an inter-ministerial committee tasked with implementing the National Action Plan on Human Rights, which incorporates many of the 136 recommendations accepted by Iraq during the Universal Periodic Review process at the Human Rights Council in 2010. Iraq has also informed the EU of the setting up of a specialised department within its Ministry of Interior that is mandated to monitor human rights abuses within its Rule of Law system. The EU will continue to closely monitor Iraq's justice system.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013064/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(18 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Illeciti commessi dalle compagnie petrolifere in Nigeria

Un recente rapporto di Amnesty International chiama in gioco alcune compagnie petrolifere europee, accusandole di falsificare i documenti riguardanti le fuoriuscite di petrolio nel delta del Niger. In buona sostanza, queste compagnie attribuiscono le perdite dovute alla corrosione dei loro oleodotti a inesistenti sabotaggi o tentativi di furto da parte delle popolazioni indigene, un modo per evitare di pagare risarcimenti alla popolazione locale in quello che è uno dei maggiori danni all'ecosistema perpetrati oggi sulla terra. E anche il sistema di monitoraggio e controllo dei dati viene indicato come inefficace. Infatti le indagini sono condotte da società dipendenti delle stesse aziende che si proclamano vittime dei furti e dei sabotaggi e non, come dovrebbe essere per legge, da organizzazioni indipendenti.

Si consideri che da più di un decennio la cooperazione tra lo Stato Nigeriano e l'Unione europea si è fatta sempre più corposa, partendo dall'accordo «EU-Nigeria Joint Way Forward» del 2009, proseguendo col 10° Fondo europeo di sviluppo per la Nigeria del periodo 2008-13, che destina 677 milioni di euro a programmi in materia di pace e sicurezza, governance e diritti umani e commercio e integrazione regionale, e che l'ambiente e i cambiamenti climatici sono tra le nuove aree coperte dal 10° Fondo europeo di sviluppo.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione riferire:

1. se intende approfondire e informare in merito al coinvolgimento economico e politico delle istituzioni europee riguardo al problema in oggetto e

2. se intende effettuare pressioni internazionali o prendere provvedimenti per scoraggiare o sanzionare tali pratiche?

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

L'UE discute periodicamente di tali questioni con tutte le parti interessate, comprese le autorità nigeriane, la società civile e le compagnie petrolifere internazionali. I danni ambientali provocati dalle maree nere nel delta del Niger sono fonte di grande preoccupazione; l'UE sostiene la raccomandazione contenuta nella relazione dell'UNEP e ha esortato le autorità nigeriane ad adottare in tempi rapidi il disegno di legge di modifica della National Oil Spill Detection and Response Agency (NOSDRA), che contempla, tra l'altro: misure di risanamento per le maree nere, compresa la risposta di emergenza; sanzioni e misure di contrasto; risarcimento; piani di gestione dell'inquinamento; rafforzamento delle capacità del NOSDRA.

Attraverso il Fondo europeo di sviluppo (FES), l'UE sostiene le riforme attuate dal governo nigeriano per promuovere la trasparenza e la responsabilità, anche nell'industria petrolifera. Inoltre il FES finanzia i progetti che generano reddito sostenibile per le comunità locali nel delta del Niger colpite dal danno ambientale.

Nel 2013 il Parlamento europeo e il Consiglio hanno adottato la direttiva sulla sicurezza delle operazioni in mare nel settore degli idrocarburi. Essa garantisce che le compagnie petrolifere e del gas assumano la responsabilità principale del controllo dei rischi che creano con le loro operazioni nell'Unione e al di fuori di questa. Nell'ambito di tale strumento legislativo, gli Stati membri impongono alle imprese registrate sul loro territorio e che svolgono attività in mare nel settore degli idrocarburi e del gas al di fuori dell'Unione di comunicare loro, su richiesta, le circostanze relative a ogni incidente grave in cui sono stati coinvolti.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013064/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: Illegal actions by oil companies in Nigeria

A recent report by Amnesty International calls certain European oil companies into question, accusing them of falsifying documents about oil leaks in the Niger Delta. Basically, the companies are blaming the leaks caused by corrosion of their pipelines on non-existent sabotage or attempted theft by the local population. This is a way of avoiding paying compensation to the local area for what is currently some of the worst damage to ecosystems on the planet. The monitoring and control system is also reported to be ineffective, since the investigations are carried out by companies associated with those claiming to have been victims of theft and sabotage, not by independent organisations as legally required.

It is important to remember that cooperation between the Nigerian Government and the EU has been gaining momentum for over a decade now, first with the 'EU-Nigeria Joint Way Forward' of 2009, followed by the 10th European Development Fund for 2008-13, which set aside EUR 677 million for Nigeria for programmes concerning peace and security, governance and human rights and regional trade and integration, as well as the fact that the environment and climate change are among the new areas covered by the 10th European Development Fund.

1. Will the Commission provide details and information about the European institutions' economic and political involvement regarding the abovementioned problem?

2. Will the Commission exert international pressure or take steps to deter or punish this kind of practice?

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

The EU is regularly discussing these issues with all relevant stakeholders including the Nigerian authorities, civil society and the international oil companies. The environmental damage caused by oil spills in the Niger Delta are of great concern and the EU has been supporting the recommendation of the UNEP report and urged the Nigerian authorities to quickly adopt the National Oil Spill Detection and Response Agency (NOSDRA) amendment bill, which would provide, *inter alia*, for remediation measures to oil spills, including emergency reaction; penalties and enforcement; compensation; pollution management plan; and reinforcement of NOSDRA capacity.

Through the European Development Fund (EDF), the EU supports the Nigerian government's reforms aiming at fostering transparency and accountability, including in the oil industry. Projects generating sustainable livelihood for local communities in the Niger Delta affected by environmental damage is also funded under the EDF.

In 2013, the European Parliament and the Council adopted the directive on safety of offshore oil and gas operations. It ensures that oil and gas companies consistently take primary responsibility for controlling the risks they create by their operations in the Union and outside of the Union. Under this legislative instrument, Member States shall require companies registered in their territory and conducting offshore oil and gas operations outside the Union to report to them, on request, the circumstances of any major accident in which they have been involved.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013129/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(19 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Caracol manzana en el Delta del Ebro

Considerando que la especie *Pomacea insularum* (caracol manzana) es una de las cien especies invasoras más importantes del mundo y que, debido a su alta reproducción y su capacidad para soportar situaciones anaeróbicas y bajas temperaturas, se ha extendido por arrozales, canales y desagües del Delta del Ebro (Tarragona), colonizando también el río Ebro.

Considerando que el aumento de la población de caracol manzana afecta a los productores de la zona, a la sociedad y a un ecosistema que se quiere proteger, y teniendo en cuenta que este año esta especie ha provocado la pérdida del 70 % de la producción de arroz y ha tenido graves repercusiones en la flora y la fauna silvestre. Considerando que se ve amenazada la estructura productiva basada en los arrozales y como consecuencia de ello, también la realidad del Delta, ya que sin arroz desaparecerían los campos inundados y todo lo que comportan para el medio ambiente.

Considerando que es necesaria una actuación, el Gobierno de la Generalitat de Cataluña ha presentado un plan para combatir la plaga de caracol manzana, una de cuyas principales actuaciones es la desecación de 7 000 Ha de arrozales de la margen izquierda del Delta y la inundación con agua salada de otras 2 000 Ha.

Considerando que la Comisión Europea ha comunicado que si los agricultores no mantienen inundados los campos, no se les pagará la ayuda agroambiental por este concepto, lo que supondría que los arroceros dejarían de recibir unos 378 000 euros en subvenciones (54 euros por Ha).

Considerando que es el productor quien soporta el mayor coste, ya que además de ver reducida su cosecha, pierde la ayuda por querer luchar contra la plaga.

1. ¿Se ha planteado la Comisión Europea la posibilidad de mantener las ayudas agroambientales, en vista de que tienen por objetivo proteger el medio ambiente y de que el objetivo de la desecación de los campos es precisamente reducir la plaga de caracol manzana para así poder preservar el paisaje y el elevado valor ambiental de la zona?

2. ¿Considera la Comisión que la riqueza ecológica que aportan los arrozales al Delta del Ebro y la amenaza que supone el caracol manzana para estos es un motivo suficiente para que la Comisión Europea invierta recursos en combatir la plaga?

3. ¿Qué medidas propone la Comisión para combatir la plaga de caracol manzana?

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

Por lo que se refiere a la posibilidad de mantener las ayudas agroambientales, la Comisión quisiera aclarar que el pago de tales ayudas tiene que ajustarse a lo dispuesto en el Reglamento (CE) n° 1698/2005 ([1]) y en el Programa de Desarrollo Rural de Cataluña. En la actuación 21401 «Gestión de las zonas de humedales incluidas en el Convenio Ramsar» prevista en ese Programa se contempla el compromiso de realizar inundaciones. La ayuda concedida en el marco de esta actuación se destinaba a compensar a los agricultores los costes adicionales y las pérdidas de renta por la realización de la medida, en particular por la inundación de los campos. En la lucha contra el caracol manzana deben evitarse las inundaciones y, por consiguiente, no se justifican las ayudas por ese concepto, que deben deducirse de los importes asignados a los agricultores.

La Comisión está realmente muy preocupada por el daño económico y ambiental que causa el caracol manzana y, por esa razón, y en el contexto de la legislación fitosanitaria de la UE, los caracoles del género Pomacea están sujetos a medidas de emergencia para prevenir su introducción y propagación en la Unión, de acuerdo con la Decisión 2012/697/UE. Por otra parte, en relación con la inversión de recursos y las medidas propuestas para combatir la plaga del caracol manzana, las autoridades españolas han obtenido una participación financiera de «lucha fitosanitaria» de la UE ([2]) por importe de 2,64 millones EUR durante el período 2010-2013 para combatir ese organismo nocivo.

([1]) Reglamento (CE) n° 1698/2005 del Consejo, de 20 de septiembre de 2005, relativo a la ayuda al desarrollo rural a través del Fondo Europeo Agrícola de Desarrollo Rural (Feader) (DO L 277 de 21.10.2005, p. 1).

([2]) Artículos 22 y 23 de la Directiva 2000/29/CE del Consejo (DO L 169 de 10.7.2000, p. 1).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013129/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: Island apple snail in the Ebro Delta

Whereas *Pomacea insularum* (the island apple snail) is one of the hundred most invasive species in the world and, due to its high reproductive rate and its ability to tolerate anaerobic situations and low temperatures, it has spread into the rice fields, canals and drainage channels of the Ebro Delta (Tarragona), also colonising the river Ebro.

Whereas the increase in the island apple snail population affects growers and society in the area and an ecosystem that they are seeking to protect, and taking into consideration that this species has caused 70% of rice production to be lost this year and has had a serious impact on the wild flora and fauna. Whereas the system of production that relies on the rice fields is under threat and, as a consequence of this, the existence of the Delta too, since without the rice, the flooded fields and everything that supports the environment would disappear.

Whereas action is required, and the Autonomous Government of Catalonia has submitted a plan to combat the plague of island apple snails, one of its main components being to drain 7 000 hectares of rice fields on the left bank of the Delta and to flood a further 2 000 hectares with salt water.

Whereas the Commission has stated that if farmers fail to keep the fields flooded, they will not be paid agri-environment support for this component, resulting in the rice growers losing out on some EUR 378 000 in subsidies (EUR 54 per hectare).

Whereas it is the producer who bears the greatest cost, since in addition to seeing their harvest reduced, they are losing aid for wanting to combat the scourge.

1. Has the Commission considered the option of retaining the agri-environment support, in view of the fact that one of its objectives is to protect the environment and that the purpose of draining the fields is precisely to reduce the plague of island apple snails in order to be able to preserve the landscape and the great environmental value of the area?

2. Does it consider the ecological richness that the rice fields bring to the Ebro Delta to be sufficient reason for it to invest resources in combating the scourge?

3. What measures does it propose to combat the plague of island apple snails?

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

As regards the possibilities of agri-environment support, the Commission would like to clarify that the payment of agri-environmental measures must be in accordance with the provisions of Regulation 1698/2005 ([1]) and the Rural Development Programme of Catalonia. This programme currently includes under measure 214.1 'management of zones of wetlands included in the RAMSAR Convention', the commitment of flooding the land. The support given for this measure was meant to compensate the farmers for the extra costs and income foregone of this measure, including flooding the land. If in the context of combatting the apple snail, flooding should be avoided then the support for flooding is no longer justified and should be deducted from the amount allocated to farmers.

The Commission is indeed very concerned about the economic and environmental damage caused by the apple snail and for that reason, under the EU plant health legislation, the snails of the genus Pomacea are subject to emergency measures to prevent its introduction into and the spread within the Union in accordance with Decision 2012/697/EU. In addition, as regards the investment of resources and the measures proposed in combating the apple snail, EU plant health co-financing ([2]) for an amount of EUR 2.64 million has been made available to the Spanish authorities from 2010 until 2013 for control actions against the harmful organism.

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005 of 20 September 2005 on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) (OJ L 277, 21.10.2005, p.1).
([2]) Article 22 and 23 of Council Directive 2000/29/EC (OJ L 169, 10.7.2000, p.1).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013130/13
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(19 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Possibile violazione del regolamento (UE) n. 142/2011 della Commissione da parte dello Stato italiano, in materia di smaltimento dei sottoprodotti animali di «categoria 1»

Con nota dell'11 luglio 2012, il Ministero della Salute italiano ha stabilito — previo parere espresso dall'ISS (Istituto Superiore di Sanità) — l'equiparazione tra caldaia a 1 100 °C e motore endotermico a fini di smaltimento dei sottoprodotti animali, tra i quali quelli di «categoria 1». Tale previsione sembra porsi in netto contrasto con quanto previsto dal regolamento (UE) n. 142/2011 della Commissione che prevede che tali materiali debbano essere vaporizzati in una caldaia e bruciati a una temperatura di almeno 1 100 °C per almeno 0,2 secondi. La previsione di tale trattamento è motivata dalla necessità di garantire, grazie alla combustione ad alte temperature, la riduzione dei rischi per la salute pubblica quali la produzione di diossina. I motori endotermici ai quali fa riferimento la norma, tuttavia, sono per massima parte motori diesel di tipo navale (motori a 2 800 kilowatt che marciano a 750 giri al minuto) con temperatura in camera di combustione di appena 500 °C, di molto inferiore a quanto previsto dal succitato regolamento (e che renderebbe necessario, pertanto, un maggiore tempo di passaggio del materiale). Tale combustione non risulterebbe pertanto essere equivalente a quella prodotta in caldaia a 1 100 °C. Interpellato in proposito da un cittadino del mio collegio elettorale, di professione veterinario, l'ISS non ha tuttavia fornito documentazione che giustifichi sul piano scientifico l'avvenuta equiparazione legislativa.

Sulla base di quanto esposto, la Commissione:

1. Non ritiene che l'intervenuta equiparazione descritta sopra sia stata introdotta senza che vi siano basi scientifiche a supporto, non essendosi ancora pronunciata in proposito la Commissione Veterinaria 7015/2012 della DG SANCO (Direzione generale per la Salute e i consumatori — Commissione europea)?

2. Non ritiene inoltre che, al fine di garantire la salute dei cittadini, occorra ribadire che tali materiali devono essere smaltiti in caldaie che adottano le temperature e i tempi di passaggio in combustione previsti dal succitato regolamento?

3. Non ritiene infine che l'adozione di nuovi metodi di combustione, ivi compreso l'utilizzo del motore endotermico descritto sopra, debba obbligatoriamente essere valutata dall'EFSA (Autorità europea per la sicurezza alimentare) prima di essere introdotta a livello normativo all'interno degli Stati membri, come confermato sempre al succitato cittadino dalla stessa DG SANCO?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(10 gennaio 2014)

La Commissione ritiene che le autorità italiane abbiano seguito la procedura appropriata per l'adozione della legislazione nazionale sull'equivalenza del nuovo trattamento dei grassi fusi. La Commissione non ha motivo per impugnare il parere formulato dall'Istituto Superiore di Sanità.

La legislazione dell'UE non prevede una consultazione dell'Autorità europea per la sicurezza alimentare (EFSA) in relazione all'adozione di una legislazione nazionale nel merito. La Commissione non è a conoscenza del fatto che rappresentanti della DG Salute e comsumatori (DG SANCO) abbiamo mai espresso, anche informalmente, una posizione favorevole alla necessità di un simile parere dell'EFSA.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013130/13
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: Possible infringement of Commission Regulation (EU) No 142/2011 by Italy as regards the disposal of Category C animal by-products

In a memorandum dated 11 July 2012, the Italian Ministry of Health stipulated, subject to the opinion of the National Institute of Health (Istituto Superiore di Sanità or ISS), that internal-combustion engines would henceforth be equivalent to thermal boilers operating at 1 100 °C when used to dispose of animal by-products, including Category 1 materials. This provision seems to clearly contradict Commission Regulation (EU) No 142/2011, which stipulates that these materials must be vaporised in a steam-raising boiler and combusted at a temperature of at least 1 100 °C for at least 0.2 seconds. This processing method is required because of the need to ensure that public health risks, such as the risk of dioxin generation, are reduced, something which is achieved through combustion at high temperatures. However, the internal-combustion engines to which the legislation in question refers are mostly diesel engines of the kind used on ships (2 800 kilowatt engines turning at 750 revolutions per minute). The temperature inside the combustion chamber is only 500 °C, which is much lower than that required by the aforementioned Regulation (which means that the material would have to be processed for a longer period of time). It would appear, therefore, that this type of combustion is not equivalent to combustion produced in steam-raising boilers at 1 100 °C. When questioned on this matter by a citizen from my constituency who is a veterinary surgeon, the ISS failed to provide any documentation explaining why, from a scientific point of view, this method has been granted equivalent status in law.

1. Does the Commission not believe that the granting of the equivalent status described above lacks a scientific basis, since the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health 7015/2012 of DG SANCO (Directorate-General for Health and Consumers — European Commission) has not yet given an opinion on the matter?

2. Does it not also believe that the need for these materials to be disposed of in thermal boilers in which they are combusted at the temperatures and for the periods of time laid down in the aforementioned Regulation should be reiterated in order to protect people's health?

3. Lastly, does it not believe that the adoption of new combustion methods, including the use of the abovementioned internal-combustion engine, should be assessed by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) before it is made law in the Member States, just as DG SANCO itself confirmed to the citizen referred to above?

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

The Commission considers that the Italian authorities followed the appropriate procedure for the adoption of national law on the equivalent status of the new treatment of rendered fats. The Commission does not have reasons to challenge the opinion delivered by the National Institute of Health (Istituto Superiore di Sanità).

EU legislation does not foresee a consultation of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) in relation to the adoption of national legislation on this matter. The Commission is not aware that representatives of DG Health and Comsumers (DG SANCO) have ever taken, even informally, a position supporting the need of such an EFSA opinion.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013131/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(19 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Directiva 2000/60/CE

El 4 de octubre de 2012, el Tribunal de Justicia de la Unión Europea dictó sentencia contra España por no cumplir la Directiva Marco del Agua (Directiva 2000/60/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 23 de octubre de 2000, por la que se establece un marco comunitario de actuación en el ámbito de la política de aguas). El pasado 5 de marzo de 2013, la Comisión Europea envió «carta de emplazamiento» a España para que ésta cumpla la sentencia (expediente C 403/11). Parece ser que todavía no se ha dado cumplimiento a la sentencia a día de hoy ([1]).

1. ¿Puede indicar la Comisión si España ha dado cumplimiento a la sentencia?

2. En caso negativo, ¿qué medidas tiene previsto tomar la Comisión para que España cumpla la Directiva 2000/60/CE?

3. Uno de los objetivos de la Directiva 2000/60/CE es conseguir un buen estado ecológico de las aguas de todos los ríos de los Estados miembros en 2015. Estamos a finales de 2013. ¿Cree la Comisión que España va a cumplir los objetivos marcados para 2015?

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

El 24 de octubre de 2013, el Tribunal de Justicia de la Unión Europea condenó a España por no haber adoptado medidas legislativas para transponer, en lo que respecta a las cuencas hidrográficas intracomunitarias, el artículo 4, apartado 8, el artículo 7, apartado 2, y el artículo 10, apartados 1 y 2, así como las secciones 1.3 y 1.4 del anexo V ([2]) de la Directiva marco del agua ([3]). Se ha pedido a España que informe sobre las medidas de aplicación de esas disposiciones.

En cuanto a la aplicación de la sentencia del Tribunal de Justicia de la Unión Europea de 4 de octubre de 2012 (asunto C-403/11), siguen pendientes hasta la fecha once planes hidrológicos de cuenca: cuatro en la Península (Ebro, Tajo, Júcar y Segura) y siete en las Islas Canarias (La Palma, El Hierro, La Gomera, Tenerife, Gran Canaria, Fuerteventura y Lanzarote). Todos los planes, menos el correspondiente a la demarcación hidrográfica de Fuerteventura, se encuentran por el momento en la fase de información y consulta públicas.

La Comisión adoptará todas las medidas necesarias para incitar a España a cumplir lo antes posible sus obligaciones a este respecto.

Teniendo en cuenta que hay varios planes hidrológicos de cuenca pendientes que cubren una proporción significativa del territorio, la Comisión aún no dispone de información completa sobre la aplicación de la Directiva marco del agua en España ni sobre el porcentaje previsto de masas de agua que alcanzaran el «buen estado» en 2015.

([1]) http://www.euroefe.efe.com/3776_euroefe-destacado-regiones/2267820_espana-incumplio-la-directiva-del-agua-en-cuencas-hidrograficas-de-las-ccaa.html
([2]) Sentencia del Tribunal de Justicia de 24 de octubre de 2013 en el asunto C-151/12 (DO C 367 de 14.12.2013).
([3]) Directiva 2000/60/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 23 de octubre de 2000, por la que se establece un marco comunitario de actuación en el ámbito de la política de aguas (DO L 327 de 22.12.2000).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013131/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: Directive 2000/60/EC

On 4 October 2012, the European Court of Justice delivered a judgment against Spain for non-compliance with the Water Framework Directive (Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy). On 5 March 2013, the Commission sent a 'letter of formal notice' to Spain in order for it to comply with the judgment (Case C-403/11). To date, it appears that Spain has failed to comply ([1]).

1. Can the Commission indicate whether Spain has complied with the judgment?

2. If not, what measures does it intend to take to ensure that Spain complies with Directive 2000/60/EC?

3. One of the objectives of Directive 2000/60/EC is that all river waters in Member States attain good ecological status by 2015. It is now the end of 2013. Is the Commission of the opinion that Spain will meet the objectives set for 2015?

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

On 24 October 2013 Spain was condemned by the European Union Court of Justice for its failure to adopt legislative measures to transpose, in respect of intra-community river basins, Articles 4(8), 7(2) and 10(1) and (2), as well as Sections 1.3 and 1.4 of Annex V ([2]), of the Water Framework Directive ([3]). Spain has been asked to report on the measures intended to implement this ruling.

As regards the implementation of the European Union Court of Justice judgment of 4 October 2012 (Case C-403/11), to date, eleven River Basin Management Plans are still outstanding: four in mainland (Ebro, Tajo, Júcar and Segura) and seven more for the Canary Islands (La Palma, El Hierro, La Gomera, Tenerife, Gran Canaria, Fuerteventura and Lanzarote). All plans except the one corresponding to the River Basin District of Fuerteventura are now at the public information and consultation stage.

The Commission will take all necessary steps to encourage Spain to comply within the shortest delay possible.

Since there are several outstanding river basin management plans which cover a significant proportion of the territory, the Commission does not have yet complete information on the implementation of the Water Framework Directive in Spain and the expected percentage of water bodies which will attain good status in 2015.

([1]) http://www.euroefe.efe.com/3776_euroefe-destacado-regiones/2267820_espana-incumplio-la-directiva-del-agua-en-cuencas-hidrograficas-de-las-ccaa.html
([2]) Judgment of the Court of 24 October 2013 in Case C-151/12 (OJ 29/11/2013).
([3]) Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy (OJ 2000 L 327).

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013132/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(19 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Controles sanitarios en la importación de avellana procedente de Turquía

El 23 de enero de 2012 se formuló por escrito una pregunta parlamentaria a la Comisión (E-000418/2012) sobre el porcentaje de muestras tomadas respecto de la totalidad de avellana turca importada en el año 2010.

En la respuesta, de fecha 6 de marzo de 2012, la Comisión señala que se analizó el contenido de 355 plaguicidas de 14 muestras respecto a un total de 95 250,30 toneladas de avellana turca importada.

El 28 de marzo de 2012, en contestación a las preguntas (E-000419/2012 y E-000420/2012), la Comisión afirma que la lista completa de los puntos de importación está disponible en el Anexo V del «Documento de orientación para las autoridades competentes en materia de control del cumplimiento de la legislación de la UE sobre aflatoxinas». Señala, asimismo, que los mismos puntos de importación designados que tienen instalaciones para muestrear las avellanas en busca de aflatoxinas también pueden detectar la presencia de residuos de plaguicidas.

El 16 de abril de 2012 (E-003950/2012), se formuló una nueva pregunta para averiguar en qué lugares del conjunto del territorio europeo se habían tomado dichas muestras. En la respuesta de 21 de junio de 2012, se establece que las muestras de vigilancia para el año 2010 se tomaron en Alemania, Dinamarca, Finlandia, Italia y Letonia.

A la luz de estos resultados:

1. ¿Cuántas muestras se analizaron en 2011 y 2012? ¿En qué lugares se realizaron los análisis?

2. ¿En qué laboratorios alemanes se analizaron las muestras de avellana turca importada el año 2010 indicados en la respuesta a la pregunta parlamentaria E-000418/2012? ¿De qué manera verifican y validan las autoridades comunitarias dicha información?

3. ¿Puede la Comisión indicar cómo verifica y controla que todos los Estados Miembros cumplan su obligación de establecer programas nacionales plurianuales de control de los residuos de plaguicidas y el modo en que incluyen a la avellana turca?

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

1. Los resultados de los análisis de residuos de plaguicidas de las muestras de avellanas turcas se encuentran disponibles. En 2011 se analizó el contenido de 417 residuos de 13 muestras. Se dispone de los resultados preliminares de los análisis del contenido de 336 residuos de 14 muestras realizados en 2012. No se detectó un nivel superior al límite máximo de residuos o al límite de cuantificación en ninguna de las muestras. Los análisis se realizaron en Austria, Alemania, Dinamarca, España, Finlandia, Francia, Lituania, Italia y Eslovaquia.

2. La Comisión no dispone de información detallada acerca de los laboratorios alemanes que analizaron las muestras de avellanas turcas importadas en 2010. El Reglamento (CE) n° 882/2004 ([1]) establece que las autoridades competentes deben designar los laboratorios que analizarán las muestras tomadas en los controles oficiales. Solo los laboratorios que funcionan y han sido evaluados y acreditados con arreglo a las normas europeas EN ISO/IEC 17025 y EN ISO/IEC 17011 pueden ser designados por las autoridades competentes para realizar dichos análisis. Además, en el sitio web de la Dirección General de Salud y Consumidores ([2]) se hallan disponibles varios documentos de orientación para el análisis de residuos de plaguicidas. De esta forma se garantiza la validez de los resultados de los análisis.

([1]) Reglamento (CE) n° 882/2004 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 29 de abril de 2004, sobre los controles oficiales efectuados para garantizar la verificación del cumplimiento de la legislación en materia de piensos y alimentos y la normativa sobre salud animal y bienestar de los animales (DO L 165 de 30.4.2004, p. 1) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CONSLEG:2004R0882:20120101:ES:PDF

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/plant/pesticides/guidance_documents/mrls_en.htm

3. De conformidad con los artículos 30 y 31 del Reglamento (CE) n° 396/2005 [3], los Estados miembros deben remitir a la Comisión y a la Autoridad Europea de Seguridad Alimentaria sus programas nacionales actualizados de control de residuos de plaguicidas y los resultados de los controles oficiales que realicen. Los programas nacionales de control deben estar basados en el riesgo y tener como objetivo la evaluación de la exposición de los consumidores. Es responsabilidad de los Estados miembros decidir las mercancías que deben muestrearse.

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[3] Reglamento (CE) n° 396/2005 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 23 de febrero de 2005, relativo a los límites máximos de residuos de plaguicidas en alimentos y piensos de origen vegetal y animal y que modifica la Directiva 91/414/CEE del Consejo (DO L 70 de 16.3.2005, p. 1). http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CONSLEG:2005R0396:20121026:ES:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013132/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: Health controls on the import of hazelnuts from Turkey

On 23 January 2012, a written parliamentary question was presented to the Commission (E-000418/2012) on the percentage of samples taken from the total quantity of Turkish hazelnuts imported in 2010.

In its answer, dated 6 March 2012, the Commission states that 14 samples were analysed for 355 pesticides from a total quantity of 95 250.30 tonnes of imported Turkish hazelnuts.

On 28 March 2012, in response to questions E-000419/2012 and E-000420/2012, the Commission states that the complete list of designated points of import is available in Annex V to the 'Guidance document for competent authorities for the control of compliance with EU legislation on aflatoxins'. It also highlights that the same designated points of import that have facilities to sample hazelnuts for aflatoxins are considered to be in a position to sample for pesticide residues.

On 16 April 2012, a new question (E-003950/2012) was formulated in order to establish the locations across the entire European territory where the abovementioned samples had been taken. In the answer of 21 June 2012, it was established that the surveillance samples for 2010 were taken in Germany, Denmark, Finland, Italy and Latvia.

In light of these results:

1. How many samples were analysed in 2011 and 2012? In what locations were the analyses carried out?

2. In which German laboratories were the samples of Turkish hazelnuts imported in 2010, indicated in the answer to parliamentary Question E-000418/2012, analysed? How do the Community authorities verify and validate the abovementioned information?

3. Can the Commission say how it verifies and monitors the compliance of all Member States with their obligation to establish multi-annual national programmes to monitor pesticide residues and the way in which they incorporate the Turkish hazelnut?

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

1. Results are available for pesticide residue analyses on hazelnut samples from Turkey. In 2011, 13 samples were analysed for 417 residues. For 2012 preliminary results are available for 336 residues on 14 samples. In none of these samples residue levels exceeding the Maximum Residue Level or the Limit of Quantification were found. These analyses were performed in Austria, Germany, Denmark, Spain, Finland, France, Lithuania, Italy and Slovakia.

2. The Commission has no detailed information available as regards the German laboratories that have analysed the samples of hazelnuts from Turkey imported in 2010. Regulation (EC) 882/2004 [1] provides that competent authorities designate laboratories to perform the analysis of the samples taken during official controls. Only laboratories that operate and are assessed and accredited in accordance with the European standards EN ISO/IEC 17025 and EN ISO/IEC 17011 can be designated by the competent authority to perform these analyses. Furthermore several guidance documents for the analysis of pesticide residues are available on the website of the DG Health and Consumers. [2] This guarantees the validity of the analytical results.

3. According to Articles 30 and 31 of Regulation (EC) 396/2005 [3], Member States have to submit their updated national control programmes for pesticide residues and the results of the official controls to the Commission and to the European Food Safety Authority. The national control programmes have to be risk-based and aimed at assessing consumer exposure. It is the responsibility of the Member States to decide on the commodities to be sampled.

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(1) Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules (OJ L 165, 30.4.2004, p. 1.)
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CONSLEG:2004R0882:20120101:EN:PDF

(2) http://ec.europa.eu/food/plant/pesticides/guidance_documents/mrls_en.htm

(3) Regulation (EC) No 396/2005 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 February 2005 on maximum residue levels of pesticides in or on food and feed of plant and animal origin and amending Council Directive 91/414/EEC (OJ L 70, 16.3.2005, p. 1)
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CONSLEG:2005R0396:20121026:EN:PDF

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013133/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(19 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Sistema de ayudas directas a la avellana en Turquía

El 14 de mayo de 2013 se formuló por escrito la pregunta parlamentaria a la Comisión E-005321/2013 sobre la política de apoyo a las avellanas en Turquía.

En su última respuesta, de 5 de julio de 2013, se nos informa que Turquía decidió ampliar su política de apoyo a la avellana al periodo 2012-2014 con los mismos principios e instrumentos políticos de ayudas directas.

Por otro lado, el 20 de septiembre de 2013, tuvo lugar en Giresun (Turquía), el encuentro bilateral entre la Unión Europea y Turquía, en relación con la política de la avellana.

1. A raíz de esta reunión, ¿puede indicarnos la Comisión qué cantidad, en forma de ayuda directa, recibirán del Estado los productores turcos a partir del 2013?

2. ¿Pueden la Comisión y su servicio de estudios indicarnos en qué medida los precios del mercado interior turco de la avellana se ven afectados por estas ayudas directas?

3. ¿Cuál sería el precio esperable para la avellana de venta en el mercado interior turco si ésta no tuviera dichas ayudas directas?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013134/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(19 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Sistema de ayudas directas a la avellana en Turquía

El 14 de mayo de 2013 se presentó por escrito la pregunta parlamentaria a la Comisión E-005321/2013 sobre la política de apoyo a las avellanas en Turquía.

En su última respuesta de 5 de julio de 2013, se nos informa que Turquía decidió ampliar su política de apoyo a la avellana al periodo 2012-2014 con los mismos principios e instrumentos políticos de ayudas directas.

Turquía es el mayor productor mundial de avellana, con aproximadamente un 70 % de la producción total. Esto lo convierte en el país que marca la tendencia mundial de precios.

Por otro lado, el 20 de septiembre de 2013 tuvo lugar en Giresun (Turquía) el encuentro bilateral entre la Unión Europea y Turquía en relación con la política de la avellana.

1. ¿Ha valorado la Comisión si dichas ayudas directas influyen decisivamente para que Turquía logre un precio internacional de venta de la avellana superior al precio del mercado interior turco mediante la rebaja subvencionada del precio del mercado interior?

2. Dada la situación de Turquía como mayor productor mundial de avellana, con sobrada capacidad para desestabilizar los mercados, ¿qué medidas ha adoptado la Comisión para salvaguardar la comercialización de la avellana de origen comunitario y evitar distorsiones del precio en el mercado comunitario derivadas de una sobreoferta subvencionada en origen que pueda llegar a nuestros mercados a un precio situado por debajo de los precios de venta en origen sin subvención?

Respuesta conjunta del Sr. Cioloș en nombre de la Comisión
(16 de enero de 2014)

Turquía continúa aplicando una política de apoyo a las avellanas durante el período 2012-2014, y lo hace a través de dos instrumentos principales: el «Sistema de ayuda a la renta basada en la superficie» y los «Pagos compensatorios por producción alternativa». Estos se han aplicado desde 2009 en sustitución de la política de ayuda a los precios de la avellana.

La Comisión ha sido informada de que el importe de la ayuda por hectárea proporcionada por el gobierno turco en 2013 fue de 160 liras turcas (esto es, 57 euros a fecha de 9.12.2013). No obstante, la Comisión no dispone de información sobre el impacto que ha tenido la ayuda nacional en los precios internos y de exportación de Turquía.

Sin embargo, a fin de estabilizar los precios de mercado de las avellanas, se ha establecido un régimen de cooperación relativo a la avellana en virtud del acuerdo bilateral sobre productos agrícolas entre Turquía y la UE, que prevé un intercambio de impresiones entre los operadores turcos y de la UE. En estas reuniones, que se celebran cada año en septiembre, se estudian, en particular, las previsiones de producción, las existencias, los precios de producción y exportación previstos y la evolución del mercado. La última reunión tuvo lugar en Giresun el 20 de septiembre de 2013 y los operadores europeos no expresaron ninguna inquietud en relación con el nivel de los precios.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013133/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: Direct aid system for the hazelnut in Turkey

On 14 May 2013, a written parliamentary question was presented to the Commission (E-005321/2013) on the support policy for hazelnuts in Turkey.

In the most recent answer, dated 5 July 2013, we were informed that Turkey had decided to extend its hazelnut support policy to 2012-2014 with the same principles and policy instruments of direct aid.

Furthermore, on 20 September 2013, the bilateral meeting between the European Union and Turkey took place in Giresun, Turkey, regarding hazelnut policy.

1. Following this meeting, can the Commission tell us what quantity of direct aid Turkish producers will receive from the State from 2013?

2. Can the Commission and its research department tell us to what extent hazelnut prices on the Turkish domestic market will be affected by this direct aid?

3. What would be the expected sale price of the hazelnut on the Turkish domestic market if it was not in receipt of the abovementioned direct aid?

Question for written answer E-013134/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: Direct aid system for the hazelnut in Turkey

On 14 May 2013, a written parliamentary question was presented to the Commission (E-005321/2013) on the support policy for hazelnuts in Turkey.

In the most recent answer, dated 5 July 2013, we were informed that Turkey had decided to extend its hazelnut support policy to 2012-2014 with the same principles and policy instruments of direct aid.

Turkey is the largest producer of hazelnuts in the world, accounting for approximately 70% of total production. This makes it the country that sets the global price trend.

Furthermore, on 20 September 2013, the bilateral meeting between the European Union and Turkey took place in Giresun, Turkey, regarding hazelnut policy.

1. Has the Commission assessed whether the abovementioned direct aid is having a decisive influence in ensuring that Turkey achieves an international sale price for the hazelnut that is higher than the Turkish domestic market price by means of the subsidised price reduction on the domestic market?

2. Given Turkey's situation as the largest global hazelnut producer, with more than enough capacity to destabilise the markets, what steps has the Commission taken to safeguard the marketing of the hazelnut produced within the Union and prevent price distortions on the Union market as a result of an oversupply subsidised at source, which could reach our markets at a price that is lower than the sale prices that are not subsidised at source?

Joint answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(16 January 2014)

Turkey continues to implement a hazelnuts support policy for the period 2012-2014, based on two main policy instruments, 'Area Based Income Support Scheme' and 'Compensatory Payments for Alternative Production', that have been implemented since 2009 in replacement to the price support policy for hazelnuts.

The Commission has been informed that the aid per hectare provided by the Turkish government in 2013 was equivalent to 160TL (i.e. EUR 57 on 9/12/2013) but the Commission does not have at its disposal information on the impact of the national aid on Turkish internal prices or export prices.

However, in order to ensure stable market prices for hazelnuts, a cooperation scheme on hazelnuts has been created under the bilateral agreement on agricultural products between Turkey and the EU, which foresees an exchange of views between the EU and Turkish operators. This meeting, which takes place every year in September, examines notably production forecasts, stocks, expected producer and export prices and market developments. The last meeting took place in Giresun on 20th September 2013 and the European operators have not raised concerns in relation to the level of prices.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013135/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(19 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Fondi erogati alla Turchia in quanto paese in fase di preadesione

Può la Commissione indicare l'ammontare dei fondi ricevuti dalla Turchia, dall'acquisizione dello status di candidato a oggi, a titolo di preadesione?

Risposta di Stefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(31 gennaio 2014)

I finanziamenti preadesione assegnati a programmi per la Turchia da quando al paese è stato riconosciuto lo status di candidato (dicembre 1999) ammontano complessivamente a 6,624 milioni di EUR per il periodo 2000-2013. Questo importo globale è così suddiviso: 594 milioni di EUR provenienti dal programma MEDA (2000-2002); 1,235 milioni di EUR provenienti dalla dotazione destinata ai programmi nazionali turchi (2002-2006) e 4,795 milioni di EUR provenienti dai finanziamenti IPA I (2007-2013).

L'entità dei finanziamenti effettivamente ricevuti dipende dalla natura dei programmi e dai costi di attuazione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013135/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: Funding granted to Turkey as a pre-accession country

Can the Commission state the amount of pre-accession funding that Turkey has received since it was granted candidate status?

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

The overall amount of pre-accession funding allocated to Turkey programmes since it was granted candidate status (December 1999) is EUR 6 624 million for the period 2000-2013. This overall amount is shared by the following funds: EUR 594 million from the MEDA programme (2000-2002); EUR 1 235 million from the Turkey National Programmes funding (2002-2006) and EUR 4 795 million from IPA I funding (2007-013).

Actual funding received depends on the nature of programmes and cost of implementation.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013136/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(19 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Errore nel calcolo delle quote latte: tutela dei produttori italiani

Secondo le evidenze giudiziarie di una recente indagine, l'algoritmo alla base del calcolo delle quote latte per l'Italia sarebbe di fatto errato e avrebbe causato enormi inesattezze nei calcoli delle stesse con la conseguente irrogazione di multe a migliaia di allevatori per aver superato la produzione di latte consentita.

Può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

— È a conoscenza dei fatti sopra esposti?

— Conferma le evidenze emerse dall'indagine in corso in Italia? Se sì, come intende tutelare gli allevatori italiani?

— Intende intervenire affinché le multe comminate e già versate vengano restituite?

— Può quantificare esattamente l'ammontare di dette multe?

Risposta di Dacian Cioloş a nome della Commissione
(20 gennaio 2014)

Secondo le norme che disciplinano il funzionamento del prelievo stabilito dall'UE nel settore lattiero-caseario, tale prelievo è corrisposto in base alle dichiarazioni dei produttori lattiero-caseari relative ai quantitativi prodotti o consegnati. Spetta agli Stati membri controllare i quantitativi dichiarati in tal modo e dichiarare ogni anno la produzione nazionale di latte. In caso di superamento della quota nazionale, i produttori dello Stato membro interessato hanno l'obbligo di versare un prelievo sulle eccedenze («prelievo supplementare»), calcolato in proporzione al loro contributo al superamento della quota durante l'anno contingentale.

Nel 2010 la Commissione ha preso atto del contenuto del rapporto della sezione dei Carabinieri presso il Ministero italiano delle politiche agricole, alimentari e forestali e ha invitato le autorità italiane a esprimere il loro parere sulle conclusioni di tale rapporto. Le autorità italiane hanno risposto confermando l'affidabilità dei dati dichiarati con cadenza annuale. Peraltro, la Commissione ha preso atto del fatto che la Corte dei conti italiana, nella sua relazione speciale n. 2/2012 ([1]), è giunta alla stessa conclusione.

Non compete alla Commissione confermare o smentire le conclusioni presentate nei rapporti delle autorità nazionali.

Per il periodo dal 1995 al 2009, il prelievo supplementare dovuto dai produttori di latte italiani ammontava complessivamente a 2,264 miliardi di euro. Stando ai dati trasmessi dallo Stato membro il 5 novembre 2012, di tale importo sono stati pagati soltanto 455 milioni di euro.

([1]) Relazione speciale n. 2/2012 relativa al prelievo supplementare nel settore del latte e dei prodotti lattiero-caseari. http://www.corteconti.it/export/sites/portalecdc/_documenti/controllo/sez_contr_affari_com_internazionali/2012/delibera_2_2012_e_relazione.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013136/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: Miscalculation of milk quotas: protection of Italian producers

According to the legal evidence presented during a recent investigation, the algorithm used to calculate Italy's milk quotas is in fact incorrect and has led to a huge number of mistakes in the calculation of those quotas. As a result, thousands of farmers have been fined for exceeding their milk production limits.

— Is the Commission aware of the facts set out above?

— Can it confirm the evidence arising from the investigation under way in Italy? If so, how does it intend to protect Italian farmers?

— Will it take steps to ensure that the fines imposed and already paid are refunded?

— Can it put an exact figure on the amount of those fines?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Cioloş au nom de la Commission
(20 janvier 2014)

En vertu des règles qui régissent le fonctionnement du prélèvement établi par l'UE dans le secteur laitier celui-ci repose sur les déclarations faites par les producteurs laitiers ou les laiteries des quantités produites ou livrées. Le contrôle des quantités ainsi déclarées et la déclaration annuelle de la production nationale de lait relèvent de la responsabilité des États membres. En cas de dépassement du quota national, les producteurs de l'État membre concerné doivent payer un prélèvement sur les excédents (ou «superprélèvement»), calculé au prorata de leur contribution au dépassement durant l'année contingentaire.

En 2010, la Commission a pris connaissance du contenu du rapport de la Section des Carabinieri auprès du Ministère italien de l'Agriculture et de la Forêt et a sollicité la position des autorités italiennes sur les conclusions du rapport des Carabinieri. Dans leur réponse, les autorités italiennes ont réaffirmé la fiabilité des données annuellement déclarées. Par ailleurs, la Commission a pris note que, dans son rapport spécial 2/2012 ([1]), la Cour des comptes italienne a abouti à cette même conclusion.

La Commission n'a pas la compétence de confirmer ou d'infirmer les conclusions des rapports des autorités nationales

Pour la période 1995 à 2009, le montant total du prélèvement supplémentaire dû par les producteurs laitiers italiens s'élève à 2,264 milliards d'euros. Sur ce montant, selon les chiffres transmis par l'État membre le 5 novembre 2012, seulement 455 millions d'euros ont été payés.

([1]) Rapport spécial 2/2012 relatif au prélèvement spécial dans le domaine du lait et des produits laitiers:
http://www.corteconti.it/export/sites/portalecdc/_documenti/controllo/sez_contr_affari_com_internazionali/2012/delibera_2_2012_e_relazione.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013137/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(19 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Epidemia di poliomielite in Siria

È ormai confermata l'epidemia di poliomielite che si è sviluppata in Siria nella provincia nord-est di Deir-ez-Zor, 10 bambini sono già rimasti paralizzati ma centinaia di migliaia sono a rischio, sia in Siria sia in tutti gli Stati limitrofi.

Unicef e Organizzazione Mondiale della Sanità si sono già attivate per una massiccia campagna di vaccinazione che vuole raggiungere oltre 20 milioni di bambini in Medio Oriente proprio partendo dalla Siria.

Può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

— È informata dei fatti sopra esposti?

— Come intende intervenire per portare aiuto alle popolazioni colpite dal diffondersi di questa epidemia?

Risposta di Kristalina Georgieva a nome della Commissione
(21 gennaio 2014)

Fino ad oggi in Siria sono stati confermati 17 casi di poliomelite: 15 nella provincia di Deir-ez-Zor, uno nella zona di Aleppo e uno nella zona rurale di Damasco. La Commissione segue attentamente la situazione in Siria e nei paesi confinanti ed è in costante contatto con l'OMS, l'UNICEF e altri partner per monitorare l'avanzamento delle attività di vaccinazione in tutta la regione.

Sotto il coordinamento dei ministeri della Sanità, dell'OMS e dell'UNICEF, è stata messa a punto una strategia a livello regionale. Per 23 milioni di bambini al di sotto dei 5 anni sono in via di pianificazione o già in corso campagne di vaccinazione sincronizzate in Siria, Egitto, Iraq, Giordania, Libano, Palestina e Turchia. In Siria la prima fase della campagna nazionale, compresa la distribuzione di vaccini, è cominciata l'8 dicembre, come previsto.

Per quanto riguarda i finanziamenti, la Commissione era preparata a tale allarme sanitario e, attraverso il bilancio umanitario dell'UE, dall'inizio del conflitto ha già destinato all'OMS 13,5 milioni di euro. Se necessario, la Commissione è pronta a rafforzare tale sostegno. Su un totale di 150 milioni di euro di aiuti umanitari a favore della Siria, la Commissione ha destinato circa 27 milioni all'assistenza sanitaria e 29 milioni a progetti idrici e igienico-sanitari, particolarmente importanti per la prevenzione e la diffusione di malattie, tra cui la poliomielite. In questo momento, l'assistenza totale dell'UE a favore della Siria, umanitaria e di altro tipo, ammonta a oltre 2 miliardi di euro.

In termini di tutela dei diritti, la Commissione invita tutte le parti in conflitto a garantire accesso pieno e sicuro alle équipe sanitarie che partecipano alla campagna di vaccinazione antipolio in Siria. Essa richiama altresì l'attenzione sull'importanza di adottare tutte le misure necessarie per la consegna tempestiva dei vaccini e del materiale da vaccinazione in tutto il territorio nazionale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013137/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: Polio epidemic in Syria

The polio epidemic that has broken out in the province of Deir Ezzor in north-east Syria has now been confirmed. Ten children have already been left paralysed but hundreds of thousands more are at risk, both in Syria and in all of the neighbouring countries.

Unicef and the World Health Organisation have already embarked on a mass vaccination campaign. They aim to reach more than 20 million children in the Middle East, starting in Syria.

— Is the Commission aware of the facts set out above?

— What will it do to help the populations affected by the spread of this epidemic?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(21 January 2014)

To date, seventeen polio cases were confirmed in Syria: fifteen from Deir ez-Zor governorate, one from Aleppo area and one from Rural Damascus. The Commission has closely followed up the situation inside Syria and neighbouring countries and is in constant contact with WHO, Unicef and other health partners to monitor the progress of vaccination activities throughout the region.

Under the coordination of the Ministries of Health, WHO and Unicef, a regional response strategy has been prepared and synchronised vaccination campaigns — targeting 23 million children under five- are being planned or underway in Syria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine and Turkey. Inside Syria, the first round of the national campaign, including vaccine distribution, started on 8 December, as planned.

Funding-wise, the Commission was prepared for such a health scare and, through the EU humanitarian budget, has already committed EUR 13.5 million to WHO, since the beginning of the conflict. The Commission stands ready to increase this support if needed. Out of the overall EUR 150 million in humanitarian aid for inside Syria only, the Commission has allocated around EUR 27 million to healthcare and EUR 29 million to water and sanitation projects, which are especially relevant to the prevention and spread of diseases, including polio. At this stage, the EU's overall assistance in response to the Syria crisis, humanitarian and other, amounts to over EUR 2 billion.

In terms of advocacy, the Commission calls on all parties to the conflict to ensure safe and full access of health teams participating in the polio immunization campaign in Syria. It also urges the need to take all necessary measures for the timely delivery of vaccines and vaccination equipment and supplies countrywide.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-013138/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(19 novembre 2013)

Objet: Stop Qatar 2022

Le Qatar est régulièrement accusé d'exploiter sa main-d'œuvre étrangère, à tout le moins de disposer d'un droit du travail balbutiant et d'être peu regardant sur les conventions internationales concernées, dont celle sur le travail forcé. De telles accusations sont d'autant plus gênantes que Doha se présente volontiers comme un modèle pour le monde arabe, ce qu'il n'est pas en raison de sa législation sur le travail.

Comme tous les pays de la péninsule arabique, le richissime émirat recourt à des contingents de main-d'œuvre issus principalement d'Asie du Sud: Indiens, Népalais, Sri-lankais, Pakistanais, Philippins, Bangladais, notamment dans les secteurs de la construction et de l'industrie. On estime que cette main-d'œuvre étrangère constitue environ 85 % des deux millions d'habitants de l'émirat. Les 370 000 Népalais représentent le deuxième groupe d'immigrés, derrière les Indiens.

L'année dernière déjà, un rapport de Human Rights Watch, intitulé «Construire une meilleure Coupe du Monde: Protéger les travailleurs migrants au Qatar dans la perspective de la Fifa 2022», pointait les abus, les violences et l'exploitation que subissent des centaines de milliers de travailleurs dans ce pays. Le rapport mettait directement en cause le système de parrainage des travailleurs migrants, pourtant assoupli il y a quelques années.

1. Comment la Commission réagit-elle devant les méfaits dénoncés et les conditions de travail proches de l'esclavage dont souffrent, et quelquefois meurent, les travailleurs?

2. La Commission est-elle d'avis qu'il faille prendre des sanctions à l'encontre du Qatar?

3. Étant donné que nombre de travailleurs migrants perdent la vie dans la construction des stades de la Coupe du monde de 2022, la Commission pourrait-elle responsabiliser officiellement la FIFA?

4. La Commission pourrait-elle soutenir l'idée selon laquelle le Qatar pourrait se voir retirer l'organisation de la Coupe du monde s'il ne respecte pas les Droits de l'homme?

Réponse donnée par Mme Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(21 janvier 2014)

La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante est bien consciente du problème des droits des travailleurs migrants au Qatar et, plus généralement, dans la région du Golfe. La délégation de l'UE à Riyad (accréditée auprès du Qatar) et les missions diplomatiques à Doha suivent de près la situation des Droits de l'homme, y compris ceux des travailleurs migrants.

Le respect de la dignité humaine est au cœur des valeurs défendues par l'UE. L'UE a toujours plaidé en faveur de l'adoption d'une législation et de mesures d'exécution plus volontaristes par nos partenaires du Golfe afin de prendre en compte la situation des travailleurs migrants qui, malgré les indéniables progrès accomplis ces dernières années, doit encore être améliorée conformément aux conventions internationales de l'OIT (en particulier la convention n° 111 sur l'élimination de la discrimination en matière d'emploi et de profession et la convention n° 81 sur l'inspection du travail, qui ont été ratifiées par le Qatar) et en collaboration avec les pays d'origine des travailleurs étrangers, en particulier pour ce qui est de la mise en œuvre de la législation existante.

Pour plus de détails sur la position de l'UE en la matière, veuillez vous référer à la réponse donnée à la question écrite E-010838/2013.

De manière générale, dans le domaine du sport, la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante se doit de respecter l'autonomie des organisations sportives. L'organisation de grands événements sportifs tels que la coupe du monde de football relève du pays hôte sélectionné, de la Fédération internationale des associations de football (FIFA) et des associations nationales de football. Il n'en reste pas moins que les Droits de l'homme doivent être respectés à tout moment, y compris dans le sport. C'est aux organisateurs d'événements sportifs qu'incombe la responsabilité de faire respecter ces droits. Les fédérations sportives sont de plus en plus sensibles aux Droits de l'homme, la FIFA et d'autres organisations sportives semblant y accorder plus d'attention.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013138/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: Stop Qatar 2022

Qatar is regularly accused of exploiting its foreign workforce — at the very least of having poorly developed employment law — and of paying scant regard to the international conventions on the subject, including the convention on forced labour. Such accusations are all the more worrying when Doha is happy to set itself up as a model for the Arab world, which it is not when it comes to its employment laws.

Like all the countries in the Arabian Peninsula, the super-rich emirate uses a workforce drawn mainly from South Asia: Indians, Nepalese, Sri Lankans, Pakistanis, Filipinos, Bangladeshis, especially in the construction and industrial sectors. It is estimated that this foreign labour force makes up around 85% of the emirate's 2 million inhabitants. The 370 000 Nepalese are the second largest group of migrants behind the Indians.

A report last year from Human Rights Watch, called 'Building a Better World Cup: Protecting Migrant Workers in Qatar Ahead of FIFA 2022', detailed the abuse, violence and exploitation endured by hundreds of thousands of workers in the country. The report lays the blame squarely with the system of sponsorship for migrant workers, although this has been relaxed in recent years.

1. What is the Commission's reaction to the wrongs exposed and the working conditions bordering on slavery in which workers suffer and sometimes die?

2. Does the Commission believe that sanctions should be imposed on Qatar?

3. Given that many migrant workers are losing their lives building stadiums for the 2022 World Cup, could the Commission not officially hold FIFA responsible?

4. Would the Commission support the idea of Qatar having the right to hold the World Cup withdrawn if it does not respect human rights?

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

The HR/VP is well aware of the issue of migrant workers' rights in Qatar and more broadly in the Gulf region. The EU Delegation in Riyadh (accredited to Qatar) and EU diplomatic missions in Doha are closely following the human rights situation, including the situation of migrant workers' rights.

The respect of human dignity is at the core of EU values. The EU has consistently advocated for more decisive legislation and enforcement measures to be taken by our Gulf partners in order to address the situation of migrant workers which, in spite of undeniable progress in recent years, still deserves improvements in accordance with international ILO conventions (in particular convention No 111 on elimination of discrimination in employment and occupation and convention No 81 on labour inspection which have been ratified by Qatar) and in collaboration with the countries of origin of foreign workers- in particular as regards implementation of existing legislation.

Please refer to the answer given to Written Question E-010838/2013 for more details on the EU's position on the issue.

As a general principle, in the field of sport, the HR/VP has to respect the autonomy of sport organisations. The organisation of major sport events such as the World Cup Football is a matter for the selected host country, the International Federation of Football Associations (FIFA) and the national football associations. However, human rights should be respected at all times, including in sport. The organisers of sports events have a responsibility to respect human rights. There is a growing awareness regarding human rights in sport by sport organisations, as it seems that FIFA, and other sport organisations, are giving more attention for this topic.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-013140/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(19 novembre 2013)

Objet: Importations de bois

Il faut restreindre les importations illégales de bois. Il y a deux ans, nous avons voté un règlement censé décourager l'abattage illégal de bois. Le règlement de l'Union européenne dans le domaine du bois interdit l'importation de bois illégal en Europe. Le bois est légal lorsqu'il est abattu, transformé et commercialisé conformément à la législation du pays d'origine. Par illégal, on entend le fait de pénétrer dans une forêt sans autorisation, d'abattre des arbres là où ce n'est pas permis, d'abattre des espèces protégées, de dépasser les volumes autorisés ou d'exporter du bois sans licence. Dans tel pays, la réglementation relative à l'abattage d'arbres est plus stricte que dans tel autre.

1. Quel est le constat après deux ans?

2. Quels sont les pays avec lesquels nous avons signé des accords satisfaisants?

3. Quels sont les pays avec lesquels nous n'avons pas signé d'accords satisfaisants?

4. Tout le monde est-il à présent en mesure de lutter efficacement contre le bois illégal? Cela ne reste-t-il pas apparemment un vœu pieux?

5. Que compte entreprendre la Commission pour améliorer la situation?

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

1. Le règlement (UE) n° 995/2010 ([1]) (règlement de l'UE dans le domaine du bois, règlement «Bois») a en effet été adopté il y a deux ans pour décourager l'exploitation illégale des forêts. Il est entré en vigueur le 1er mars 2013. Un rapport concernant la mise en place du règlement «Bois» sera communiqué au Parlement européen et au Conseil d'ici le mois de décembre 2015, comme le prévoit l'article 20, paragraphe 1 dudit règlement.

2. L'Union européenne a conclu des accords de partenariat volontaires (APV) relatifs à l'application des réglementations forestières, à la gouvernance et aux échanges commerciaux (FLEGT) avec le Cameroun, le Ghana, l'Indonésie, le Libéria, la République centrafricaine et la République du Congo. L'Union européenne négocie actuellement des accords de ce type avec la Côte d'Ivoire, le Gabon, le Guyana, le Honduras, le Laos, la Malaisie, la République démocratique du Congo, la Thaïlande et le Viêt Nam.

3. Les APV FLEGT sont conclus sur la base du volontariat. Une liste des pays ayant signé des accords de ce type est disponible en ligne à l'adresse suivante: http://www.euflegt.efi.int/vpa-countries. Les importations vers l'Union de produits du bois en provenance de pays n'ayant signé aucun APV doivent répondre aux exigences fixées par le règlement «Bois».

4. Un certain nombre de pays n'ont pas seulement manifesté leur volonté politique de s'attaquer à l'exploitation illégale des forêts mais mettent également en place l'arsenal législatif nécessaire pour affronter efficacement ce problème. Outre l'Union européenne, les pays de l'EEE (Norvège, Islande et Liechstenstein) mettent en œuvre le règlement «Bois». La Suisse, les États-Unis et l'Australie adoptent ou ont déjà adopté, des législations ayant des objectifs similaires.

5. La Commission fera tout son possible pour garantir la mise en œuvre uniforme et efficace du règlement «Bois» dans l'UE. Elle poursuivra la mise en œuvre du plan d'action de l'UE relatif à l'application des réglementations forestières, à la gouvernance et aux échanges commerciaux (FLEGT) et collaborera avec les pays producteurs et transformateurs de bois pour décourager encore davantage l'exploitation illégale des forêts.

([1]) Règlement (UE) n° 995/2010 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 20 octobre 2010 établissant les obligations des opérateurs qui mettent du bois et des produits dérivés sur le marché.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013140/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: Timber imports

It is time to clamp down on illegal timber imports. Two years ago, we passed a regulation intended to discourage illegal logging. European Union regulations on timber forbid the import of illegal timber into Europe. Timber is legal when it is felled, processed and marketed in accordance with the law of the country of origin. 'Illegal' means entering a forest without permission, felling trees where this is not allowed, felling protected species, exceeding permitted volumes or exporting timber without a licence. Regulations on felling vary from country to country in terms of how strict they are.

1. What is the situation two years on?

2. Which countries have we signed satisfactory agreements with?

3. Which countries have we not signed satisfactory agreements with?

4. Is everyone now in a position to combat illegal wood effectively? Is this not seemingly just a pious wish?

5. What does the Commission plan to do to improve the situation?

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

1. Regulation (EU) 995/2010 ([1]) (the EU Timber Regulation, EUTR) was indeed passed two years ago to discourage illegal logging. It entered into force on 3 March 2013. A report on EUTR implementation will be sent to the European Parliament and the Council by December 2015, as provided for in Article 20(1) of that regulation.

2. The European Union has concluded Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPAs) with Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Ghana, Indonesia, Liberia and the Republic of Congo. The EU is currently negotiating VPAs with Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon, Guyana, Honduras, Laos, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam.

3. FLEGT VPAs are voluntary. A list of the countries that have signed such agreements is available online: http://www.euflegt.efi.int/vpa-countries. Imports into the EU of timber products from countries that have not signed a VPA still need to meet the legal requirements set out in the EUTR.

4. A number of countries have not only demonstrated the political will to address illegal logging but are also setting up the necessary legislation to effectively tackle it. In addition to the EU, the EEA countries (Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein) are implementing the EUTR. Switzerland, the USA and Australia are adopting or have adopted legislation with similar objectives.

5. The Commission will make every effort to ensure uniform and effective implementation of the EUTR in the EU. It will also continue implementing the EU FLEGT Action Plan and work with timber producing and processing countries to further discourage illegal logging.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 995/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 October 2010 laying down the obligations of operators who place timber and timber products on the market.

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-013141/13
до Комисията
Monika Panayotova (PPE)
(19 ноември 2013 г.)

Относно: Навременно прилагане на мерките по „гаранция за младежта"

Инициативата за младежка заетост на Европейската комисия получи принципна подкрепа от Съвета през април 2013 г. В рамките на преговорите за Многогодишната финансова рамка (2014—2020 г.) параметрите за финансиране на инициативата претърпяха две основни изменения — от една страна бюджетът беше увеличен от 6 млрд. на 8,1 млрд. евро; от друга — бе добавено изискването средствата да бъдат изразходвани през първите две години от програмния период. Един от основните аргументи за поставянето на тази времева рамка бе да се гарантира бързото реализиране на мерките по инициативата, в това число и гаранцията за младежта, както и да се даде възможност за отделянето на допълнително финансиране при нужда след очакваното преразглеждане на МФР (2014—2020 г.) през 2016 г.

Същевременно, както Комисията обръща внимание в работния документ, придружаващ документа „Предложение за препоръка на Съвета за създаване на гаранция за младежта" (COM(2012)0729), успешното създаване и функциониране на схемата за гаранцията изискват ранна намеса и започване на дейностите. Държавите членки следва да определят като приоритет мерките за младежка заетост в националните бюджети и да отделят необходимото внимание в споразуменията си за партньорство на конкретните цели, свързани с прилагането на схеми от гаранцията за младежта.

В този контекст:

1. Забавянето на МФР може ли да послужи за оправдание за забавянето на подготовката от държавите членки на споразуменията за партньорство? Ако да, какви мерки се предвиждат за неговото предотвратяване и стартиране на оперативните програми в срок?

2. Предвиден ли е механизъм за интензивно прилагане на мерките по гаранциятапрез първите две години на новия програмен период в контекста на забавенотоприемане на МФР?

Отговор, даден от Ласло Андор от името на Комисията
(16 януари 2014 г.)

Късното приемане на многогодишната финансова рамка не би следвало да доведе до забавяне в изпълнението на Инициативата за младежка заетост (ИМЗ). Регламентът съдържа няколко мерки, чиято цел е да се гарантира нейното скорошно изпълнение:

Сумата от 6 млрд. евро в рамките на ИМЗ ще бъде заделена предварително, така че всички тези средства да могат да бъдат поети като задължение през 2014 г. и 2015 г.

Държавите членки могат по изключение да започнат да изпълняват мерки по ИМЗ още от 1 септември 2013 г., като разходите ще им бъдат възстановени със задна дата след одобряването на програмите и подаването на исканията за плащане.

Държавите членки могат да приемат специални оперативни програми по ИМЗ преди подаването и приемането на съответното им споразумение за партньорство.

Освен това в регламента са определени и мерки за увеличаване на наличното финансиране от самото начало на програмния период:

Държавите членки ще получават предварително финансиране за средствата по ИМЗ (както по линия на ЕСФ, така и специално отпуснати за ИМЗ).

Също така ще им бъдат предоставени специални и по-благоприятни схеми за съфинансиране.

От държавите членки с високи нива на безработица сред младите хора (т.е. държавите — бенефициери на средства по ИМЗ), бе поискано до края на декември 2013 г. да съставят планове за изпълнение на схемата „Гаранция за младежта" (Youth Guarantee). Всички останали държави членки следва да представят своите планове до пролетта на 2014 г. От държавите членки се очаква паралелно да изготвят и да представят възможно най-скоро (части от) оперативните програми, свързани с младежта, които ще послужат за основа за отпускането на финансово подпомагане по ЕСФ и ИМЗ за изпълнението на схемата „Гаранция за младежта". Оперативните програми следва да бъдат в пълно съответствие с плановете за изпълнение на схемата „Гаранция за младежта".

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013141/13
to the Commission
Monika Panayotova (PPE)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: Timely implementation of Youth Guarantee measures

The Youth Employment Initiative of the European Commission received support from the Council in April 2013. Within the framework of negotiations on the Multiannual Financial Framework (2014-2020), the funding parameters of the initiative underwent two major changes, namely, the budget was increased from EUR 6 billion to EUR 8.1 billion, on the one hand; and, on the other hand, a requirement that the funds be spent within the first two years of the programming period was introduced. One of the main arguments for setting this timeframe was to ensure the rapid implementation of the measures in the initiative, including the Youth Guarantee, and to allow for the allocation of additional funding if required after the anticipated revision of the MFF (2014-2020) in 2016.

However, as the Commission noted in the working document accompanying the document 'Proposal for a Council Recommendation on Establishing a Youth Guarantee' (COM(2012)0729), the successful establishment and operation of a guarantee scheme requires early intervention and activation. Member States should give priority to youth employment measures in national budgets and pay the necessary attention in partnership agreements to the specific objectives related to the implementation of Youth Guarantee schemes.

1. Could the delay of the MFF serve as an excuse for the delay in the preparation of partnership agreements by Member States? If so, what measures are envisaged to prevent this and ensure that the operational programmes start on time?

2. Is there a mechanism for intensive implementation of guarantee measures in the first two years of the new programming period in the context of the delayed adoption of the MFF?

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

The late adoption of the multiannual financial framework (MFF) should not delay the implementation of the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI). To this end, the regulation sets out several measures to ensure its quick implementation:

The EUR 6 billion under the YEI will be frontloaded so that all these funds could be committed in 2014 and 2015.

Member States can exceptionally start implementing YEI-related measures already as of 1 September 2013 and will be reimbursed 'retroactively' when the programmes are approved and payment claims submitted.

Member States may adopt a YEI dedicated Operational Programme before the submission and adoption of their Partnership Agreement.

The regulation also sets out measures to increase the available funding right from the start of the programming period:

Member States will receive pre-financing for the YEI resources (both ESF resources and specific allocation for YEI).

They will also be able to make use of specific and more beneficial co-financing arrangements.

Member States suffering from high youth unemployment (i.e. those benefiting from the YEI) were asked to draw up Youth Guarantee Implementation Plans by the end of December 2013. All other Member States should submit their plans by spring 2014. Member States are expected to draw up in parallel and submit as soon as possible the youth-related (parts of) Operational Programmes which will be the basis for ESF and YEI financial support to the youth guarantee implementation. Operational Programmes should be fully coherent with the Youth Guarantee Implementation Plans.

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-013143/13
до Комисията
Monika Panayotova (PPE)
(19 ноември 2013 г.)

Относно: Равен достъп до висококачествено образование и грижи в ранна детска възраст

Образованието и грижите в ранна детска възраст (ОГРДВ) са най-важната основа за успешното учене през целия живот, за социалната интеграция, личното развитие и шансовете за намиране на работа в бъдеще (COM(2011)0066). Осигуряването на всеобщ равностоен достъп до висококачествено ОГРДВ би допринесло за изпълнението на стратегията „Европа 2020“, по-специално по отношение на целите за намаляване на преждевременно напускащите училище под 10 % и предпазване на поне 20 милиона души от застрашаващата ги бедност и социално изключване.

Отчитайки тези факти, държавите членки си поставят целта до 2020 г. най-малко 95 % от децата между 4 години и възрастта за започване на задължително начално образование да участват в ОГРДВ („ECET 2020“, (2009/C 119/02)). Същевременно по отношение на ОГРДВ държавите членки са изправени пред двойно предизвикателство: да предоставят достъп до ОГРДВ за всички деца и да повишат качеството на предоставяното ОГРДВ. За да подпомогне държавите членки в това отношение, през 2012 г. Комисията сформира тематична работна група с цел определяне на рамка за качество на ОГРДВ на ниво ЕС.

В тази връзка:

1. Какъв е напредъкът в работата на работната група за разработването на рамка за качество на ОГРДВ на равнище ЕС?

2. Какви други конкретни мерки предвижда Комисията за подпомагане на държавите членки в гарантирането на равен достъп до ОГРДВ и неговото високо качество?

Отговор, даден от г-жа Василиу, от името на Комисията
(17 януари 2014 г.)

Последното издание на „Образователен наблюдател“ (Education Monitor) показва, че участието в образованието и грижите в ранна детска възраст в Европа е средно 92,3 %. Така че целевият европейски показател за 95-процентно участие до 2020 г. изглежда реалистичен. Въпреки това множество групи, и особено уязвимите, не са обхванати, а в същото време качеството на предоставяните грижи е променливо и често не се следи, както подобава. Това се отнася особено за най-малките възрастови групи (децата под тригодишна възраст), както показва последният Доклад относно целта от Барселона. [1]

В този контекст и в съответствие с предложенията от Заключенията на Съвета от 2011 г. относно образованието и грижите в ранна детска възраст, тематичната работна група работи по предложение за Европейска рамка за качество и ще приключи изготвянето му през 2014 г. След като бъде приета, рамката за качество следва да бъде в подкрепа на държавите членки за подобряване на качеството и за наблюдение на техните системи.

Освен това с Препоръката „Инвестициите в децата“ [2] се определят общите принципи за ефективни политически мероприятия в ключови области в подкрепа на усилията на ЕС и държавите членки за намаляване на бедността сред децата. В Препоръката се акцентира съществено върху достъпа до висококачествено образование и грижи в ранна детска възраст.

През 2013 г. на четиринадесет държави членки бяха отправени специфични за всяка от тях препоръки във връзка с достъпа до образование и грижи в ранна детска възраст и тяхното качество. В периода 2014 — 2020 г. програмата „Еразъм+“ и Кохезионният фонд ще подкрепят държавите членки в усилията им за справяне с тези предизвикателства и за развитието на услугите в сферата на образованието и грижите в ранна детска възраст, особено в рамките на тематичните цели, свързани с образованието и обучението, социалното приобщаване и борбата с бедността.

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[1] Доклад на Комисията до Европейския парламент, Съвета, Европейския икономически и социален комитет и Комитета на регионите: Цели от Барселона. Развиване на детските заведения за деца в ранна детска възраст в Европа за постигането на устойчив и приобщаващ растеж. Европейска комисия, 2013 г. http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0322:FIN:BG:PDF.

[2] Препоръка на Комисията от 20 февруари 2013 г.: Инвестициите в децата — изход от порочния кръг на неравностойното положение, C(2013) 778 final http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:059:0005:0016:BG:PDF.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013143/13
to the Commission
Monika Panayotova (PPE)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: Equal access to quality Early Childhood Education and Care

Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) is the essential foundation for successful lifelong learning, social integration, personal development and later employability (COM(2011)0066). Ensuring universal equal access to high quality ECEC would contribute to the implementation of the Europe 2020 strategy, in particular in relation to the targets of reducing early school leaving to below 10% and lifting at least 20 million people out of the risk of poverty and social exclusion.

Taking these facts into consideration, Member States have set a target for at least 95% of children between age 4 and the start of compulsory education to participate in ECEC by 2020 ('ET 2020', (2009/C 119/02)). However, Member States are faced with a two-fold challenge with regard to ECEC: to provide access to ECEC for all children and to raise the quality of the ECEC provided. To assist Member States in this regard, the Commission set up a Thematic Working Group in 2012 to determine the quality framework for ECEC at EU level.

1. What progress has been made in the work of the working group to develop a quality framework for ECEC at EU level?

2. What other specific measures does the Commission envisage to assist Member States in ensuring equal access to ECEC and the high quality of provision?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(17 January 2014)

The latest Education Monitor indicates that the average participation in ECEC in Europe was 92.3%. Thus, the European benchmark level aim of 95% participation by 2020 appears to be within reach. However, many-particularly vulnerable-groups are not being reached while the quality of provision varies and is often not properly monitored. This is particularly the case for the younger age group (children under three), as the latest Report on the Barcelona target shows. ([1])

In this context — in line with what was proposed by the Council Conclusions on early childhood education and care (ECEC) in 2011 — the Thematic Working Group is working on a proposal for a European Quality Framework and will finish its work in the course of 2014. Once adopted, the Quality Framework should support Member States in improving the quality and monitoring of their systems.

Furthermore, the recommendation on investing in children ([2]) sets out common principles for effective policy intervention in key areas, so as to support EU and Member States' efforts to reduce child poverty. Access to high quality ECEC is an important focus of the recommendation.

In 2013, fourteen Member States received Country-Specific Recommendations in relation to access and quality of ECEC. In the 2014-2020 period, the Erasmus+ Programme and Cohesion Funds will support Member States in their efforts to address these challenges and develop ECEC services, particularly under thematic objectives related to education and training, social inclusion, and combatting poverty.

([1]) Report from the Commission to the European Parliament , the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Commiittee of the Regions: Barcelona objectives. The development of childcare facilities for young children in Europe with a view to sustainable and inclusive growth. European Commission 2013. http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/documents/130531_barcelona_en.pdf

([2]) Commission Recommendation of 20.2.2013. Investing in children: breaking the cycle of disadvantage C(2013) 778 final. http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/files/c_2013_778_en.pdf

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-013145/13
до Комисията
Monika Panayotova (PPE)
(19 ноември 2013 г.)

Относно: Гарантиране на пълната свобода на движение в ЕС за български и румънски граждани след 1 януари 2014 г.

На 1 януари 2014 г. предстои да отпаднат ограниченията за български и румънски граждани за свободен достъп до пазара на труда на всички държави членки в ЕС. В тази връзка в някои държави членки съществуват страхове от повишаване на нивата на безработица и „социален туризъм“, свързани с прилива на имигранти от България и Румъния.

Съвременно проучване на Комисията от 14 октомври 2013 г. относно последствията от мобилността на гражданите за социалните системи на държавите членки сочи, че имигрантите от България и Румъния не натоварват социалните системи в никоя от държавите, в които са пребивавали до този момент, а носят добавена стойност за развитието на единния пазар на ЕС.

Въпреки гореспоменатите данни с темата все по-често се спекулира, като на моменти се стига до всяване не само на безпочвени страхове, но и до насаждане на враждебни нагласи сред местното население в държавите членки.

В това отношение предвижда ли Комисията мерки, за да гарантира, че след 1 януари 2014 г. законовото право на пълна свобода на движението за български и румънски граждани в ЕС няма да бъде възпрепятствано от дискриминационни практики (от правен или неправен характер) в държавите членки на ЕС, които са запазили ограниченията си до този момент?

Отговор, даден от г-н Андор от името на Комисията
(22 януари 2014 г.)

Румънските и българските граждани сега се ползват в пълна степен във всички държави членки от правата, дадени от постиженията на правото на ЕС относно свободното движение на работници — по-специално член 45 от ДФЕС и Регламент (ЕС) № 492/2011. Комисията продължава да наблюдава спазването от страна на държавите членки на правилата на ЕС в тази област.

Уважаемият член на Парламента се приканва да обърне внимание на отговора на Въпрос E-009936/2013 от подобно естество.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013145/13
to the Commission
Monika Panayotova (PPE)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: Ensuring full freedom of movement within the EU for Bulgarian and Romanian citizens after 1 January 2014

The restrictions on free access to the labour market of all European Union Member States for Bulgarian and Romanian citizens are to be lifted on 1 January 2014. In this connection, there are fears in certain Member States that there will be increased levels of unemployment and 'social tourism' associated with the influx of immigrants from Bulgaria and Romania.

However, a study by the Commission on 14 October 2013 about the effect that the mobility of citizens has had on social security systems of Member States suggests that immigrants from Bulgaria and Romania are not a burden on the social security system of any state where they have been to date, and that they bring added value to the development of the single market in the EU.

Despite the aforementioned data on the subject, there has been increasing speculation which not only sows baseless fears but also leads to hostile attitudes among the local population in Member States.

Is the Commission going to provide measures to ensure that after 1 January 2014 the legal right to full freedom of movement for Bulgarian and Romanian citizens in the EU will not be hindered by discriminatory practices (legal or illegal) in EU Member States which have maintained restrictions to date?

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

Romanian and Bulgarian nationals now enjoy fully in all Member States the rights given by the EU *acquis* concerning the free movement of workers, in particular Article 45 TFEU and Regulation (EU) No 492/2011. The Commission continues to monitor Member States' compliance with the EU rules in this area.

The Honourable Member is referred also to the reply given to Question E-009936/2013 on a similar matter.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-013146/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(19 noiembrie 2013)

Subiect: Virusul hepatitei E amenință Europa

Hepatita E este principala cauză a epidemiilor de hepatită virală acută la nivel mondial, arată un studiu francez recent.

Până nu demult, infecțiile cu virusul hepatitei E (HEV) existau în țările dezvoltate doar ca urmare a călătoriilor în zone cu risc, precum India, Mexic sau țările din Orientul Mijlociu. Numărul cazurilor de hepatită E apărute spontan în țările Uniunii Europene a crescut în ultima vreme, tulpinile virale fiind comune la om și la unele animale. La om, populația-țintă este reprezentată de adulți tineri și de vârstă medie (între 15 și 40 de ani); simptomele sunt cele tipice hepatitei virale acute și includ icter, anorexie, greață, durere abdominală, febră. Rata mortalității la om este de 0,2-1% la populația generală, dar ajunge până la 15-25% la femeile însărcinate.

În acest context:

1. Ce măsuri prevede Comisia pentru a preveni răspândirea acestui virus în Europa?

2. Care sunt acțiunile prevăzute de Centrul European de Prevenire și Control al Bolilor în legătură cu virusul HEV?

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(17 ianuarie 2014)

Europa nu este o zonă endemică pentru hepatită, dar au fost depistate cazuri izolate de hepatită E în Franța, Țările de Jos, Spania, Ungaria, Regatul Unit, Danemarca și Norvegia, fapt care indică o largă răspândire a virusului în Uniune. Anumite studii recente au arătat că, în comparație cu populația generală, infecția apare cu precădere la lucrători din silvicultură și la persoane cu expunere profesională la porci, deși, până în prezent, nu sunt disponibile cifre precise care să demonstreze creșterea incidenței. În plus, există dovezi că hepatita E se poate transmite prin transfuzie sanguină și, recent, acest virus a fost găsit în sânge donat în mai multe țări.

Dacă este necesar, Centrul European de Prevenire și Control al Bolilor va oferi o evaluare a riscului prezentat de această situație în UE, însoțită de eventuala necesitate a unei supravegheri în întreaga UE a hepatitei E atât la oameni, cât și la animale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013146/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: Europe threatened by hepatitis E virus

According to a recent French study, hepatitis E is the main cause of acute viral hepatitis epidemics across the world.

Until quite recently, infections caused by hepatitis E virus (HEV) occurred in developed countries only as a result of people travelling to risk areas such as India, Mexico or countries in the Middle East. The number of cases of hepatitis E which have occurred spontaneously in EU countries has risen recently, with viral strains being common to both people and some animals. The target human population is young and middle-aged adults (between the ages of 15 and 40). The symptoms are those typical of acute viral hepatitis and include jaundice, anorexia, nausea, abdominal pain and fever. The human mortality rate is 0.2-1% of the general population, but reaching 15-25% in pregnant women.

In this context:

1. What measures does the Commission envisage in order to prevent the spread of this virus in Europe?

2. What actions does the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control intend to take to tackle HEV?

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

Europe is not an endemic region as regards Hepatitis, but sporadic Hepatitis E cases have been detected in France, The Netherlands, Spain, Hungary, the United Kingdom, Denmark, and Norway, indicating a wide distribution of the virus in the Union. A number of recent studies showed an increased prevalence of infection in forestry workers and people with occupational exposure to pigs as compared to the general population, although precise figures which can demonstrate the rise in incidence are not available so far. Furthermore, there is evidence that Hepatitis E can be transmitted by blood transfusion and has recently been found in donated blood in a number of countries.

If needed, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control will provide a risk assessment of the situation in the EU, including the possible need for EU wide surveillance of Hepatitis E both in humans and animals.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-013147/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(19 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Αναθεώρηση Επιχειρησιακών Προγραμμάτων του ΕΣΠΑ 2007-2013

Η επικείμενη αναθεώρηση των Επιχειρησιακών Προγραμμάτων (ΕΠ) του ΕΣΠΑ 2007-2013 εστιάζεται στην επιπλέον χρηματοδότηση με 2,2 δις μεγάλων έργων για τους αυτοκινητόδρομους. Το αναθεωρημένο ύψος της συμμετοχής των συγχρηματοδοτούμενων πόρων στο κόστος των έργων αυξάνεται σημαντικά, ενώ παράλληλα πλείστα άλλα ΕΠ χάνουν τη δυνατότητα να υλοποιήσουν άλλα έργα. Η υπερχρηματοδότηση για την υλοποίηση οδικών αξόνων γίνεται σε περίοδο σοβαρής αύξησης της φτώχειας και της ανεργίας, αντί η αναθεώρηση να ευνοήσει τομείς με δυναμικό δημιουργίας πολλαπλάσιων βιώσιμων θέσεων εργασίας, με αμοιβές που εξασφαλίζουν αξιοπρεπή διαβίωση.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1α. Ισχύει πως το φυσικό αντικείμενο (π.χ. του Ε65) μειώνεται, ενώ αυξάνεται το συνολικό κόστος των έργων; Για κάθε ένα από τα εν λόγω έργα, υπολογίζοντας το συνολικό κόστος (περιλαμβανομένης και της μη συγχρηματοδοτούμενης δαπάνης), κατά πόσο αποκλίνει το μέσο κόστος από τον ευρωπαϊκό μέσο όρο υλοποίησης αντίστοιχων έργων; Η τεκμηρίωση της αναγκαιότητας αναθεώρησης σύμφωνα με τα οριζόμενα στον 1083/2006 είναι επαρκής; Πόσο εύλογη είναι η αύξηση της χρηματοδότησής τους ([1]);

β. Ποιο το αναθεωρημένο συνολικό κόστος των αυτοκινητοδρόμων στα Ε.Π. του ΕΣΠΑ 2007-2013 και ποια ποσά θα μεταφερθούν ίσως στην επόμενη προγραμματική περίοδο;

2. Μπορεί να παραπέμψει σε μελέτες τεκμηρίωσης της σκοπιμότητας αναθεώρησης και του εύλογου της απόφασης παρουσιάζοντας, με μετρήσιμους δείκτες, πώς η ολοκλήρωση της υλοποίησης των αυτοκινητοδρόμων με το αναθεωρημένο κόστος ωφελεί περισσότερο τις τοπικές κοινωνίες συγκριτικά με ό,τι προβλεπόταν ή με χρηματοδότηση σιδηροδρομικών έργων και έργων αστικής συγκοινωνίας που δημιουργούν έως και διπλάσιες θέσεις εργασίας ([2]);

3. Σε απάντηση σε ερώτησή μου (E-005394/2013) ([3]), η Επιτροπή αναφέρεται στην αναθεώρηση του κόστους εξαιτίας και «… της ικανότητας των έργων να αντεπεξέλθουν στο χρέος». Αποτελεί σύμφωνα με τους κανονισμούς για τις δημόσιες συμβάσεις υποχρέωση του Δημοσίου να παρεμβαίνει σε περιπτώσεις μη ικανότητας των έργων να αντεπεξέλθουν στο χρέος τους; Αυξάνεται η συμμετοχή του Ελληνικού Δημοσίου στο κόστος των έργων και η ευθύνη που αναλαμβάνει σε περίπτωση μη υλοποίησης;

4. Κρίνει εφικτή την υλοποίηση των έργων αυτών μέχρι το τέλος του 2015;

Απάντηση του κ. Hahn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(29 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

1. Το ελληνικό δημόσιο και οι ανάδοχοι συμφώνησαν να μειώσουν το φυσικό αντικείμενο του Ε-65 και της Ολυμπίας Οδού λόγω περιβαλλοντικών ζητημάτων, σημαντικής μείωσης της κυκλοφορίας, μείωσης των εσόδων κ.λπ. Το συνολικό κόστος του Ε-65 και της Ολυμπίας Οδού δεν θα αυξηθεί συγκριτικά με το συνολικό κόστος που είχε προβλεφθεί όταν υπεγράφησαν οι συμβάσεις παραχώρησης.

Η συνεισφορά της ΕΕ αυξάνεται κατόπιν της δήλωσης, από το ελληνικό δημόσιο, των επιλέξιμων δαπανών των κρατικών ενισχύσεων και των διοδίων. Δεν είναι δυνατόν να δοθεί στον κύριο βουλευτή μια μέση σύγκριση του κόστους. Κάθε αυτοκινητόδρομος έχει τις δικές του ιδιαιτερότητες (ορεινό ανάγλυφο του εδάφους, κόστος απαλλοτρίωσης κ.λπ.).

Το συνολικό επιλέξιμο δημόσιο κόστος των 4 αυτοκινητοδρόμων κατά την περίοδο 2007-2013 ανέρχεται σε περίπου 4,6 δισ. ευρώ. Δεν προβλέπεται να μεταφερθεί κανένα ποσό στην περίοδο 2014-2020.

2. Η Επιτροπή ενέκρινε τα μεγάλα έργα ύστερα από αξιολόγηση των αιτήσεων, σύμφωνα με τις συνήθεις διαδικασίες. Τα έργα έχουν θετικούς κοινωνικοοικονομικούς δείκτες.

([1]) http://www.edulll.gr/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Trop.Egkykliou_ODIGIES_DIAXEIRISHS_ANATHEWRHSH_2013.pdf, σημείο 2.Β.
([2]) http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/research/the-best-stimulus-for-the-money/what-we-learned-from-the-stimulus/
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2013-005394&language=EL

3. Η νομοθεσία της ΕΕ δεν υποχρεώνει ένα κράτος μέλος να παρέμβει εάν τα έργα δεν είναι ικανά να αντεπεξέλθουν στο χρέος. Τα κράτη μέλη είναι ελεύθερα να παρέχουν υποστήριξη, σύμφωνα με τη νομοθεσία της ΕΕ, σε έργα υποδομής. Η Ελλάδα κοινοποίησε τα συμπληρωματικά μέτρα υποστήριξης. Η Επιτροπή κατέληξε στο συμπέρασμα ότι ένα μέρος των μέτρων συνιστούσαν κρατικές ενισχύσεις συμβατές με το άρθρο 107 παράγραφος 3 στοιχείο γ) της ΣΛΕΕ ([4]), δεδομένου ότι συνέβαλλαν στην επίτευξη στόχου κοινού συμφέροντος και ήταν αναγκαία και αναλογικά. Όσον αφορά τη δυνατότητα εφαρμογής των κανόνων για τις δημόσιες συμβάσεις, οι κανόνες αυτοί εφαρμόζονται κατ' αρχήν μόνο για το στάδιο της ανάθεσης και δεν επιβάλλουν στις αναθέτουσες αρχές καμία υποχρέωση παρέμβασης σε περίπτωση που έργα τα οποία έχουν ανατεθεί αντιμετωπίζουν προβλήματα βιωσιμότητας του χρέους.

4. Οι αυτοκινητόδρομοι θα πρέπει να έχουν ολοκληρωθεί έως το τέλος του 2015.

([4]) Συνθήκη για τη λειτουργία της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013147/13
to the Commission
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: Review of NSRF 2007-2013 operational programmes

The imminent review of NSRF 2007-2013 operational programmes will focus on additional financing of EUR 2.2 billion for major motorway projects. The revised contribution from co-financed resources to the cost of the projects has been significantly increased; at the same time, many other operational programmes will be unable to implement other projects. This over-financing to build new roads coincides with a massive increase in poverty and unemployment and should be used instead in sectors with the potential to create large numbers of sustainable jobs which pay enough to provide a decent standard of living.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1a) Is it true that the physical scope (e.g. of the E65) will be reduced, while the overall cost of the projects will rise? If the overall cost (including non-co-financed expenditure) is calculated for each of the projects in question, by how much does the average cost differ from the European average for implementing similar projects? Has the need for review been substantiated in accordance with the requirements of Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006? How reasonable is the increase in financing? ([1])

b) What is the revised overall cost of motorways in the NSRF 2007-2013 operational programmes and what sums will perhaps be carried forward to the next programming period?

2. Can it cite studies which substantiate the purpose of the revision and whether the decision was reasonable, illustrating, using quantifiable indicators, that completion of the motorways at the revised cost will be more beneficial to local communities than (a) what was originally planned or (b) financing railway projects and urban transport projects which create up to twice the number of jobs? ([2])

3. In reply to my question (E-005394/2013), ([3]) the Commission stated that the cost had been revised partly due to 'the capacity of the projects to sustain debt'. Does the State have an obligation under public procurement regulations to intervene if projects are unable to sustain their debt? Will there be any increase in the contribution by the Greek State to the cost of the projects and its liability if they are not implemented?

4. Does it consider that these projects can feasibly be completed by the end of 2015?

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

1. The Greek state and the concessionaires agreed to reduce the physical scope of E-65 and Olympia Odos due to environmental considerations, sharp reduction of traffic, reduction of revenues etc. The overall cost of E-65 and Olympia Odos will not rise in comparison to the overall costs envisaged at the time when the original concession agreements were signed.

The EU contribution is increased following the declaration by the Greek State of the eligible expenditure of state aid and tolls. It is not possible to provide the Honourable Member with an average comparison of costs. Each motorway has its own specificities (mountainous terrain, expropriation costs etc.).

The overall total public eligible cost of the 4 motorways under 2007-2013 is approximately EUR 4.6 billion. No sum is forecast to be carried over to 2014-2020.

2. The Commission adopted the major projects following the assessment of the applications, in accordance with normal procedures. The projects have positive socioeconomic indicators.

([1]) http://www.edulll.gr/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Trop.Egkykliou_ODIGIES_DIAXEIRISHS_ANATHEWRHSH_2013.pdf point 2.B.
([2]) http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/research/the-best-stimulus-for-the-money/what-we-learned-from-the-stimulus/
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2013-005394&language=EN

3. EC law does not oblige a State to intervene if projects are unable to sustain debt. Member States are free to provide support, in line with EC law, to infrastructure projects. Greece notified the additional support measures. The Commission concluded that part of the measures constituted state aid compatible with Article 107(3)(c) of the TFEU ([4]), since they contributed to an objective of common interest and they were necessary and proportionate. Concerning the applicability of public procurement rules, such rules apply in principle only to the award stage and do not include any obligation upon contracting authorities to intervene in case the projects awarded face debt sustainability problems.

4. The motorways should be completed by the end of 2015.

([4]) Treaty on the Functioning of the EU.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-013148/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(19 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Περαιτέρω διευκρινίσεις για το πρόγραμμα αποκατάστασης στη λιμνοθάλασσα της Επανομής

Στην απάντηση της Επιτροπής στην ερώτησή μου (E-008076/2013) σχετικά με το πρόγραμμα Life09 NAT/GR/000343 «ACCOLAGOONS» στη λιμνοθάλασσα της Επανομής (Δίκτυο NATURA 2000, SPA GR1220011 και SAC GR1220012), αναφέρεται ότι «Οι επιδόσεις της Στρατηγικής Περιβαλλοντικής Εκτίμησης (ΣΠΕ), που προβλέπονται στη δράση A7, ολοκληρώθηκαν σύμφωνα με την εθνική νομοθεσία και υποβλήθηκαν από την Περιφέρεια Κεντρικής Μακεδονίας για έγκριση στο Υπουργείο Περιβάλλοντος». Κάτι τέτοιο δεν ισχύει. Το ΥΠΕΚΑ πρόσφατα επέστρεψε τη Στρατηγική Μελέτη Περιβαλλοντικών Επιπτώσεων (ΣΜΠΕ) (), αναφέροντας ότι, σύμφωνα με την εθνική νομοθεσία ενσωμάτωσης της Οδηγίας 2001/42/ΕΚ ([1]), η δράση A7 συνδέεται άμεσα με τη διαχείριση και προστασία περιοχών NATURA 2000 και επομένως για το έργο οφείλει να ακολουθηθεί η διαδικασία του Ν.1650/1986 ([2]). Διαδικασία που οφείλει να ακολουθηθεί και για τις δράσεις A2, A3 και A5. Επομένως, όχι μόνο δεν υφίσταται απόφαση έγκρισης ΣΜΠΕ η οποία εκπονείται στη ΣΠΕ (άρθρο 6, παρ. 1) και δεν έχει πραγματοποιηθεί η προβλεπόμενη διαδικασία διαβούλευσης με το ενδιαφερόμενο κοινό (άρθρο 7, παρ. 4), αλλά οι δράσεις A2, A3, A5 και A7 έχουν ολοκληρωθεί κατά παράβαση της ευρωπαϊκής και εθνικής νομοθεσίας. Τελικά, η άδεια που εκδόθηκε από την Περιφέρεια Κεντρικής Μακεδονίας για τα έργα στον οικότοπο προτεραιότητας ευρωπαϊκού ενδιαφέροντος ουδεμία απόφαση έγκρισης ΣΜΠΕ έχει λάβει υπόψη και ουδόλως είναι πλήρως εναρμονισμένη με τις δράσεις A και τις εγκρίσεις αυτών βάσει της νομοθεσίας γιατί τέτοιες δεν υφίστανται. Επίσης, στην απάντηση αναφέρεται ότι «Οι εργασίες που προτείνονται στο πλαίσιο της δράσης C2 είναι σύμφωνες με τις προτάσεις της διαχειριστικής μελέτης για την περιοχή που εκπονήθηκε το 2002 από την ΕΟΕ για λογαριασμό της ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΑ ΤΟΥΡΙΣΤΙΚΑ ΑΚΙΝΗΤΑ ΑΕ». Ωστόσο στις σελίδες 31 και 91 της μελέτης αναφέρονται ακριβώς τα αντίθετα ([3]).

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Επιμένει ότι τηρήθηκαν όλες οι νόμιμες διαδικασίες όπως αυτές περιγράφονται και χρηματοδοτήθηκαν από την ΕΕ;

2. Ποιες τεκμηριωμένες διαβεβαιώσεις μπορεί να παράσχει ότι οι παρεμβάσεις της δράσης C2 δεν θα οδηγήσουν στην αποστράγγιση και ολοκληρωτική αλλοίωση του χαρακτήρα του συγκεκριμένου οικότοπου προτεραιότητας, παραβιάζοντας τις Οδηγίες 92/43/ΕΟΚ και 2009/147/ΕΟΚ;

Απάντηση του κ. Potočnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(17 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Σύμφωνα με τις πληροφορίες που διαθέτει η Επιτροπή, έχουν τηρηθεί όλες οι επίσημα απαιτούμενες νομικές διαδικασίες, και συγκεκριμένα η ειδική διαδικασία περιβαλλοντικής αδειοδότησης, σύμφωνα με τον νόμο 4014/2011.

Από τις πληροφορίες που έλαβε η Επιτροπή προκύπτει ότι σκοπός των τάφρων είναι η διοχέτευση του νερού από τη λεκάνη απορροής στη μόνιμη ζώνη πλημμυρών του υγροβιότοπου, η οποία βρίσκεται σε χαμηλότερο υψομετρικό, και, επομένως, είναι απίθανο να υπάρξει κίνδυνος αποστράγγισης της λιμνοθάλασσας.

([1]) Αριθ. ΥΠΕΧΩΔΕ/ΕΥΠΕ/οικ.107017/06 (ΦΕΚ-1225Β/2006) http://goo.gl/dDlJBA

([2]) Άρθρο 18, παρ. 5 του Ν. 1650/1986 «Για την προστασία του περιβάλλοντος» (ΦΕΚ-160Α/1986) http://goo.gl/SPCFkP, Άρθρο 15, παρ. 1γ του Ν.2742/1999 «Χωροταξικός σχεδιασμός και αειφόρος ανάπτυξη & άλλες διατάξεις» (ΦΕΚ-207Α/1999) http://goo.gl/wG7YuU, Άρθρο 4, παρ. 5 του Ν.3937/2011 «Διατήρηση της βιοποικιλότητας και άλλες διατάξεις» (ΦΕΚ-60Α/2011) http://goo.gl/0gdyF1

([3]) Σύμφωνα με τη μελέτη «Διαχειριστικό Σχέδιο για τη λιμνοθάλασσα της Επανομής (2002)»: Οι στραγγιστικές τάφροι που διανοίχτηκαν τη δεκαετία του 1950 αλλοίωσαν την υδρολογική ισορροπία της περιοχής (σελ. 31). Αποτέλεσμα της κατάστασης αυτής ήταν η αλλαγή στην κατανομή και σύνθεση των φυτικών διαπλάσεων που επακόλουθα επηρέασε τα ενδιαιτήματα της πανίδας και της ορνιθοπανίδας (σελ. 91).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013148/13
to the Commission
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: Additional clarification regarding the Epanomi Lagoon restoration programme

The Commission stated in its reply to my question (E-008076/2013) concerning the Life09 Accolagoons programme (NAT/GR/000343) for Epanomi Lagoon (Natura 2000 network, SPA GR1220011 and SAC GR1220012) that 'the performance of a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), foreseen in action A7, was completed in accordance with national legislation and submitted by the Region of Central Macedonia (RCM) to the Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change for approval'. That is not true. The Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change recently returned the Environmental Impacts Study (EIS) ([1]) on the grounds that, according to the national legislation transposing Directive 2001/42/EC ([2]), action A7 is directly linked to the management and protection of Natura 2000 areas and the project therefore needed to follow the procedure in Law 1650/1986. ([3]) This procedure also needs to be followed for actions A2, A3 and A5. Therefore, not only has no decision been adopted approving the EIS carried out in relation to the SEA, as required under Article 6(1), no public consultation procedure has been held, as required under Article 7(4) and, moreover, actions A2, A3, A5 and A7 have been completed in breach of European and national legislation. Finally, the permit issued by the Region of Central Macedonia for works in the priority natural habitat of Community interest does not take account of any EIS approval whatsoever and is not, by any stretch of the imagination, fully harmonised with the 'A' series of actions and approval thereof based on the legislation, because no such approvals exist. Furthermore, the Commission states in its reply that 'the works proposed under action C2 are in line with the proposals of the Management Study on the area prepared in 2002 by HOS on behalf of Ellinika Touristika Akinita SA'. However, precisely the opposite is stated on pages 31 and 91 of the study. ([4])

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Does it insist that all legal procedures were complied with, as described and financed by the EU?

2. What substantiated assurances can it give that interventions under action C2 will not result in this particular priority natural habitat being drained and completely altered, in breach of Directives 92/43/EEC and 2009/147/EEC?

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

According to the information available to the Commission, all formally required legal procedures have been followed, namely a specific environmental permitting procedure in accordance with law 4014/2011.

The information the Commission has received indicates that the canals are intended to direct water from the catchment area to the wetland's permanent flooding area, which has a lower elevation, and therefore unlikely to risk draining the lagoon.

([1]) No YPECHODE/EYPE/Section B 168820 of 16 October 2013.
([2]) No YPECHODE/EYPE/oik.107017/06 (Government Gazette II/1225/2006) http://goo/gl/dD1JBA
([3]) Article 18(5) of Law 1650/1986 on environmental protection (Government Gazette I/160/1986) http://goo.gl/SPCFkP
Article 15(1c) of Law 2742/1999 on land use planning and sustainable development and other provisions (Government Gazette I/207/1999) http://goo.gl/wG7YuU
Article 4(5) of Law 3937/2011 on biodiversity and other provisions (Government Gazette I/60/2011) http://goo/gl/0gdyF1
([4]) According to the Management Study for Epanomi Lagoon (2002), drainage ditches excavated in the 1950s altered the hydrological balance of the area (p. 31). This caused a change in the distribution and composition of plant growth, which in turn affected the habitats of the fauna and bird life (p. 91).

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-013149/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(19 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Κίνδυνος απαξίωσης σιδηροδρομικού δικτύου Πελοποννήσου

Την ίδια στιγμή που με την επικείμενη αναθεώρηση των Επιχειρησιακών Προγραμμάτων του ΕΣΠΑ 2007-2013 προβλέπεται επιπλέον χρηματοδότηση 2.2 δις ευρώ μεγάλων έργων για τους αυτοκινητόδρομους, υπάρχει κίνδυνος πλήρους εγκατάλειψης γραμμών του σιδηροδρόμου στην Πελοπόννησο που βρίσκονται σήμερα σε αναστολή λειτουργίας, δηλαδή των γραμμών Κορίνθου-Τρίπολης-Καλαμάτας και Πάτρας-Πύργου-Κυπαρισσίας-Καλαμάτας, αν και έργα σε αυτές έχουν συγχρηματοδοτηθεί από ευρωπαϊκούς πόρους. Και τούτο, παρά το γεγονός ότι τα σιδηροδρομικά έργα συμβάλλουν στην περιφερειακή ανάπτυξη και στην δημιουργία έως διπλάσιων θέσεων εργασίας σε σχέση με τους αυτοκινητόδρομους ([1]).

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Η προωθούμενη ιδιωτικοποίηση που θα περιλαμβάνει το μεταφορικό έργο μόνο των γραμμών που σήμερα είναι σε λειτουργία είναι απαίτηση της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής και της τρόικα ή πρωτοβουλία της ελληνικής κυβέρνησης;

2. Προτίθεται να συνεργαστεί με την ελληνική κυβέρνηση ώστε να υπάρξει ανοικτή πρόσκληση ενδιαφέροντος για την επαναλειτουργία των γραμμών;

3. Με ποια κριτήρια ορίστηκε το σημερινό όριο των 50 εκ. ευρώ για Υποχρεώσεις Δημόσιας Υπηρεσίας προς το σιδηρόδρομο; Είναι αυτό ανάλογο με τα ισχύοντα κριτήρια στα υπόλοιπα κράτη μέλη; Με ποιές προϋποθέσεις θα δεχόταν η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή να συζητήσει με την ελληνική κυβέρνηση αύξηση του ορίου;

4. Συνάδει η απαξίωση του σιδηροδρόμου στην Ελλάδα με την στρατηγική για την δημιουργία ενός ενιαίου Ευρωπαϊκού Σιδηροδρομικού Χώρου ([2]), καθώς και την επίτευξη του στόχου της Λευκής Βίβλου της ΕΕ για τις μεταφορές, να έχει δηλ., μέχρι το 2020, κάθε πόλη με πληθυσμό πάνω από 30 000, σιδηροδρομική σύνδεση.

Απάντηση του κ. Kallas εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(16 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Η Επιτροπή δεν πρότεινε την ιδιωτικοποίηση των σιδηροδρομικών υποδομών. Η συντήρηση του σιδηροδρομικού δικτύου αποτελεί αποκλειστική ευθύνη του διαχειριστή της σιδηροδρομικής υποδομής, η οποία δεν περιλαμβάνεται στο σχέδιο ιδιωτικοποιήσεων στο πλαίσιο του δεύτερου προγράμματος οικονομικής προσαρμογής για την Ελλάδα.

Τα κράτη μέλη δεσμεύονται από τις διατάξεις του κανονισμού (ΕΕ) αριθ. 1370/2007 όσον αφορά τις συμβάσεις παροχής δημόσιας υπηρεσίας σιδηροδρομικών επιβατικών μεταφορών ([3]), σύμφωνα με τον οποίο τα κράτη μέλη αποφασίζουν ποιες επιβατικές υπηρεσίες επιθυμούν να χρηματοδοτήσουν βάσει των υποχρεώσεων παροχής δημόσιας υπηρεσίας.

Οι αρμόδιες αρχές των κρατών μελών είναι υπεύθυνες για τη λήψη αποφάσεων σχετικά με το επίπεδο των αντισταθμίσεων όσον αφορά τις υποχρεώσεις παροχής δημόσιας υπηρεσίας στις σιδηροδρομικές επιβατικές μεταφορές σύμφωνα με τις διατάξεις του κανονισμού (ΕΕ) αριθ. 1370/2007.

Αν και η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση αποτελεί εδώ και δεκαετίες τον βασικότερο χρηματοδότη των επενδύσεων σε σιδηροδρομικές υποδομές στην Ελλάδα, δεν έχει καμία αρμοδιότητα για τη χρηματοδότηση της συντήρησης των υποδομών.

([1]) http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/research/the-best-stimulus-for-the-money/what-we-learned-from-the-stimulus/
([2]) Directive 2012/34/EU of the European Parliament and the Council of 21 November 2012 establishing a single European railway area.
([3]) Κανονισμός (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1370/2007 του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, της 23ης Οκτωβρίου 2007, για τις δημόσιες επιβατικές σιδηροδρομικές και οδικές μεταφορές και την κατάργηση των κανονισμών του Συμβουλίου (ΕΟΚ) αριθ. 1191/69 και 1107/70.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013149/13
to the Commission
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: Threat to the Peloponnese rail network

At the same time that the imminent revision of the 2007-2013 National Strategic Reference Framework Operational Programmes provides an extra EUR 2.2 billion for major motorway projects, , there is a risk of a complete abandonment of the rail lines in the Peloponnese which are currently suspended, i.e. the Corinth-Tripoli-Kalamata and Patras-Pyrgos-Kyparissia-Kalamata lines, even though projects on these lines have been co-financed by European funds. This is in spite of the fact that rail projects contribute to regional development and to the creation of up to twice as many jobs as roads. ([1])

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Is it a demand of the European Commission and the Troika, or an initiative of the Greek Government that the proposed privatisation should include transport projects only for lines that are currently in operation?

2. Does it intend to cooperate with the Greek Government on an open call for proposals for the reopening of the lines?

3. What criteria have been used to set the current limit of EUR 50 million on Public Service Obligations for the railways? Are these similar to the existing criteria in other Member States? Under what conditions would the European Commission agree to a discussion with the Greek Government over an increase in the limit?

4. Does the running down of the railways in Greece accord with the strategy of establishing a single European Railway Area ([2]), and the achievement of the target in the EU White Paper on Transport, under which every city with a population of more than 30 000 should have a rail connection by 2020.

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(16 January 2014)

The Commission has not proposed a privatisation of rail infrastructure lines. The maintainance of the rail network is the exclusive responsibility of the railway infrastructure manager, which is not included in the privatisation plan under the 2nd economic adjustment programme for Greece.

Member States are bound by the provisions of Regulation (EU) No 1370/2007 as regards public service contracts for rail passenger transport ([3]), whereby Member States decide which passenger services under public service obligations they wish to finance.

The level of compensation for public service obligations in rail passenger transport depends on the decision of competent authorities in Member States as to the applicable public service obligations in compliance with the provisions of Regulation (EU) No 1370/2007.

The European Union has been the biggest funder of rail infrastructure investments in Greece for decades, whilst it has no competence to finance maintenance of infrastructure.

([1]) http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/research/the-best-stimulus-for-the-money/what-we-learned-from-the-stimulus/
([2]) Directive 2012/34/EU of the European Parliament and the Council of 21 November 2012 establishing a single European railway area.
([3]) Regulation (EC) No 1370/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2007 on public passenger transport services by rail and by road and repealing Council Regulations (EEC) Nos 1191/69 and 1107/70.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-013150/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)
(19 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Αλλαγές στις «ενισχύσεις ήσσονος σημασίας» και επιπτώσεις για τις μικρομεσαίες επιχειρήσεις στην Ευρώπη

Σύμφωνα με το δεύτερο προσχέδιο του κανονισμού ([1]) για «την εφαρμογή των άρθρων 107 και 108 της Συνθήκης για τη λειτουργία της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης στις ενισχύσεις ήσσονος σημασίας» καθορίζονται νέοι ορισμοί ως προς την έννοια της «ενιαίας επιχείρησης» αλλά και νέες πτυχές ορισμού μίας επιχείρησης ως «προβληματικής». Την ίδια στιγμή, στην ετήσια έκθεση ([2]) για τις μικρομεσαίες επιχειρήσεις (ΜΜΕ) στην ΕΕ καταγράφονται σημαντικές αποκλίσεις στην απόδοση τους, καθώς στην Αυστρία και τη Γερμανία οι ΜΜΕ έχουν ξεπεράσει τα αντίστοιχα επίπεδα του 2008 όσον αφορά στην Ακαθάριστη Προστιθέμενη Αξία και την απασχόληση, σε άλλα τέσσερα κράτη μέλη η εν λόγω απόδοση παραμένει αναιμική, ενώ σε άλλα είκοσι κράτη μέλη οι ΜΜΕ δεν έχουν ακόμα κατορθώσει να επιστρέψουν στις επιδόσεις του 2008. Παράλληλα, στην έκθεση ([3]) για την πρόσβαση των ΜΜΕ, στη χρηματοδότηση της Ευρωπαϊκής Κεντρικής Τράπεζας διατυπώνεται το συμπέρασμα πως οι χρηματοδοτικές συνθήκες για τις ευρωπαϊκές μικρομεσαίες επιχειρήσεις συνεχίζουν να διαφοροποιούνται σημαντικά ανά την ευρωπαϊκή επικράτεια αλλά και να είναι δυσμενέστερες σε σχέση με τις συνθήκες χρηματοδότησης των μεγαλύτερων επιχειρήσεων.

Δεδομένων των παραπάνω ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Θεωρεί πως οι υπό εξέταση αλλαγές στον Κανονισμό συμβάλλουν στην άμβλυνση των ανισορροπιών που χαρακτηρίζουν την απόδοση και τη χρηματοδότηση των ευρωπαϊκών ΜΜΕ; Διαθέτει μελέτη και εκτιμήσεις;

2. Πώς συνδέεται ο κανονισμός αυτός με την ανάγκη χρηματοδότησης των ΜΜΕ, κυρίως στα κράτη μέλη όπου οι ΜΜΕ υφίστανται τις συνέπειες της λιτότητας και της δημοσιονομικής προσαρμογής;

3. Πώς αντιμετωπίζει το γεγονός ότι, βάσει των προτεινόμενων προϋποθέσεων ορισμού μίας επιχείρησης ως «προβληματικής», ουσιαστικά το συντριπτικό μέρος των ελληνικών επιχειρήσεων τίθεται εκτός των δυνατοτήτων δανεισμού την περίοδο αυτή των τεράστιων αναγκών της πραγματικής οικονομίας;

Απάντηση του κ. Tajani εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(4 Φεβρουαρίου 2014)

1. Η επανεξέταση του κανονισμού για τις ενισχύσεις ήσσονος σημασίας (de minimis) αποτελεί μέρος του εκσυγχρονισμού των κρατικών ενισχύσεων ([4]) (ΕΚΕ) που αποσκοπεί στην αποτελεσματικότερη στοχοθέτηση βιώσιμων πολιτικών για την ενίσχυση της ανάπτυξης, ενθαρρύνοντας ταυτόχρονα τη δημοσιονομική εξυγίανση, περιορίζοντας τις στρεβλώσεις του ανταγωνισμού και διατηρώντας ανοικτή την ενιαία αγορά. Ορίζει σαφείς οριζόντιους κανόνες που εφαρμόζονται σε όλα τα κράτη μέλη και στους δικαιούχους, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των ΜΜΕ, και με τον τρόπο αυτό θα συμβάλλει στη βελτίωση των επιδόσεων και της χρηματοδότησης των ΜΜΕ. Ωστόσο, ο βαθμός στον οποίο οι κανόνες θα χρησιμοποιηθούν στην πράξη ώστε να στοχεύουν την κάλυψη των αναγκών χρηματοδότησης, εξαρτάται από τις πολιτικές επιλογές σε εθνικό επίπεδο. Η επανεξέταση περιλαμβάνει εκτίμηση των επιπτώσεων, η οποία δημοσιεύθηκε στις 18 Δεκεμβρίου 2013 μαζί με την έκδοση κανονισμού.

2. Σε μία συγκυρία στην οποία οι ΜΜΕ αντιμετωπίζουν συνεχώς μεγαλύτερες δυσκολίες όσον αφορά την πρόσβαση σε χρηματοδότηση, η Επιτροπή εκπονεί σειρά πρωτοβουλιών για τη βελτίωση του χρηματοδοτικού περιβάλλοντος για τις ΜΜΕ, ώστε να βοηθήσει την καινοτομία και την ανάπτυξη. Όταν η αγορά δεν εκπληρώνει επαρκώς το καθήκον της για την κατανομή λιγοστών χρηματοδοτικών πόρων λόγω των ασυμμετριών πληροφόρησης (ειδικότερα για τις ΜΜΕ), η κρατική στήριξη αποτελεί σημαντικό στοιχείο που καλύπτει τα κενά χρηματοδότησης και συμπληρώνει τις διαθέσιμες πηγές χρηματοδότησης. Ο ΕΚΕ περιλαμβάνει τη μεταρρύθμιση του γενικού κανονισμού απαλλαγής κατά κατηγορία, σχέδιο του οποίου έχει δημοσιευθεί ([5]) και επεκτείνει το πεδίο εφαρμογής του κανονισμού, συμπεριλαμβάνοντας την πρόσβαση σε χρηματοδότηση για τις ΜΜΕ. Οι ενισχύσεις αυτού του είδους είναι ιδιαιτέρως προσαρμοσμένες στην προώθηση της ανάπτυξης και της ποιότητας των δημόσιων οικονομικών.

3. Η Επιτροπή έλαβε υπόψη τις ανησυχίες που διατυπώθηκαν σχετικά με τον ορισμό της «προβληματικής επιχείρησης». Ως εκ τούτου, οι επιχειρήσεις που αντιμετωπίζουν οικονομικές δυσκολίες δεν εξαιρούνται πλέον από το πεδίο εφαρμογής του κανονισμού. Κατ' αυτόν τον τρόπο η Επιτροπή επιβεβαίωσε ότι η de minimis εξακολουθεί να είναι ένα απλό και ευέλικτο μέσο, ιδίως για τη στήριξη των ΜΜΕ.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/competition/consultations/2013_second_de_minimis/index_en.html
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/facts-figures-analysis/performance-review/files/supporting-documents/2012/annual-report_en.pdf
([3]) http://www.ecb.europa.eu/press/pr/date/2013/html/pr130426.en.html
([4]) Εκσυγχρονισμός των κρατικών ενισχύσεων.
([5]) Το σχέδιο, το οποίο δημοσιεύτηκε στις 18 Δεκεμβρίου 2013, διατίθεται εδώ: http://ec.europa.eu/competition/consultations/2013_consolidated_gber/index_en.html Επιπλέον, οι νέες κατευθυντήριες γραμμές για τα κεφάλαια κινδύνου (RFG), που εκδόθηκαν στις 15 Ιανουαρίου 2014, χρησιμοποιούν αυτή την επέκταση του πεδίου εφαρμογής για την περαιτέρω βελτίωση της πρόσβασης των ΜΜΕ στη χρηματοδότηση. Το κείμενο των RFG διατίθεται εδώ: http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/modernisation/risk_finance_guidelines_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013150/13
to the Commission
Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: Changes to *de minimis* aid and impact on small and medium-sized enterprises in Europe

The second draft of the regulation ([1]) on the application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to *de minimis* aid contains new definitions for a 'single undertaking' and new preconditions for qualification as an 'undertaking in difficulty'. At the same time, the annual report ([2]) on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the EU reports considerable variations in SME performance, with SMEs in Austria and Germany exceeding their 2008 levels of gross added value and employment and SMEs experiencing anaemic performance in four other Member States and failing to bounce back to their 2008 levels in twenty other Member States. At the same time, the report ([3]) on access to finance of SMEs by the European Central Bank concludes that financing conditions for SMEs in Europe continue to differ significantly from one European state to another and are more difficult than those of larger companies.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Does it consider that the changes being considered in the regulation will help to iron out imbalances in the performance and financing of European SMEs? Does it have a study and evaluations at its disposal?

2. How does this regulation tie in with the need for financing for SMEs, especially in the Member States in which SMEs are feeling the impact of austerity and fiscal adjustment?

3. What are its comments on the fact that, based on the proposed preconditions to qualification of an undertaking as an 'undertaking in difficulty', basically the overwhelming majority of Greek undertakings are excluded from financing, at a time when the real economy is in dire need?

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

1. The review of *de minimis* Regulation is part of SAM ([4]), which aims to more effectively target sustainable growth-enhancing policies while encouraging budgetary consolidation, limiting distortions of competition and keeping the single market open. It defines clear horizontal rules that apply to all Member States and beneficiaries, including SMEs, and will thus improve the performance and financing of SMEs. However, the extent to which the rules will be used in practice to target financing needs depends on policy choices at national level. The review includes an impact assessment that has been published on 18 December 2013 together with the adopted Regulation.

2. In times of increased difficulty for SMEs in accessing finance, the Commission is working on a series of initiatives to improve the financing environment for SMEs to help innovation and growth. Where the market does not sufficiently serve its function of allocating scarce financial resources because of information asymmetries (notably for SMEs), State support is an important element that fills financing gaps and complements available sources of finance. The SAM includes a reform of the General Block Exemption Regulation, of which a draft significantly extending its scope, including access to finance for SMEs has been published ([5]). This type of aid is particularly suited to promoting growth and quality of public finance.

3. The Commission took the concerns raised regarding the definition of 'undertaking in difficulty' into account; therefore undertakings in financial difficulties are no longer excluded from the scope of the regulation. In this way the Commission has made sure that de minimis remains a simple and flexible instrument, notably to support SMEs.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/competition/consultations/2013_second_de_minimis/index_en.html
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/facts-figures-analysis/performance-review/files/supporting-documents/2012/annual-report_en.pdf
([3]) http://www.ecb.europa.eu/press/pr/date/2013/html/pr130426.en.html
([4]) State aid modernisation.
([5]) The draft, which was published on 18 December 2013, can be found here: http://ec.europa.eu/competition/consultations/2013_consolidated_gber/index_en.html
Moreover, the new Risk Finance Guidelines (RFG), which have been adopted on 15 January 2014, use this extended scope to further improve access to finance for SMEs. The text of the RFG can be found here: http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/modernisation/risk_finance_guidelines_en.pdf

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-013151/13
Komisijai
Vilija Blinkevičiūtė (S&D)
(2013 m. lapkričio 19 d.)

Tema: Dėl socialinės apsaugos sistemų tvarumo didelę emigraciją patiriančiose ES šalyse

Komisija neseniai atliko tyrimą dėl poveikio valstybių socialinės apsaugos sistemoms, kurį lemia laisvas ES darbuotojų judėjimas, dar vadinamas socialinių išmokų turizmu.

Valstybės narės, kurios patiria didžiulę savo piliečių emigraciją į kitas šalis, susiduria su kita – gerokai rimtesne – tos pačios problemos puse. Didžiulė emigracija ir kartu imigracijos nebuvimas kenksmingas valstybei ne vien dėl to, kad prarandamas žmogiškasis kapitalas ir į šių žmonių profesinį rengimą investuotos lėšos, laikas ir pastangos. Kita labai rimta neproporcingai didelės emigracijos ir nepakankamos imigracijos reiškinių problema yra pavojus tokių valstybių socialinės apsaugos sistemų tvarumui. Juk dažniausiai emigruoja ekonomiškai aktyvūs, darbingo amžiaus asmenys, mokesčių į nacionalinį biudžetą mokėtojai. Visgi, mažėjant mokesčių mokėtojų, nemažėja tų, kurie dėl vienų ar kitų priežasčių tam tikru savo gyvenimo momentu yra priklausomi nuo šių valstybių socialinės apsaugos sistemų.

Ar Komisija nemano, kad būtų tikslinga atlikti vertinimą dėl pavojaus socialinės apsaugos sistemų tvarumui didelę emigraciją ir nepakankamą imigraciją patiriančiose ES valstybėse narėse ir aptarti galimus šios problemos sprendimo būdus bendradarbiaujant su tomis valstybėmis narėmis?

L. Andoro atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2014 m. sausio 16 d.)

Gerbiamojo nario keliami klausimai Komisijai žinomi.

Nors darbo jėgos judumas gali sumažinti įtampą kilmės šalių vidaus darbo rinkoje ir taip sumažinti socialinės apsaugos sistemos išlaidas (pvz., bedarbio pašalpoms), per ilgesnį laikotarpį jis gali lemti prastėjantį priklausomybės santykį. Todėl Komisija vykdė ilgalaikę judumo poveikio stebėseną ([1]).

Vis dėlto išorinis judumas yra tik vienas iš veiksnių, turinčių įtakos socialinės apsaugos sistemų tvarumui. Kiti veiksniai yra susiję su dalyvavimo (ypač jaunimo, vyresnio amžiaus žmonių ir moterų) darbo rinkoje lygiu ir ilgalaikėmis tendencijomis, pavyzdžiui, našumu, senėjančia visuomene ir vaisingumu. Tai, kad tam tikros socialinės apsaugos sistemos yra neveiksmingos (pvz., neintegruotas išmokų ar paslaugų administravimas), taip pat gali turėti įtakos jų tvarumui. 2012 m. baltojoje knygoje dėl pensijų pateikiamos rekomendacijos, kaip pagerinti pensijų sistemų tvarumą, o 2013 m. socialinių investicijų dokumentų rinkinyje išdėstomi būdai, kaip padidinti socialinės apsaugos sistemų veiksmingumą ir efektyvumą (pvz., supaprastinti išmokų administravimą). Šis požiūris buvo dar kartą patvirtintas 2014 m. metinėje augimo apžvalgoje.

Nors po plėtros išorinis judumas iš Vidurio ir Rytų valstybių narių buvo intensyvus, pastaraisiais metais jis labai sumažėjo ([2]). Prognozuojama, kad dėl ekonominės konvergencijos judumo ilguoju laikotarpiu srautai toliau mažės.

Taip pat derėtų atsižvelgti į laikiną judumo pobūdį bei į tai, kad persikėlusieji asmenys gali įgyti daugiau patirties ir įgūdžių. Iš ankstesnės patirties matyti, kad, padėčiai pagerėjus, migrantai dažnai sugrįžta į savo šalį.

([1]) Pavyzdžiui, analizuotas judumo po plėtros poveikis („Užimtumas Europoje 2008 m"., 3 skyrius; 2011 m. apžvalga „Europos užimtumo ir socialinės tendencijos", 6 skyrius; 2012 m. emigracijos ir migracijos iš kaimo vietovių į miestus Vidurio ir Rytų Europoje socialinio poveikio tyrimas), taip pat vykdyta senėjančios visuomenės stebėsena (2010 m. demografinės padėties ataskaita; 2012 m. pranešimas apie visuomenės senėjimą).

([2]) 2013 m. birželio mėn. ES užimtumo ir socialinės padėties ataskaitos ketvirčio apžvalgoje pažymima, kad judumo srautai iš dviejų didžiausių kilmės šalių (Lenkijos ir Rumunijos) per pastaruosius metus gerokai sumažėjo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013151/13
to the Commission
Vilija Blinkevičiūtė (S&D)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: On the sustainability of social security systems in EU countries experiencing significant emigration

The Commission recently carried out a study into the impact of the free movement of workers in the EU, also known as benefits tourism, on Member States' social security systems.

Member States which experience significant emigration by their citizens to other countries face another — much more serious — side of the same problem. Mass emigration together with a lack of immigration is damaging to a country not just because of the loss of human capital, the money, time and effort invested in the vocational training of these people. Another very serious problem associated with the phenomena of disproportionately high emigration and insufficient immigration is the risk to the sustainability of the social security systems in such countries. After all, most often it is economically active people of working age paying taxes into the national budget who are the ones emigrating. However, while the number of tax-payers is falling, there is no decline in those who at a certain point in their lives for some reason or other are dependent on these countries' social security systems.

Does the Commission not feel that it would be appropriate to carry out an evaluation of the risk to the sustainability of social security systems in EU Member States experiencing significant emigration and insufficient immigration and discuss possible means of solving these problems by cooperating with these Member States?

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

The Commission is aware of the concerns raised by the Honourable Member.

While labour mobility can alleviate labour market pressures in origin countries and therefore reduce costs for social security systems (e.g. unemployment benefits), it can lead to a worsening of dependency ratio in the longer run. Hence, the Commission has been monitoring the long-run impact of mobility ([1]).

However, outward mobility is only one of the factors affecting the sustainability of social security systems. Other factors relate to the level of participation to the labour market, in particular among young, older persons and among women and to long-term trends such as productivity, demographic ageing and fertility. The inefficient design of some social protection systems (e.g. of unintegrated administration of benefits or services) may also play a role in affecting their sustainability. The 2012 White Paper on Pensions provides guidance on improving the sustainability of pensions systems, while the 2013 Social Investment Package sets out ways to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of social protection systems (e.g. simplifying benefit administration). This approach was confirmed again in the Annual Growth Survey 2014.

While outward mobility from Central and Eastern Member States was high during the post-enlargement period, it has decreased substantially in recent years ([2]). In the long-run, mobility outflows are projected to decrease further, in line with economic convergence.

One should also consider the temporary nature of mobility and the potential gains among the movers in terms of experience and skills. Past experience suggests that mobility is often followed by a return to the home country once conditions improve.

([1]) See for instance when analysing the impact of post-enlargement mobility: Employment in Europe 2008, Chapter 3; Employment and Social developments in Europe Review 2011, Chapter 6; 2012 Study on the social impact of emigration and rural-urban migration in central and eastern Europe as well as when monitoring demographic ageing : Demography report 2010; Ageing report 2012.

([2]) As pointed in the June 2013 EU Employment and social situation quarterly review, mobility flows from the two largest origin countries (Poland and Romania) dropped significantly in recent years.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-013152/13
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(19 november 2013)

Betreft: Turken willen niet bij EU (vervolgvraag)

Op 19 november 2013 heeft de heer Füle namens de Commissie antwoord gegeven op schriftelijke vraag E-010763/2013. Daarin schrijft hij onder andere: „De Commissie is op de hoogte van deze enquête en volgt de Turkse opiniepeilingen op het gebied van de betrekkingen tussen de EU en Turkije op de voet. Schommelingen in de steun voor het EU-lidmaatschap van ieder land zijn een normaal verschijnsel dat de onderhandelingsprocessen in het verleden met landen die later tot de EU zijn toegetreden, ook kenmerkte. De Commissie neemt echter nota van de strategische inzet van de Turkse autoriteiten voor de toetreding tot de EU, zoals onlangs andermaal door president Gül werd bevestigd, die in een interview in de marge van de 68e Algemene Vergadering van de Verenigde Naties in New York in september 2013 erkende dat de Europese Unie een „strategische oriëntatie" voor Turkije is."

1. Impliceert de Commissie met „het op de hoogte zijn van de Turkse opiniepeilingen", waaruit blijkt dat slechts een minderheid van de Turken wil dat hun land tot de EU toetreedt, en tegelijkertijd met „het nota nemen van de strategische inzet van de Turkse autoriteiten voor EU-toetreding" dat zij dergelijke opiniepeilingen — oftewel de wil van het volk! — helemaal niet serieus neemt? Zo neen, welke inhoudelijke reactie geeft de Commissie dan alsnog op de uitkomst van de in vraag E-010763/2013 aangehaalde opiniepeiling en welke gevolgen geeft zij daaraan?

2. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat uit de „nonchalante" houding tegenover opiniepeilingen het ondemocratische karakter van zowel de Turkse autoriteiten als van de Commissie blijkt? Zo neen, hoe bewijst de Commissie dan het tegendeel?

3. Blijkt hieruit dat, in de ogen van de Commissie, toekomstige Turkse EU-toetreding het enige na te streven doel is en dat er, wat de toetredingsonderhandelingen betreft, aldus geen weg meer terug is — wat de bevolking ook wil? Zo neen, hoezeer dient de afkeer van Turkse EU-toetreding, zowel onder de Turkse als de Europese bevolking, verder te groeien, voordat de Commissie besluit hieraan gehoor te geven en de toetredingsonderhandelingen te beëindigen?

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-013182/13
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(20 november 2013)

Betreft: Turkse pianist Say opnieuw veroordeeld wegens „beledigen islam" (vervolgvraag)

In antwoord op schriftelijke vraag E-005624/2012 d.d. 5 juni 2012, naar aanleiding van de aanklacht jegens de Turkse pianist Fazil Say, schreef de Commissie: „De Commissie volgt de rechtszaak tegen Fazil Say met bezorgdheid. […] De Commissie zal deze zaak op de voet blijven volgen."

In antwoord op schriftelijke vraag E-004250/2013 d.d. 15 april 2013, naar aanleiding van de veroordeling van Say tot tien maanden voorwaardelijke gevangenisstraf, schreef de Commissie: „Zij blijft de rechtszaak tegen Fazil Say op de voet volgen. […] De zaak is teruggewezen naar de oorspronkelijke rechter in Istanboel […]."

In antwoord op schriftelijke vraag E-010834/2013 d.d. 24 september 2013, naar aanleiding van de definitieve veroordeling van Say tot tien maanden voorwaardelijke gevangenisstraf, schreef de Commissie: „De Commissie heeft met bezorgdheid vernomen dat de in april uitgesproken voorwaardelijke gevangenisstraf […] is bevestigd. […] De Commissie zal de zaak nauwlettend blijven opvolgen […]."

1. Beseft de Commissie dat de definitieve veroordeling van Say een bijzonder ernstige kwestie is, die de stelselmatige inperking van de vrijheid van meningsuiting in Turkije belichaamt? Zo ja, hoe verhoudt zich dat tot de afwachtende houding van de Commissie die louter zegt „bezorgd te zijn" en „de zaak te blijven volgen"?

2. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat, nu de veroordeling van Say definitief is, er niet veel meer is om „te blijven volgen"? Welke verwachtingen heeft de Commissie nochtans van haar „blijvend volgende" houding?

3. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat van al haar positieve verwachtingen inzake de vrijheid van meningsuiting in Turkije niets, maar dan ook níets terecht is gekomen? Deelt de Commissie dan ook de mening dat haar positieve verwachtingen ronduit naïef zijn geweest? Zo neen, hoe bewijst de Commissie het tegendeel?

4. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat er inzake kandidaat-lidstaat Turkije, dat almaar verder afglijdt, nog slechts één mogelijkheid is — namelijk het onmiddellijk en definitief beëindigen van de toetredingsonderhandelingen? Is de Commissie daartoe bereid? Zo neen, hoe verantwoordt zij dan haar naïviteit in dezen?

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-013259/13
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(21 november 2013)

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

Op 20 november 2013 heeft de heer Füle namens de Commissie antwoord gegeven op schriftelijke vraag E-008227/2013. In voornoemde vraag betrof het de kwestie-Selin Serit, een BBC-verslaggever in Turkije die door premier Erdoğan van „verraad" is beschuldigd wegens het verslaan van de tegen de regering gerichte demonstraties. De heer Füle gaat hier echter niet inhoudelijk op in. In zijn antwoord schrijft hij louter: „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".

1. Welke toelichting geeft de Commissie op het feit dat zij in de beantwoording van de aan haar gerichte schriftelijke vragen continu louter naar haar voortgangsverslag verwijst? Waarom weigert zij klaarblijkelijk om concreet inhoudelijk op de in de vragen aangehaalde afzonderlijke gevallen in te gaan? Heeft de Commissie simpelweg geen antwoord of wil/durft zij geen antwoord te geven — en waarom?

2. Hoe kan het in het voortgangsverslag gestelde betreffende de vrijheid van meningsuiting in Turkije betrekking hebben op situaties ná publicatie van het verslag respectievelijk situaties die níet in het verslag in overweging zijn genomen?

3. Is de Commissie ertoe bereid alsnog concreet op de kwestie-Selin Serit in te gaan door schriftelijke vraag E-008227/2013 van een inhoudelijk antwoord te voorzien? Zo neen, impliceert zij daarmee dat de kwestie-Selin Serit in haar idealistische ogen te pijnlijk is?

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-013428/13
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(27 november 2013)

Betreft: Turkije wil Twitter aan banden leggen (vervolgvraag)

Op 5 september 2013 heeft de heer Füle namens de Commissie antwoord gegeven op schriftelijke vraag E-007689/2013. Daarin schrijft hij: „De Commissie zet zich krachtig in voor de vrijheid van meningsuiting en de bevordering van een vrij en open internet: de universele rechten van de mens moeten zowel online als offline gelden. Daarom heeft de Commissie herhaaldelijk benadrukt dat er eerder minder dan meer beperkingen op de media nodig zijn in Turkije."

1. Welke concrete, positieve, meetbare resultaten — duidelijk merkbaar voor de Turkse burgers — heeft de inzet van de Commissie tot dusverre in Turkije gehad?

2. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat Turkije, vooral wat betreft de vrijheid van meningsuiting, juist almaar verder afglijdt en absoluut geen oren heeft naar de inzet van de Commissie resp. de Europese normen en waarden? Deelt de Commissie de mening dat elke inzet van EU-zijde verspilde moeite en verspild geld is, omdat Turkije nóóit tot de EU zal willen en kunnen toetreden? Is de Commissie derhalve ertoe bereid een eind te maken aan dit water naar de zee dragen en de toetredingsonderhandelingen onmiddellijk te verbreken om deze nóóit meer te heropenen? Zo neen, waarom niet?

Voorts schrijft de heer Füle: „Bovendien heeft de voor de Digitale Agenda verantwoordelijke commissaris de onafhankelijke groep op hoog niveau voor mediavrijheid en -pluralisme ingesteld. Na de presentatie van het verslag van deze groep heeft de Commissie twee openbare raadplegingen gehouden, één over de aanbevelingen van de groep en één specifiek over de onafhankelijkheid van nationale audiovisuele regelgevende instanties. De aanbevelingen 9 en 10 hebben betrekking op de bevordering van Europese waarden buiten de grenzen van de EU."

3. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat het geenszins de taak van de voor de Digitale Agenda verantwoordelijke commissaris behoort te zijn zich met de bevordering van Europese waarden — in dezen met betrekking tot mediavrijheid en -pluralisme — buiten de grenzen van de EU bezig te houden?

4. Wanneer trekt de EU haar handen af van Turkije, concluderende dat Turkije niet Europees is, niet Europees wil worden en nooit Europees zal zijn?

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-013429/13
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(27 november 2013)

Betreft: Erdoğan kwaad op EU (vervolgvraag)

Op 4 november 2013 heeft de heer Füle namens de Commissie antwoord gegeven op schriftelijke vraag E-009929/2013. Daarin schrijft hij: „De Commissie is van mening dat het toetredingsproces nog altijd het meest geschikte kader blijft om EU-gerelateerde hervormingen in Turkije te stimuleren en dat aan de toetredingsonderhandelingen een nieuwe impuls moet worden gegeven binnen de verbintenissen van de EU en de gestelde voorwaarden. De Commissie was verheugd over het feit dat eerste minister Erdoğan bij de presentatie op 30 september 2013 van een pakket democratiseringsmaatregelen verwees naar de leidende rol van de EU-wetgeving in de hervormingen van Turkije." Helaas gaat de heer Füle echter níet in op de in vraag E-009929/2013 aan de orde gestelde beschuldiging van de Turkse premier Erdoğan „dat de EU-lidstaten een „lastercampagne tegen Turkije" zouden voeren en daarbij „valse informatie over Turkije" zouden verstrekken". Als voorbeeld hiervan noemt Erdoğan de „onterechte EU-kritiek" op het gebruik van grote hoeveelheden traangas door de Turkse politie gedurende de demonstraties die het afgelopen jaar in Turkije plaatsvonden ([1]).

1. Waarom heeft de Commissie in haar antwoord niet concreet op de in vraag E-009929/2013 aangekaarte beschuldiging van Erdoğan gereageerd? Kan de Commissie, in het kader van de toetredingsonderhandelingen tussen de EU en Turkije, hier alsnog haar reactie op geven? Zo neen, waarom niet?

2. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat zij, doordat zij het verzuimt krachtig veroordelend op de beschuldiging van Erdoğan te reageren, de verwerpelijk arrogante houding van Turkije impliciet legitimeert? Zo neen, hoe garandeert de Commissie dan het tegendeel?

3. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat de beschuldiging van Erdoğan vals is en slechts ertoe dient om zijn eigen verwerpelijke, EU-onwaardige schrikbewind te verdoezelen? Zo neen, hoe interpreteert de Commissie de beschuldiging dan wél?

4. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat alle EU-lidstaten Turkije — dat nota bene een kandidaat-EU-lidstaat is! — te allen tijde vrijelijk moeten kunnen bekritiseren? Zo neen, waarom niet?

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-013430/13
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(27 november 2013)

Betreft: Erdoğan kwaad op EU (vervolgvraag II)

Op 4 november 2013 heeft de heer Füle namens de Commissie antwoord gegeven op schriftelijke vraag E-009929/2013. Daarin schrijft hij: „De Commissie was verheugd over het feit dat eerste minister Erdoğan bij de presentatie op 30 september 2013 van een pakket democratiseringsmaatregelen verwees naar de leidende rol van de EU-wetgeving in de hervormingen van Turkije."

1. Voelt de Commissie zich louter „gevleid" aangezien Erdoğan bij de presentatie van het betreffende „Democratization and Human Rights Package" ([2]) naar de vermeende „leidende rol van de EU-wetgeving" verwees, of heeft zij ook daadwerkelijk positieve verwachtingen van het pakket democratiseringsmaatregelen? Zo ja, welke? — en hoe plaatst zij deze positieve verwachtingen in de context van de stelselmatig verslechterende situatie in Turkije?

2. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat het gepresenteerde pakket democratiseringsmaatregelen, blijkende de realiteit, slechts een wassen neus is en ertoe dient om de EU een rad voor ogen te draaien? Zo neen, op welke termijn verwacht de Commissie dan dat de betreffende democratiseringsmaatregelen daadwerkelijk in Turkije zijn ingevoerd?

([1]) De Telegraaf, 5.9.2013.
([2]) http://www.akparti.org.tr/english/haberler/democratization-and-human-rights-package/52628.

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-013431/13
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(27 november 2013)

Betreft: Boete voor kritische tv-stations Turkije (vervolgvraag III)

Op 22 november 2013 heeft de heer Füle namens de Commissie antwoord gegeven op schriftelijke vraag E-010835/2013. Afwimpelend schrijft hij daarin: „De Commissie verwijst het geachte Parlementslid naar haar antwoord op vraag E-007264/2013 van het geachte Parlementslid over dezelfde kwestie."

In antwoord op vraag E-007264/2013, waarnaar wordt verwezen, schrijft de heer Füle namens de Commissie: „Elk land dat met de EU over toetreding onderhandelt, moet de naleving van de mensenrechten kunnen verzekeren, met inbegrip van de vrije meningsuiting en vrijheid van vergadering en vereniging overeenkomstig de artikelen 10 en 11 van het Europees Verdrag voor de rechten van de mens (EVRM) en de rechtspraak van het Europees Hof voor de rechten van de mens (EHRM)."

Conclusie: noch in antwoord op E-010835/2013, noch in antwoord op E-007264/2013 gaat de Commissie concreet inhoudelijk in op de betreffende zaak: het feit dat de Turkse autoriteiten de vrijheid van meningsuiting stelselmatig inperken, onder andere door vermeend kritische tv-stations boetes op te leggen en daarmee tot zwijgen resp. zelfcensuur te dwingen.

1. Is de Commissie van mening dat Turkije — overwegende dat de Turkse autoriteiten de vrijheid van meningsuiting stelselmatig inperken — handelt overeenkomstig de door de Commissie aangehaalde artikelen 10 en 11 van het Europees Verdrag voor de rechten van de mens (EVRM) en de rechtspraak van het Europees Hof voor de rechten van de mens (EHRM)?

2. Opmerking: is de Commissie ertoe bereid subvraag 1 concreet met „ja" of „neen" te beantwoorden? Zo neen, hoe verantwoordt de Commissie dan de toetredingsonderhandelingen met Turkije, waarin het naleven van de mensenrechten een cruciale rol speelt, terwijl de kandidaat-lidstaat in kwestie de mensenrechten met voeten treedt zonder dat de Commissie hier concreet inhoudelijk op reageert?

3. Impliceert de Commissie — door stelselmatig om de hete brij heen te draaien en afwimpelend naar verdragsartikelen te verwijzen — dat zij haar vingers niet wil / kan / durft te branden aan in haar ogen „pijnlijke" kwesties die de toetredingsonderhandelingen „in de weg" staan? Zo neen, hoe verklaart de Commissie haar nietszeggende, wollige antwoorden op schriftelijke vragen E-010835/2013, E-010835/2013 etc. dan wel?

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-013432/13
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(27 november 2013)

Betreft: Gezi Park-protesten: mensenrechtenschendingen door Turkse autoriteiten (vervolgvraag)

Op 25 november 2013 heeft de heer Füle namens de Commissie antwoord gegeven op schriftelijke vraag E-011263/2013. Daarin verwijst hij naar schriftelijke vragen E-006193/2013, E-006403/2013, E-006871/2013, P-006302/2013, E-006922/2013, E-007265/2013, E-007260/2013, E-007036/2013, E-007238/2013, E-006378/2013, E-006390/2013, E-006507/2013, E-006891/2013, E-006721/2013, E-007023/2013, E-007093/2013, E-007264/2013, E-007259/2013 en E-010832/2013.

Alle voornoemde vragen leiden naar vragen E-007093/13, E-007259/13, E-006403/13, E-006193/13, E-007023/13, E-007260/13, E-007264/13, E-007265/13, E-006891/13, E-007238/13, E-006721/13, E-006871/13, E-006922/13, E-007036/13 en P-006302/13.

Deze cirkel van vragen leidt vervolgens naar één en hetzelfde antwoord: „De huidige gebeurtenissen onderstrepen het belang van nadere betrokkenheid bij Turkije in het kader van het proces van toetreding tot de EU, inclusief met betrekking tot de onderhandelingshoofdstukken die het meest essentieel zijn voor het hervormingsproces: hoofdstuk 23 — Rechterlijke macht en fundamentele rechten en hoofdstuk 24 — Recht, vrijheid en veiligheid."

1. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat zij van het parlementaire middel tot het stellen van schriftelijke vragen het minachtende spelletje „vicieuze cirkel van kritische vraag en nutteloos antwoord" heeft gemaakt? Deelt de Commissie de mening dat zij de betreffende democratisch gekozen parlementariërs in diskrediet brengt en hun parlementaire werk deels onmogelijk maakt door hun kritische schriftelijke vragen deel van een vicieuze cirkel te maken en uiteindelijk stelselmatig met één en hetzelfde nietszeggende antwoord af te doen? Zo neen, wanneer is de Commissie voornemens serieus op kritische schriftelijke vragen in te gaan?

2. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat haar bewering dat de toetredingsonderhandelingen met Turkije goed zouden zijn voor het zogenaamde „hervormingsproces” slechts ervoor bedoeld is om de legitimiteit van de onderhandelingen kunstmatig in stand te houden — wetende dat de Commissie zélf medeverantwoordelijk voor de onderhandelingen is en derhalve geen gezichtsverlies wil lijden? Zo neen, op welke concrete uitwerkingen baseert de Commissie dan haar veronderstelling dan de onderhandelingen daadwerkelijk een positief effect op de bijzonder slechte situatie in Turkije zouden hebben?

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-013502/13
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(27 november 2013)

Betreft: Turkse politie arresteert 70 voetbaltoeschouwers (vervolgvraag)

De Turkse politie heeft 70 voetbaltoeschouwers gearresteerd — zogezegd in de strijd tegen hooliganisme. Tegenstanders van het regime beweren echter dat het een voorwendsel zou zijn om massaal politieke tegenstanders op te pakken ([3]).

Op 27 november 2013 heeft de heer Füle namens de Commissie antwoord gegeven op schriftelijke vraag E-011116/2013 over voornoemde kwestie. Daarin schrijft hij: „De Commissie volgt gevallen van geweld van dichtbij, zowel in de sport als in een andere context en ook hoe rechtshandhavingsinstanties in Turkije reageren op de genoemde incidenten. Turkse autoriteiten moeten de veiligheid van alle burgers waarborgen en tegelijk ervoor zorgen dat de maatregelen in overeenstemming zijn met de Europese normen inzake de grondrechten.”

Hoe *oordeelt* de Commissie, in het kader van de toetredingsonderhandelingen tussen de EU en Turkije, in dezen? Acht de Commissie het optreden van de politie in deze kwestie *wel* of *niet* in overeenstemming met de Europese normen inzake de grondrechten? Zo niet, welke gevolgen heeft dat voor de toetredingsonderhandelingen? (Is de Commissie, voor de verandering, ertoe bereid *niet* met het geijkte antwoord op de proppen te komen dat de toetredingsonderhandelingen, *juist* vanwege de slechte situatie in Turkije, simpelweg voortgezet zouden moeten worden?)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-013892/13
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(6 december 2013)

Betreft: „Te sexy” Turkse tv-presentatrice ontslagen (vervolgvraag)

De bekende Turkse tv-presentatrice Gözde Kansu van het programma „Veliaht” is op staande voet ontslagen — onder druk van de AK-partij van zittend premier Erdoğan. Haar outfit zou „te sexy” zijn. Hüseyin Çelik, woordvoerder van de AK-partij, licht toe: „We zijn tegen niemand, maar dit gaat echt te ver. Dit zou in de hele wereld niet geaccepteerd worden.”

Op 2 december 2013 heeft de heer Füle namens de Commissie antwoord gegeven op schriftelijke vraag E-011586/2013 over voornoemde kwestie. Daarin schrijft hij: „Bij alle geschikte gelegenheden bespreekt de Commissie met de Turkse autoriteiten de rechten van vrouwen en de gendergelijkheid. Op 7 november 2013 benadrukte de commissaris voor Uitbreiding en nabuurschapsbeleid op de door het Turkse Ministerie van Gezin en Sociaal beleid georganiseerde conferentie „Progress in Women's Human Rights” het volgende: „Wij beseffen allemaal dat voor vooruitgang op het gebied van de rechten voor vrouwen een mentaliteitsverandering en een verandering van de zienswijzen over gender nodig zijn. […] Er moet meer worden gedaan om stereotypen te doorbreken en de perceptie van rolpatronen op alle gebieden te veranderen.””

1. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat, blijkens de betreurenswaardige realiteit, deze zogenaamde „besprekingen” tussen de Commissie en de Turkse autoriteiten wat betreft rechten van de vrouw en gendergelijkheid geen enkel positief effect sorteren? Zo neen, welke concrete positieve resultaten constateert de Commissie dan wél?

2. Hoe beoordeelt de Commissie de uitspraak van Hüseyin Çelik dat „dit (de outfit van Gözde Kansu) in de hele wereld (dus ook in de EU) niet geaccepteerd zou worden”? Aangezien de Commissie in antwoord op E-011586/2013 niet op voornoemde uitspraak heeft gereageerd: wat vindt zij ervan dat de Commissie/de EU zich impliciete woorden in de mond laat leggen, namelijk dat in de EU een dergelijke outfit niet geaccepteerd zou worden?

In de betreffende speech van de heer Füle, waaruit in het antwoord op E-011586/2013 wordt geciteerd, staat ook het volgende te lezen: „It is already a few years since the Commission concluded that Turkey already has the overall legal framework that guarantees women's rights and gender equality broadly in place and in line with European standards” ([4]).

([3]) „Turkse politie zet voetbalrellen in scène”, De Telegraaf, 28 september 2013.
([4]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-13-891_en.htm

3. Hoe is het mogelijk dat — ondanks het reeds enkele jaren bestaande „legal framework" in Turkije — de Turkse autoriteiten zich nog altijd als islamitische zedenpolitie gedragen (zie de kwestie-Kansu, maar ook de huiszoekingen bij vrouwelijke studenten om te controleren of er geen mannen bij hen aanwezig zijn ([5]))? Deelt de Commissie de mening dat Turkije, op dit terrein, juist alsmaar verder afglijdt? Zo neen, welke positieve ontwikkelingen constateert de Commissie dan wél?

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-014145/13
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(16 december 2013)

Betreft: Bağış: „Vrijheid van meningsuiting is in orde" (vervolgvraag)

Naar aanleiding van het voortgangsverslag van 2013 van de Commissie heeft Egemen Bağış, de Turkse minister van Europese Zaken, gesteld: „Today we enjoy the most transparent and liberal atmosphere ever in the area of freedom of expression and freedom of the media; our Government will continue to take the necessary steps to further enhance these freedoms". Op 12 december 2013 heeft de heer Füle namens de Commissie antwoord gegeven op schriftelijke vraag E-012139/2013 inzake bovengenoemde uitspraak van minister Bağış. De heer Füle schrijft: „De Commissie verwijst het geachte Parlementslid naar haar voortgangsverslag van 2013 over Turkije waarin zij de situatie van de vrijheid van meningsuiting en van de media uitgebreid beoordeelt."

1. Is de Commissie ertoe bereid haar nietszeggende antwoord op vraag E-012139/2013 te rectificeren door alsnog een concreet inhoudelijke reactie op minister Bağış' uitspraak te geven — aangezien zijn uitspraak naar aanleiding, en dus ná publicatie, van het voortgangsverslag van de Commissie is gedaan, waardoor het verslag géén directe reactie kan zijn?

Voorts schrijft de heer Füle: „De Commissie verwacht dat het Turkse rechtssysteem verder verandert, in het bijzonder om de vrijheid van meningsuiting en van de media, en de vrijheid van vergadering en vereniging te versterken; […]. Het vierde pakket justitiële hervormingen pakt een aantal struikelstenen aan en moet volledig worden uitgevoerd."

2. Op welke reeds waarneembare positieve ontwikkelingen baseert de Commissie haar (naïeve) verwachting dat het Turkse rechtssysteem „verder zal veranderen"?

3. Is het derde pakket justitiële hervormingen reeds volledig en correct in Turkije ten uitvoer gelegd? Zo ja, waar uit zich dat concreet in, en hoe rijmt de Commissie dit met, bijvoorbeeld, de almaar voortschrijdende inperking van de vrijheid van meningsuiting? Zo neen, waarom wordt het vierde pakket justitiële hervormingen geïntroduceerd, nog vóórdat het derde pakket geheel is geïmplementeerd?

Ook schrijft de heer Füle: „Het is in het belang van zowel Turkije als de EU dat overeenstemming wordt bereikt over de criteria voor het openen van hoofdstuk 23 (rechterlijke macht en grondrechten) en hoofdstuk 24 (justitie, vrijheid en veiligheid) […]."

4. Waarom streeft de Commissie naar het openen van nóg meer hoofdstukken — wetende dat tot dusverre slechts één hoofdstuk (nr. 25: „Wetenschap & Onderzoek") succesvol is afgesloten? Op welke reeds waarneembare positieve ontwikkelingen baseert de Commissie haar impliciete verwachting dat, door het openen van zo veel mogelijk hoofdstukken, het „allemaal wel goed komt in Turkije"?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(31 januari 2014)

De Commissie verwijst naar de lopende toetredingsonderhandelingen met Turkije die ook betrekking hebben op de onderwerpen die door het geachte Parlementslid zijn genoemd. Deze toetredingsonderhandelingen gingen van start na een unaniem besluit van de lidstaten van de Europese Unie in 2005 en worden uitgevoerd overeenkomstig het onderhandelingskader van 3 oktober 2005. De Commissie rapporteert jaarlijks in detail aan de lidstaten en het Europees Parlement over de voortgang van Turkije bij de naleving van de criteria voor de toetreding en over aanhoudende punten van zorg. Deze problemen zijn ter sprake gebracht in regelmatige bijeenkomsten op alle niveaus met de Turkse autoriteiten, voorzover dit wenselijk is.

De Raad heeft recentelijk op 17 december 2013 de aanpak van de Commissie voor het toetredingsproces van Turkije gesteund. Het laatste verslag van de Commissie werd besproken in de Commissie buitenlandse zaken van het Europees Parlement op 9 december 2013.

([5]) http://www.welt.de/politik/ausland/article121738893/Erdogans-Angst-vor-dem-Sex-in-Studenten-WGs.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013152/13
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: Reluctance of the Turks to join the EU (follow-up question)

On 19 November 2013 Mr Füle replied on behalf of the Commission to Written Question E-010763/2013. In his answer he stated, amongst other things, that 'the Commission is aware of the poll and follows Turkish public opinion surveys on EU-Turkey relations closely. Fluctuations in the support for any country's EU membership are a regular feature in negotiation processes, as has been shown by other countries that have joined the EU in the past. The Commission notes, however, the Turkish authorities' strategic commitment to EU accession, as recently re-affirmed by President Gül, who acknowledged, in an interview on the margins of the 68th United Nations General Assembly in New York in September 2013, that the European Union is a 'strategic orientation' for Turkey'.

1. Is the Commission implying by saying that it is aware of Turkish public opinion polls, which indicate that only a minority of Turks want their country to join the EU and, at the same time, 'notes, however, the Turkish authorities' strategic commitment to EU accession' that in the case of such opinion polls — an expression of the will of the people, after all — it does not take them seriously at all? If this is not the case, what substantive response will the Commission then give to the results of the opinion poll mentioned in Question E-010763/2013 and how will it act on them?

2. Does the Commission agree that the 'nonchalant' attitude towards opinion polls is indicative of the undemocratic nature of both the Turkish authorities and the Commission? If not, how can the Commission prove the opposite?

3. Does this prove that, in the Commission's view, Turkey's future EU accession is the only goal to strive for, which means that, with regard to the accession negotiations, there is no longer any way back, which is what the population also wants? If not, how much further does the reluctance to Turkey joining the EU need to grow among both the Turkish and European population before the Commission decides to listen to them and terminate the accession negotiations?

Question for written answer E-013182/13
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(20 November 2013)

Subject: Turkish pianist Fazıl Say's conviction for 'insulting Islam' upheld (follow-up question)

In its reply to Written Question E-005624/2012 of 5 June 2012, the Commission wrote in response to the criminal charge against Turkish pianist Fazıl Say: 'The Commission is following with concern the lawsuit against Fazıl Say. […] The Commission will continue to closely follow this case.'

In its reply to Written Question E-004250/2013 of 15 April 2013, the Commission wrote in response to the ten-month suspended jail sentence given to Say: 'It continues to closely follow the lawsuit against Fazıl Say. […] The case was sent back to the first court in Istanbul […].'

In its reply to Written Question E-010834/2013 of 24 September 2013, the Commission wrote in response to the confirmation of the ten-month suspended jail sentence given to Say: 'The Commission has learned with concern that the suspended jail sentence for blasphemy handed down in April […] has been confirmed. […] The Commission will continue to follow the case closely […].'

1. Does the Commission realise that confirmation of Say's sentence is a particularly serious matter representing the systematic curtailment of the freedom of expression in Turkey? If so, how does this relate to the wait-and-see approach of the Commission which merely says that it 'is concerned' and 'will continue to follow the case'?

2. Does the Commission agree that now that Say's sentence has been confirmed, there is not much more to 'continue to follow'? What expectations does it still have of its approach of 'continuing to follow'?

3. Does the Commission agree that absolutely nothing at all has come of its optimistic expectations for the freedom of expression in Turkey? Does it also agree that its optimistic expectations have been downright naive? If not, how can it prove the opposite?

4. Does the Commission agree that there is only one option with regard to Turkey as a candidate country, which is already regressing further, which is to terminate the accession negotiations immediately and permanently? Is it prepared to do this? If not, how does it justify its naiveté in this matter?

Question for written answer E-013259/13
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: BBC reporter in Turkey accused of 'treason' by Erdoğan (follow-up question)

On 20 November 2013, Mr Füle replied on behalf of the Commission to Written Question E-008227/2013. The question concerned Ms Selin Serit, a BBC reporter based in Turkey who has been accused by Prime Minister Erdoğan of 'treason' for reporting on the anti-government demonstrations. Commissioner Füle does not go into the detail of the matter, however. In his answer, he simply writes that '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'.

1. What explanation does the Commission have for the fact that it continues, in its answer to the written questions submitted to it, to simply refer to its progress report? Why does it patently refuse to go into the specific subject matter of the individual cases raised in the questions? Does the Commission simply not have an answer, or is it unwilling/unable to give an answer. Why?

2. How can what is stated in the progress report in relation to freedom of expression in Turkey be relevant to situations arising after the publication of the report or situations that were not considered in the report?

3. Is the Commission now prepared to deal specifically with the issue of Ms Serit by providing an answer on the subject matter of Written Question E-008227/2013? If not, is it thereby implying that the Serit issue is, in its idealistic view, too embarrassing?

Question for written answer E-013428/13
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(27 November 2013)

Subject: Turkey wants to place restrictions on Twitter (follow-up question)

On 5 September 2013 Mr Füle replied on behalf of the Commission to my Written Question E-007689/2013. He wrote: 'The Commission is strongly committed to freedom of expression and promoting a free and open Internet: universal human rights must apply online as they do offline. Therefore, the Commission has consistently emphasised that fewer, rather than more restrictions on media are needed in Turkey'.

1. What concrete, positive, measurable results that are clearly noticeable by Turkish citizens has the Commission's commitment had so far in Turkey?

2. Does the Commission agree that Turkey, particularly as regards the freedom of expression, is drifting in the opposite direction and is totally deaf to the Commission's commitment and to European standards and values? Does the Commission agree that any commitment from the EU side is a waste of effort and money, because Turkey will never be willing or able to join the EU? Is the Commission therefore prepared to call a halt to this fruitless endeavour and to break off accession negotiations immediately, never to reopen them? If not, why not?

Mr Füle also wrote: 'Moreover, the Commissioner responsible for the Digital Agenda set up the independent High Level Group on Media Freedom and Pluralism. Following the presentation of the report by this group, the Commission launched two public consultations, one on the recommendations of the group and one specifically on the independence of national audiovisual regulatory authorities. Recommendations 9 and 10 concern the promotion of European values beyond EU borders.'

3. Does the Commission agree that the Commissioner responsible for the Digital Agenda has no business promoting European values — in this case media freedom and pluralism — beyond EU borders?

4. When will the EU wash its hands of Turkey, concluding that it is not European, does not want to become European and never will be European?

Question for written answer E-013429/13
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(27 November 2013)

Subject: Erdoğan angry with EU (follow-up question)

On 4 November 2013, Mr Füle answered Written Question E-009929/2013 on behalf of the Commission. He wrote: 'The Commission believes that the accession process remains the most suitable framework for promoting EU-related reforms in Turkey and that accession negotiations need to regain momentum, respecting the EU's commitments and the established conditionality. The Commission has welcomed that Prime Minister Erdoğan, when announcing on 30 September 2013 a package of democratisation measures, referred to the guiding role of the EU acquis in Turkey's reforms.' Unfortunately, however, Mr Füle did not address Turkish Prime Minister Erdoğan's accusation, raised in Written Question E-009929/2013, that the EU Member States had been conducting a 'smear campaign against Turkey' and, in the process, had provided 'misleading information about Turkey'. By way of an example, Erdoğan cited the fact that the EU had heavily criticised the use of large quantities of tear gas by the Turkish police during demonstrations in Turkey the previous year ([1]).

1. Why, in its answer, did the Commission not respond specifically to the accusation, by Erdoğan, raised in Written Question E-009929/2013? In the context of the accession negotiations between the EU and Turkey, can the Commission say what its reaction to the accusation is? If not, why not?

2. Does the Commission agree that by failing to respond to Erdoğan's accusation — by roundly condemning it — it has implicitly legitimised Turkey's reprehensible arrogance? If not, how can the Commission guarantee that the reverse is true?

3. Does the Commission agree that Erdoğan's accusation is false and is merely designed to cover up his own despicable reign of terror, which is unworthy of an EU candidate country? If not, what is the Commission's interpretation of the accusation?

4 Does the Commission agree that all EU Member States should at all times be able to level criticism freely at Turkey, which, it should be noted, is an EU candidate country? If not, why not?

Question for written answer E-013430/13
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(27 November 2013)

Subject: Erdoğan angry with EU (follow-up question II)

On 4 November 2013, Mr Füle answered Written Question E-009929/2013 on behalf of the Commission. He wrote: 'The Commission has welcomed that Prime Minister Erdoğan, when announcing on 30 September 2013 a package of democratisation measures, referred to the guiding role of the EU *acquis* in Turkey's reforms.'

1. Does the Commission simply feel 'flattered' that, when announcing the 'Democratization and Human Rights Package' ([2]), Erdoğan referred to the supposed 'guiding role of the EU *acquis*', or does it also actually have positive expectations of the package of democratisation measures? If so, what are they? How does it view those positive expectations in the light of the systematically deteriorating situation in Turkey?

2. Does the Commission agree that, as is demonstrated by reality, the package of democratisation measures which has been announced is just for show and is designed to delude the EU? If not, by when does the Commission expect those democratisation measures to have actually been introduced in Turkey?

Question for written answer E-013431/13
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(27 November 2013)

Subject: Fines for critical TV stations in Turkey (follow-up question III)

On 22 November 2013, Mr Füle, on behalf of the Commission, answered Written Question E-010835/2013. He dismissively wrote: 'The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its answer to previous Question E-007264/2013 by the Honourable Member on the same issue.'

([1]) De Telegraaf, 5.9.2013.
([2]) http://www.akparti.org.tr/english/haberler/democratization-and-human-rights-package/52628

In answer to Question E-007264, referred to here, Mr Füle had written on behalf of the Commission: '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).'

Conclusion: neither in reply to E-010835/2013 nor in reply to E-007264/2013 did the Commission make any comment on the substance of the matter in question: the fact that the Turkish authorities systematically restrict freedom of expression, *inter alia* by fining TV stations which they consider to be critical, thus compelling them to refrain from criticism and exercise self-censorship.

1. As the Turkish authorities are systematically restricting freedom of expression, does the Commission consider that Turkey is acting in line with Articles 10 and 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR)?

2. Observation: will the Commission specifically answer 'yes' or 'no' to subquestion 1? If not, how does the Commission justify the accession negotiations with Turkey, in which respect for human rights plays a crucial role, while the candidate Member State in question violates human rights without eliciting from the Commission any specific reaction to that fact?

3. In systematically beating around the bush and referring dismissively to articles of a Convention, does the Commission mean to imply that it is unable or unwilling, or does not dare, to get its fingers burned by engaging with issues that it considers inconvenient and which stand 'in the way of' the accession negotiations? If not, how does the Commission explain its meaningless, woolly answers to Written Questions E-010835/2013, E-010835/2013 [sic — translator's note], etc.?

Question for written answer E-013432/13
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(27 November 2013)

Subject: Gezi Park protests: human rights violations by the Turkish authorities (follow-up question)

On 25 November 2013, Mr Füle, on behalf of the Commission, answered Written Question E-011263/2013. In his reply, he referred to Written Questions E-006193/2013, E-006403/2013, E-006871/2013, P-006302/2013, E-006922/2013, E-007265/2013, E-007260/2013, E-007036/2013, E-007238/2013, E-006378/2013, E-006390/2013, E-006507/2013, E-006891/2013, E-006721/2013, E-007023/2013, E-007093/2013, E-007264/2013, E-007259/2013 and E-010832/2013.

All of the above questions lead to Questions E-007093/13, E-007259/13, E-006403/13, E-006193/13, E-007023/13, E-007260/13, E-007264/13, E-007265/13, E-006891/13, E-007238/13, E-006721/13, E-006871/13, E-006922/13, E-007036/13 and P-006302/13.

This circle of questions then leads to one and the same reply: 'Current events underline the importance of further engagement with Turkey within the framework of the EU accession process, including on those negotiating chapters most fundamental to its reform efforts: Chapter 23 — Judiciary and Fundamental Rights and Chapter 24 — Justice, Freedom and Security.'

1. Does the Commission agree that it has turned the parliamentary institution of the written question into a contemptuous game comprising a vicious circle of critical questions and useless answers? Does the Commission agree that it is discrediting the democratically elected Members of the European Parliament in question and rendering their parliamentary work partially impossible by making their critical written questions part of a vicious circle and ultimately systematically dismissing them with one and the same meaningless answer? If not, when will the Commission respond seriously to critical written questions?

2. Does the Commission agree that its claim that the accession negotiations with Turkey are good for the so-called 'reform efforts' is intended merely to artificially preserve the legitimacy of the negotiations — bearing in mind that the Commission itself shares responsibility for the negotiations and therefore does not want to lose face? If not, on what specific effects does it base its assumption that the negotiations are actually producing a positive impact on the very poor situation in Turkey?

Question for written answer E-013502/13
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(27 November 2013)

Subject: Turkish police arrest 70 football fans (follow-up question)

Turkish police have arrested 70 football fans — supposedly as part of the fight against hooliganism. However, opponents of the regime claim that this is a pretext for rounding up political opponents en masse. ([3])

([3]) 'Turkse politie zet voetbalrellen in scène', De Telegraaf, 28 September 2013.

On 27 November 2013, on behalf of the Commission, Mr Füle answered Written Question E-011116/2013 on the above matter. He wrote: 'The Commission closely follows incidents of violence, whether in sports or in other contexts, as well as how law enforcement authorities in Turkey respond to such incidents. Turkish authorities need to guarantee security for all citizens, while ensuring that measures are in line with European standards concerning fundamental rights.'

What is the Commission's judgment on this in the context of the accession negotiations between the EU and Turkey? Does the Commission regard the abovementioned police action as being in line with European standards concerning fundamental rights? If not, what are the consequences for the accession negotiations? (Is the Commission prepared, for a change, not to come up with the stock answer that accession negotiations simply have to continue precisely because the situation in Turkey is bad?)

Question for written answer E-013892/13
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(6 December 2013)

Subject: Turkish TV presenter fired for being 'too sexy' (follow-up question)

The well-known Turkish TV presenter Gözde Kansu from the programme 'Veliaht' has been summarily dismissed — under pressure from the AK Party of incumbent Prime Minister Erdoğan. Her outfit was alleged to be 'too sexy'. Hüseyin Çelik, spokesman for the AK Party, explains, 'We have nothing against anyone but this really is going too far. This would not be accepted anywhere in the world.'

On 2 December 2013, Mr Füle replied on behalf of the Commission to Written Question E-011586/2013 on the aforementioned issue. In his reply, he writes, 'The Commission raises women's rights and gender equality issues with Turkish authorities on all appropriate occasions. On 7 November 2013, during the conference "Progress in Women's Human Rights" organised by the Turkish Ministry of Family and Social Policies, the Commissioner for Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy stressed that: "We are all aware that progress on women's rights also depends on a change in mentality and perceptions on gender. […] More work is needed to break down stereotypes and change perceptions of gender roles in all spheres".'

1. Does the Commission share the view that the lamentable reality appears to be that these so-called 'discussions' between the Commission and the Turkish authorities concerning women's rights and gender equality issues are not achieving any positive impact at all? If not, what specific positive results has the Commission observed?

2. What is the Commission's view of the assertion by Hüseyin Çelik that 'this (the outfit worn by Gözde Kansu) would not be accepted anywhere in the world' (i.e. including in the EU)? Given that the Commission did not respond to this statement in its answer to Question E-011586/2013: what does it think of words being implicitly put in the mouth of the Commission/the EU to the effect that an outfit like this would not be accepted in the EU?

Commissioner Füle's speech on this topic, which was quoted in the answer to Question E-011586/2013, also contained the following words: 'It is already a few years since the Commission concluded that Turkey already has the overall legal framework that guarantees women's rights and gender equality broadly in place and in line with European standards.' ([4])

3. How is it possible that — despite the legal framework that has supposedly already been in place in Turkey for some years — the Turkish authorities continue to behave as a kind of Islamic moral police (consider the Kansu case, but also the searches of the houses of female students in order to check that no men are present ([5]))? Does the Commission share the view that, in this area, Turkey is actually sliding further and further backwards? If not, what positive developments has the Commission observed?

Question for written answer E-014145/13
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(16 December 2013)

Subject: Egemen Bağış: 'Freedom of expression situation is fine' (follow-up question)

In response to the Commission's 2013 Progress Report, Egemen Bağış, the Turkish Minister for EU Affairs, has stated that 'Today we enjoy the most transparent and liberal atmosphere ever in the area of freedom of expression and freedom of the media; our Government will continue to take the necessary steps to further enhance these freedoms'. On 12 December 2013, Mr Füle replied on behalf of the Commission to Written Question E-012139/2013 in relation to the abovementioned comments by Mr Bağış. Commissioner Füle wrote: 'The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its 2013 Progress Report on Turkey, in which it draws a comprehensive assessment of the situation vis-à-vis freedom of expression and freedom of the media'.

([4]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-13-891_en.htm
([5]) http://www.welt.de/politik/ausland/article121738893/Erdogans-Angst-vor-dem-Sex-in-Studenten-WGs.html

1. Is the Commission prepared to rectify its failure to provide any meaningful answer to Question E-012139/2013 by now giving a specific and substantive reaction to Mr Bağış's comments — given that his comments were in response to, and thus after the publication of, the Commission's progress report, which means that the report itself cannot be a direct reaction?

Mr Füle went on to say that, 'The Commission expects further changes in the Turkish legal system, especially to strengthen freedom of expression and of the media, and freedom of assembly and of association; […]. The fourth judicial reform package addresses a number of stumbling blocks and should be implemented in full'.

2. On what already observable positive developments does the Commission base its (naive) expectation that there will be 'further changes in the Turkish legal system'?

3. Has the third judicial reform package been completely and correctly implemented in Turkey as yet? If so, what specific manifestation of this has there been, and how does the Commission square this, for example, with the ever increasing restriction of the freedom of expression? If not, why is the fourth judicial reform package being introduced, even before the third package has been fully implemented?

Commissioner Füle further wrote that, 'It is in the interest of both Turkey and the EU that the opening benchmarks for Chapter 23: Judiciary and Fundamental rights and 24: Justice, Freedom and Security are agreed upon […]'.

4. Why is the Commission aiming to open yet more chapters, in the full knowledge that thus far only one chapter (Chapter 25: Science and research) has been successfully closed? On what already observable positive developments does the Commission base its implied expectation that, by opening as many chapters as possible, 'everything will come good in Turkey in the end'?

Joint answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission

(31 January 2014)

The Commission refers to the on-going accession negotiations with Turkey which also cover the subjects mentioned by the Honourable Member. These accession negotiations were opened upon unanimous decision of the EU Member States in 2005 and are carried out in line with the Negotiating Framework of 3 October 2005. The Commission reports yearly in detail to the Member States and the European Parliament on progress in Turkey's fulfilling of the criteria for accession and on persisting concerns. These concerns are brought up in regular meetings at all levels with the Turkish authorities as appropriate.

The Council most recently endorsed the Commission's approach to Turkey's accession process on 17 December 2013. The Commission's latest report was discussed in the European Parliament's AFET Committee on 9 December 2013.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-013154/13
an die Kommission
Nadja Hirsch (ALDE)
(19. November 2013)

Betrifft: Besteuerung von Grenzgängern

In der BRD ist die Besteuerung von Alterseinkünften mit Wirkung ab 2005 geändert worden. In einer Übergangszeit von 2005 bis 2040 wird die Besteuerung von einer Besteuerung des Ertragsanteils auf eine nachgelagerte Besteuerung übergehen.

1. Ist der Kommission die Problematik der Besteuerung von Grenzgängern bekannt, wonach derzeit von ausländischen nicht-deutschen EU-Bürgern rückwirkend ab 2005 Steuern nachgefordert werden?

2. Ist der Kommission bekannt, dass in der BRD lebende Rentner automatisch unbeschränkt steuerpflichtig sind und somit im Hinblick auf die rückwirkende Besteuerung hohe Freibeträge geltend machen können und in vielen Fällen keine Nachzahlungen anfallen, während hingegen im EU-Ausland lebende Bürger, die deutsche Renten nachzuversteuern haben, zunächst einmal automatisch beschränkt steuerpflichtig sind und nicht im gleichen Maße von Freibeträgen profitieren?

3. Sieht die Kommission in dieser Ungleichbehandlung von in der BRD lebenden deutschen rentenbeziehenden Bürgern gegenüber im EU-Ausland lebenden Bürgern hinsichtlich der automatischen steuerrechtlichen Einstufung in beschränkt und unbeschränkt Steuerpflichtige einen Verstoß gegen die Freizügigkeit?

4. Sieht die Kommission in dem Umstand, dass im EU-Ausland lebende Bürger in Deutschland nur dann auf die unbeschränkte Steuerpflicht umgestellt werden und Freibeträge geltend machen können, wenn mehr als 90 % der Einkünfte aus Deutschland stammen, einen Verstoß gegen die Freizügigkeit gegenüber Grenzgängern, die weniger als 90 % ihrer Einkünfte in Deutschland erzielen und deshalb als Bezieher deutscher Renten nicht in den Genuss der Freibeträge der unbeschränkten Besteuerung kommen?

Antwort von Herrn Šemeta im Namen der Kommission
(16. Januar 2014)

Zu den Fragen 1 und 2 verweist die Kommission die Frau Abgeordnete auf ihre Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-004935/2011. Außerdem haben die deutschen Steuerbehörden aufgrund der Bemerkungen im Jahresbericht 2009 des Bundesrechnungshofs zur Besteuerung von im Ausland lebenden Rentnern, die deutsche Altersrenten beziehen, diese Rentner systematisch aufgefordert, auch ihre Steuererklärungen zu übermitteln.

Zu den Fragen 3 und 4: Bei der Berücksichtigung der Alterseinkünfte in der Bemessungsgrundlage wird nicht zwischen gebietsansässigen und gebietsfremden Rentnern unterschieden. Die Besteuerung von gebietsansässigen und gebietsfremden Rentnern unterscheidet sich insofern, als bestimmte Steuervorteile im Zusammenhang mit der persönlichen Lage oder dem Familienstand nur im Wohnsitzland berücksichtigt werden. Der EuGH ([1]) hat in seinem Grundsatzurteil in der Rechtssache Schumacker befunden, dass es in der Regel nicht diskriminierend ist, einem Gebietsfremden bestimmte Steuervergünstigungen zu versagen, da sich diese beiden Gruppen von Steuerpflichtigen nicht in einer vergleichbaren Lage befinden. Der Gerichtshof kam jedoch zu dem Schluss, dass zwischen diesen Gruppen kein objektiver Unterschied besteht, wenn der Gebietsfremde sein zu versteuerndes Einkommen wesentlich aus einer Tätigkeit bezog, die er im Quellenstaat ausgeübt hat. Denn in seinem Wohnsitzstaat hätte er keine ausreichenden Einkünfte erzielt, bei denen der Staat die Steuervorteile gewährt hätte, die sich aus einer Berücksichtigung seiner persönlichen Lage und seines Familienstands ergeben hätten. Der EuGH hat seitdem die deutsche Vorgehensweise, auf entsprechenden Antrag Gebietsfremde als Gebietsansässige zu behandeln und ihnen dieselben Steuervorteile zu gewähren, wenn mehr als 90 % ihres Einkommens aus deutschen Quellen stammen oder das nicht aus deutschen Quellen stammende Einkommen den deutschen Steuerfreibetrag nicht überschreitet, für mit den Grundfreiheiten vereinbar erklärt.

([1]) Gerichtshof der Europäischen Union.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013154/13
to the Commission
Nadja Hirsch (ALDE)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: Taxation of cross-border workers

The taxation of retirement income in the Federal Republic of Germany changed with effect from 2005. Over a transitional period from 2005 to 2040, the taxation will switch from taxation of the income portion to deferred taxation.

1. Is the Commission aware of the problems relating to the taxation of cross-border workers, whereby non-German EU citizens living in another Member State are currently receiving tax demands with retroactive effect from 2005 onwards?

2. Is it aware that pensioners living in Germany are automatically fully taxable and thus, with regard to the retroactive taxation, are able to claim large allowances and in many cases are not required to make any back payments, whereas people living in another EU Member State who have to pay retroactive tax on German pensions are automatically not fully taxable and cannot benefit to the same extent from allowances?

3. Does the Commission see a violation of the freedom of movement in this unequal treatment of those people receiving German pensions who live in Germany and those who live in another EU Member State in respect of the automatic tax classification into not fully and fully taxable persons?

4. Does it consider the fact that people living in another EU Member State are only given fully taxable status and are able to claim allowances in Germany if more than 90% of their income comes from Germany to be a violation of the freedom of movement of cross-border workers who obtain less than 90% of their income in Germany and therefore, as recipients of German pensions, do not benefit from the allowances afforded by fully taxable status?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(16 January 2014)

1 and 2. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-004935/2011. In addition, as a consequence of the statements in the report for 2009 of the German Federal Court of Auditors on the taxation of non-residents receiving German pensions, the German tax authorities started to systematically request non-residents receiving a German pension to also submit their tax declarations.

3 and 4. There is no difference between a resident and non-resident taxpayer when taking into account the pension income in the tax base. The taxation of a resident and non-resident pensioner differs in so far as certain tax benefits relating to the personal and family circumstances are only taken into account in the country of residence. The CJEU ([1]) decided in its landmark judgment in the Schumacker case that not granting to non-residents certain tax benefits which it grants to residents is, as a rule, not discriminatory, since those two categories of taxpayers are not in a comparable situation. However, the Court came to the conclusion that there was no objective difference between these categories when the non-resident obtained the major part of his taxable income from an activity performed in the State of source. This was because in his State of residence he would not have sufficient income to allow that State to grant him the benefits resulting from taking into account his personal and family circumstances. The CJEU has since confirmed as compatible with the fundamental freedoms the German approach to treat, upon request, non-residents as residents and to grant them the same benefits, if more than 90% of their income is subject to German sources or if the income not subject to German sources does not exceed the German basic allowance.

([1]) Court of Justice of the European Union.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-013155/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(19. November 2013)

Betrifft: Kinderarbeit in der EU

Kinderarbeit ist auch in der Europäischen Union ein schwerwiegendes und ernstzunehmendes Problem. Laut Medienberichten muss in Italien jedes zwanzigste Kind Geld verdienen, um seine Eltern finanziell zu unterstützen. Auch andere EU-Länder sind mit derselben Problematik konfrontiert. Dadurch wird die Schulbildung relevant negativ beeinflusst, und ein Kreislauf setzt sich in Gang, der mit Kinderarbeit beginnt und weiter über eine schlechte Ausbildung und kaum Berufschancen im Erwachsenenalter zu Armut und Arbeitsbedarf der eigenen Kinder führt.

1. Was unternimmt die Kommission konkret, um diesen Kreislauf des sozialen Abstiegs zu durchbrechen?

2. Welche Maßnahmen empfiehlt die Kommissionen den EU-Mitgliedstaaten auf nationalstaatlicher Ebene (insbesondere im Hinblick auf sozialpolitische Veränderungen)?

3. Welche Maßnahmen und Programme existieren auf EU-Ebene, um einen zu frühen Eintritt in den Arbeitsmarkt (und darauffolgenden Schulabbruch) zu verhindern und der Verschärfung der Situation durch die Finanz- und Wirtschaftskrise (und somit auch steigender Arbeitslosigkeit der Eltern) Rechnung zu tragen?

4. Wie kann — nach Ansicht der Kommission — der sozialen Akzeptanz von Kinderarbeit entgegengewirkt werden?

Antwort von László Andor im Namen der Kommission
(27. Januar 2014)

Der Besitzstand der Union verbietet Kinderarbeit. Die Charta der Grundrechte der Europäischen Union verbietet Kinderarbeit und erkennt das Recht von Kindern auf allgemeine und berufliche Bildung an ([1]).

Die Richtlinie 94/33/EG des Rates ([2]) zielt auf das Verbot von Kinderarbeit und soll die Einhaltung der Schulpflicht gewährleisten und junge Menschen vor wirtschaftlicher Ausbeutung sowie vor Arbeit schützen, die ihrer Sicherheit, ihrer Gesundheit oder ihrer physischen, psychischen, moralischen oder sozialen Entwicklung schaden oder ihre Gesamtbildung beeinträchtigen könnten. Alle Mitgliedstaaten haben die Richtlinie in innerstaatliches Recht umgesetzt.

Die Kommission hat einen Bericht über die Anwendung der Richtlinie veröffentlicht ([3]), aus dem hervorgeht, dass die Wahrnehmung der Arbeit junger Menschen sehr unterschiedlich sein kann und dass die Arbeit in Familienbetrieben oder im Haushalt in einigen Ländern positiv gesehen wird. In den nationalen Berichten haben zahlreiche Mitgliedstaaten darauf hingewiesen, dass die Richtlinie zu einer stärkeren Sensibilisierung geführt habe und einen Beitrag zur Verbesserung des rechtlichen Schutzes junger Menschen leiste.

Darüber hinaus haben alle EU-Mitgliedstaaten die IAO-Kernübereinkommen 138 über das Mindestalter für die Zulassung zu Beschäftigung und 182 über die schlimmsten Formen der Kinderarbeit ratifiziert.

Auch das VN-Übereinkommen über die Rechte des Kindes, auf das in der Empfehlung „Investitionen in Kinder: Den Kreislauf der Benachteiligung durchbrechen" ([4]) verwiesen wird, haben alle EU-Mitgliedstaaten ratifiziert. Die Vertragsstaaten dieses Übereinkommens erkennen „das Recht des Kindes an, vor wirtschaftlicher Ausbeutung geschützt und nicht zu einer Arbeit herangezogen zu werden, die Gefahren mit sich bringen, die Erziehung des Kindes behindern oder die Gesundheit des Kindes oder seine körperliche, geistige, seelische, sittliche oder soziale Entwicklung schädigen könnte".

([1]) Artikel 32.
([2]) Richtlinie 94/33/EG des Rates vom 22. Juni 1994 über den Jugendarbeitsschutz, ABl. L 216 vom 20.8.1994.
([3]) Arbeitsunterlage der Kommissionsdienststellen, SEK(2010)1339, abrufbar unter: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=706&langId=de&intPageId=209
([4]) Empfehlung der Kommission vom 20.2.2013 „Investitionen in Kinder: Den Kreislauf der Benachteiligung durchbrechen", C(2013)778 endg.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013155/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: Child labour in the EU

Child labour is a major problem even in the European Union, and one that must be taken seriously. According to media reports, in Italy one in 20 children has to earn money to support his or her parents financially. Other EU Member States are also facing the same problem. As a result, the children's education is adversely affected and a cycle is set in motion, beginning with child labour, progressing on to poor education and poor employment opportunities in adulthood and then to poverty for their own children, who then also have to work.

1. What, in specific terms, is the Commission doing to break the cycle of this downward social spiral?

2. What steps would it recommend the Member States to take at national level (in particular in relation to socio-political changes)?

3. What measures and programmes exist at EU level to prevent people from entering the labour market too early (and subsequently dropping out of school) and to take account of the exacerbation of the situation by the financial and economic crisis (and thus also rising unemployment among parents)?

4. In the Commission's opinion, what can be done to combat the social acceptance of child labour?

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

The EU *acquis* prohibits the employment of children. The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union prohibits the employment of children and recognises their right to education and vocational training. ([1])

Council Directive 94/33/EC ([2]) aims to prohibit work by children, to safeguard their schooling obligations, and to protect young people against economic exploitation and any work likely to harm their safety, health and physical, mental, moral or social development or to jeopardise their education. All Member States have transposed the directive into their national legislation.

The Commission published a report on the application of the directive ([3]) showing that the perception of young people's work can differ considerably and that in some countries work in a family business or at home is perceived positively. In their national reports, many Member States pointed out that the directive has resulted in increasing awareness and plays a positive role by contributing to the improvement of the legal protection afforded to young people.

In addition, all EU Member States have ratified ILO fundamental Conventions 138 on the minimum age for labour and 182 on the worst forms of child labour.

Moreover all EU Member States have ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, cited in the recommendation 'Investing in children: breaking the cycle of disadvantage' ([4]). The latter foresees that 'states recognise the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development'.

([1]) Article 32.
([2]) Council Directive 94/33/EC of 22 June 1994 on the protection of young people at work, OJ L 216, 20.8.1994.
([3]) Commission Staff Working Document, SEC(2010) 1339, available at: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=706&langId=en&intPageId=209
([4]) Commission recommendation of 20/02/2013, Investing in children: breaking the cycle of disadvantage, C(2013)778 final.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-013156/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(19 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Φορολογικοί παράδεισοι στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση

Σύμφωνα με την απάντηση της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής (E-004826/2013) σε σχετική μου ερώτηση για το ξέπλυμα μαύρου χρήματος στην ΕΕ και την επιβολή Μνημονίου Οικονομικής Πολιτικής στην Κύπρο, οι κυπριακές αρχές και το Eurogroup συμφώνησαν να διενεργήσουν «πρόσθετη ενδελεχή έρευνα όσον αφορά το καθεστώς για την καταπολέμηση της νομιμοποίησης εσόδων από παράνομες δραστηριότητες στην Κύπρο, και ιδίως όσον αφορά την πραγματική συμμόρφωση των τραπεζών με την κυπριακή νομοθεσία για την καταπολέμηση της νομιμοποίησης εσόδων από παράνομες δραστηριότητες». Επίσης, η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή, στην απάντησή της, επισήμαινε ότι «Κατά γενικό κανόνα, η Επιτροπή παρακολουθεί την υλοποίηση του καθεστώτος της ΕΕ για την καταπολέμηση της νομιμοποίησης εσόδων από παράνομες δραστηριότητες σε όλα τα κράτη μέλη».

Με δεδομένο ότι στις 7 Νοεμβρίου 2013 το Δίκτυο Φορολογικής Δικαιοσύνης (Tax Justice Network) δημοσίευσε τον Δείκτη Χρηματοοικονομικής Μυστικότητας, στον οποίο εμφανίζεται η Κύπρος στην 41η θέση, η Μεγάλη Βρετανία στην 21η θέση, η Αυστρία στην 18η θέση και η Γερμανία στην 8η θέση της παγκόσμιας κατάταξης, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Γιατί συνεχίζεται ο διεθνής διασυρμός της Κύπρου από την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση, όσον αφορά το ξέπλυμα μαύρου χρήματος, όταν η Γερμανία φιγουράρει στις πρώτες θέσεις της παγκόσμιας κατάταξης;

2. Με ποιον τρόπο η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή παρακολούθησε την «υλοποίηση του καθεστώτος της ΕΕ για την καταπολέμηση της νομιμοποίησης εσόδων από παράνομες δραστηριότητες σε όλα τα κράτη μέλη», όταν δύο χώρες της ΕΕ βρίσκονται στην πρώτη δεκάδα της παγκόσμιας κατάταξης;

Απάντηση του κ. Barnier εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(3 Φεβρουαρίου 2014)

1. Η Επιτροπή θεωρεί ότι η περίπτωση της Κύπρου ήταν ιδιάζουσα, όπως και ο τρόπος αντιμετώπισής της. Τα μέτρα που συμφωνήθηκαν με την Κύπρο ικανοποιούσαν την απαίτηση των κρατών μελών να εξασφαλισθεί ένα πρότυπο δέουσας επιμέλειας ως προς τον πελάτη, το οποίο ενδείκνυται στους συγκεκριμένους κινδύνους στους οποίους ήταν εκτεθειμένες οι κυπριακές τράπεζες. Τα μεταγενέστερα πορίσματα των εκθέσεων της Deloitte και της MONEYVAL χρησιμοποιήθηκαν από τους εταίρους του προγράμματος, ώστε να οδηγηθούν σε συμφωνία με την Κύπρο ως προς ένα δομημένο σχέδιο δράσης και να βελτιώσουν το κυπριακό πλαίσιο καταπολέμησης της νομιμοποίησης εσόδων από παράνομες δραστηριότητες.

2. Η Επιτροπή δεν επιθυμεί να σχολιάσει την κατάταξη ορισμένων άλλων κρατών μελών στον Κατάλογο Χρηματοπιστωτικού Απορρήτου. Επιβεβαιώνει, ωστόσο, ότι παρακολουθεί τη συμμόρφωση των κρατών μελών με τη σχετική νομοθεσία της ΕΕ και την πρόοδο των αξιολογήσεων των κρατών μελών και των διαδικασιών παρακολούθησης από την ομάδα χρηματοοικονομικής δράσης (της οποίας η Επιτροπή είναι πλήρες μέλος) και την MONEYVAL (όπου είναι παρατηρητής), οι οποίες παρέχουν λεπτομερή πορίσματα και επακόλουθες ενέργειες παρά μια γενική κατάταξη. Οι εν λόγω εκθέσεις καλύπτουν ευρύτερο φάσμα θεμάτων (όπως επάρκεια και αποτελεσματικότητα του νομικού πλαισίου, προληπτικά μέτρα, επιβολή του νόμου και συνεργασία), σε σύγκριση με τον Κατάλογο Χρηματοπιστωτικού Απορρήτου, ο οποίος καλύπτει κυρίως θέματα, λόγου χάριν, περί διαφάνειας και εύκολης πρόσβασης σε πληροφορίες σχετικά με την πραγματική κυριότητα.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013156/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: Tax havens in the European Union

According to the European Commission's reply (E-004826/2013) to my question about money laundering in the EU and the imposition of a memorandum of economic policies on Cyprus, the Cypriot authorities and the Eurogroup have agreed to carry out an 'additional in-depth investigation of the anti-money laundering regime in Cyprus and in particular into actual compliance by banks with the Cypriot anti-money laundering legislation'. The European Commission also noted in its reply that 'as a general matter, the Commission follows the implementation of the EU AML regime in all Member States'.

In view of the fact that, on 7 November 2013, the Tax Justice Network published a financial secrecy index, in which Cyprus was listed in 41st position, Great Britain in 21st position, Austria in 18th position and Germany in 8th position in the global ranking, will the Commission say:

1. Why does the European Union persist in its international defamation of Cyprus on money laundering, when Germany holds one of the top positions in the global ranking?

2. How is the European Commission following 'the implementation of the EU AML regime in all the Member States' when two EU Member States are in the top ten of the global ranking?

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

1. The Commission considers that the Cyprus situation was unique, as was the way that the situation was dealt with. The measures agreed with Cyprus responded to the demand by Member States to ensure a standard of Customer Due Diligence which is appropriate to the specific risks to which Cypriot banks were exposed. The subsequent findings of the Deloitte and MONEYVAL reports have been used by the Programme Partners to agree a structured Action Plan with Cyprus to make improvements to its Anti-Money laundering framework.

2. The Commission does not wish to comment on the position in the Financial Secrecy index of other individual Member States. However, it can confirm that it monitors Member States' compliance with the relevant EU legislation and the progress of Member State evaluations and follow-up procedures established by the Financial Action Task Force (where the Commission is a full member) and MONEYVAL (where it is an observer), which provide detailed findings and follow-up rather than an overall ranking. These reports cover a wider range of issues (including the adequacy and effectiveness of the legal structure, preventative measures, law enforcement and cooperation) than those identified in the Financial Secrecy Index, which concentrates on issues such as transparency of beneficial ownership and easy access to information.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-013159/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(19 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Συγχώνευση Olympic Air και Aegean

Σε συνέχεια της έγκρισης της εξαγοράς της Olympic Air από την Aegean, βάσει του κανονισμού της ΕΕ για τις συγκεντρώσεις μεταξύ επιχειρήσεων, το ελληνικό επιβατικό κοινό καθίσταται έρμαιο ενός και μόνου αερομεταφορέα, παρόλο που οι δύο αεροπορικές εταιρείες θα διατηρήσουν η καθεμιά το όνομα και το σήμα της, καθώς και διακριτό πτητικό έργο και στόλο.

Η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή, στην ανακοίνωσή της συμπεραίνει ότι η εν λόγω συγχώνευση είναι συμβατή με την εσωτερική αγορά καθώς μετά από διεξοδική έρευνα προέκυψε ότι αν η Olympic Air δεν εξαγοραζόταν από την Aegean, θα αναγκαζόταν στο άμεσο μέλλον να παύσει να λειτουργεί λόγω οικονομικών δυσχερειών. Κατά συνέπεια, σύμφωνα με την Επιτροπή, η συγκέντρωση επιχειρήσεων δεν στρεβλώνει τον ανταγωνισμό, ο οποίος ούτως ή άλλως δεν θα υπήρχε.

Σύμφωνα με τα παραπάνω ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Η ιδιωτικοποίηση της Ολυμπιακής το 2009, εκτιμά ότι απέφερε θετικά αποτελέσματα στον ανταγωνισμό έως σήμερα στην ελληνική εσωτερική αγορά;

2. Σύμφωνα με τις εκτιμήσεις της Επιτροπής αναμένεται η είσοδος άλλων αεροπορικών εταιρειών στην ελληνική αγορά;

3. Πώς σχολιάζει η Επιτροπή το γεγονός ότι σε πολλές νησιωτικές και απομακρυσμένες περιοχές οι καταναλωτές διαμαρτύρονται για τη πολιτική του μονοπωλίου της Olympic, που απαιτεί μισό μισθό για ένα ταξίδι στην Αθήνα, την ώρα που με το 1/3 των χρημάτων φτάνει κανείς σε ευρωπαϊκούς και όχι μόνο προορισμούς;

Απάντηση του κ. Almunia εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(31 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Μετά την ιδιωτικοποίηση της Olympic Airlines το 2009, οι καταναλωτές ωφελήθηκαν από τη δυνατότητα επιλογής μεταξύ δύο αεροπορικών εταιρειών για πολλά σημαντικά εμπορικά δρομολόγια. Παρόλο που το 2009 η Olympic ήταν σε θέση να αρχίσει και πάλι την εκτέλεση πτήσεων από το μηδέν και χωρίς υποχρεώσεις, το επιχειρηματικό μοντέλο της τελικά δεν ήταν βιώσιμο. Η Olympic, από τη στιγμή της ιδιωτικοποίησής της, παρουσίαζε ζημίες κάθε χρόνο και το 2011 άρχισε να περιορίζει τις πτήσεις της προκειμένου να μειωθούν οι ζημίες. Επιπλέον, ήταν απίθανο η Olympic να καταστεί κερδοφόρα υπό οποιοδήποτε επιχειρηματικό σενάριο στο εγγύς μέλλον και, σε κάθε περίπτωση, θα ήταν αναγκασμένη να εγκαταλείψει σύντομα την αγορά. Ως εκ τούτου, στις 9 Οκτωβρίου 2013 η Επιτροπή ενέκρινε άνευ όρων την εξαγορά της Olympic Air από την Aegean Airlines ([1]).

Η εγχώρια αγορά της Ελλάδας είναι ελκυστική ως σύνολο για νέες επιχειρήσεις, όπως αποδεικνύει η πρόσφατη είσοδος της Ryanair στο δρομολόγιο Θεσσαλονίκη-Χανιά. Ωστόσο, αυτό δεν ισχύει για τα εγχώρια δρομολόγια από την Αθήνα, όπου η Aegean και η Olympic έχουν την βάση τους, παρά την πρόσφατη ανακοίνωση της Ryanair ότι προτίθεται να δημιουργήσει βάση στην Αθήνα ([2]).

Η είσοδος αυτή θα αυξήσει τον ανταγωνισμό στην εγχώρια αγορά και θα λειτουργήσει προς όφελος των Ελλήνων καταναλωτών. Επιπλέον, εφόσον οι ελληνικές αρχές θεωρήσουν ότι ορισμένα μικρά νησιά και περιφερειακές περιοχές δεν συνδέονται με την Αθήνα τακτικά ή σε προσιτές τιμές, έχουν δικαίωμα να αναθέσουν τα εν λόγω δρομολόγια με διαγωνισμό στο πλαίσιο του καθεστώτος υποχρέωσης παροχής δημόσιας υπηρεσίας σύμφωνα με τον κανονισμό 1008/2008 ([3]).

([1]) Υπόθεση COMP/M.6796 — Aegean/Olympic II· το δελτίο τύπου είναι διαθέσιμο στη διεύθυνση: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-927_el.htm
([2]) http://www.ryanair.com/index.php/en/news/ryanair-announces-news-athens-and-thessaloniki-bases-no-63-and-64
([3]) Κανονισμός (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1008/2008 του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, της 24ης Σεπτεμβρίου 2008, σχετικά με κοινούς κανόνες εκμετάλλευσης των αεροπορικών γραμμών στην Κοινότητα, ΕΕ L 293 της 31.10.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013159/13
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: Merger of Olympic Air and Aegean

Further to approval of the acquisition of Olympic Air by Aegean, based on the EU regulation on concentrations between large undertakings, Greek passengers have been left at the mercy of a single carrier, despite the fact that the two airlines will each keep their name and logo and separate schedules and fleets.

The European Commission concludes in its communication that this merger is compatible with the internal market because, according to its in-depth investigation, Olympic Air would be forced to exit the market in the near future due financial difficulties if not acquired by Aegean. Therefore, according to the Commission, the concentration of undertakings does not distort competition which, in any case, does not exist.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Did the privatisation of Olympic Airways in 2009 bring about positive results in terms of competition to date on the Greek domestic market?

2. Does the Commission expect other airlines to enter the Greek market?

3. What does the Commission have to say about the fact that, in numerous island and peripheral regions, consumers are protesting about the policy of the monopoly of Olympic Air, which demands half a month's pay for a flight to Athens, when flights are available to European and other destinations for 1/3 of the cost?

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

Following Olympic Airlines' privatisation in 2009, consumers benefitted from the choice between two airlines on many important commercial routes. Although in 2009 Olympic was able to restart its operations with a clean slate and without liabilities, its business model was ultimately not sustainable. Olympic was loss-making every year since privatisation and began scaling down its flight operations in 2011 in order to reduce losses. Furthermore, Olympic was unlikely to become profitable under any business scenario in the near future, and would have been forced to leave the market soon in any event. Therefore, on 9 October 2013, the Commission unconditionally approved the acquisition of Olympic Air by Aegean Airlines. ([1])

The Greek domestic market as a whole is attractive to newcomers, as the recent entry of Ryanair on the Thessaloniki-Chania route demonstrates. This is, however, less the case regarding domestic routes out of Athens where Aegean and Olympic have their home bases, despite a recent announcement from Ryanair that it intends to open a base in Athens ([2]).

This entry will increase competition on the domestic market and benefit Greek consumers. Moreover, should Greek authorities consider that certain small islands and peripheral regions are not connected to Athens regularly or at affordable fares, they are entitled to tender such routes under the Public Service Obligation scheme in accordance with Regulation 1008/2008 ([3]).

([1]) Case COMP/M.6796 — Aegean/Olympic II; the press release can be found at: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-927_en.htm
([2]) http://www.ryanair.com/index.php/en/news/ryanair-announces-news-athens-and-thessaloniki-bases-no-63-and-64
([3]) Regulation (EC) No 1008/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 September 2008 on common rules for the operation of air services in the Community, OJ L 293, 31.10.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013160/13
to the Commission
Jean Lambert (Verts/ALE)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: Microfinance projects and their impact on child labour

Following concerns from a number of NGOs and civil society organisations concerning the impact of microfinance projects on child labour, I would like to seek clarification regarding the evaluation of EU and Member State development and investment projects.

An NGO in Bangladesh, People's Oriented Program Implementation (POPI), recently conducted a study in Bangladesh which suggested that there could be an unintended link between microfinance projects and an increase in child labour. This is as a result of families sending their children to work to help with loan repayments, or employing them in small businesses financed by microloans.

Are EU-funded development and investment activities regularly assessed as regards their impact on child labour?

Does the Commission have arrangements in place to inspect, monitor and report on its projects with a view to confirming that they have not had any impact in terms of encouraging or facilitating child labour?

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

The Commission is well aware that child labour remains a pressing concern, and recognises that microcredit, if not managed properly, could contribute to its increase.

In order to mitigate this risk it has adopted a holistic approach going beyond microcredit to include other financial products and additional social services, tailored to the needs of the poorest. Evidence has shown that such tailored savings and insurance can be an effective tool to cope with emergencies, better manage risks, and invest in social assets, such as education.

The Commission's primary focus on microfinance is to support Micro Financial Institutions with an excellent track record in monitoring social and financial performance. . Since 2010, concerns about over-indebtedness have led to stronger social performance management of financial services providers in order to deliver responsible finance.

Regarding the impact of existing actions on children, the Commission is committed to implementing the EU's long-term strategy on children's rights ([1]). The Commission has also proposed indicators and enhanced monitoring of the impact of existing actions on children ([2]).

The EU Delegation in Bangladesh has systematic contacts with CSO ([3]), and has conducted regular external monitoring and evaluation of its microfinance projects achieving positive results on the livelihoods of the poorest.

The Commission is firmly committed to promoting and respecting the rights of the child at global level and to collective efforts on the eradication of child labour and in particular the elimination of its worst forms, through a holistic approach using a broad spectrum of instruments including specific development cooperation tools, such as the EIDHR ([4]) and Investing in People ([5]).

([1]) Communication 'Towards an EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child' COM(2006) 367 final of 4.7.2006.
([2]) Communication 'A Special Space for Children in EU External Action' COM(2005) 55 final of 5.2.2008.
([3]) Civil Society Organisations.
([4]) European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights.
([5]) 15 projects selected in 2011 under the call 'Fighting Child Labour' (EUR 11 million) are currently being implemented with the aim, *inter alia* to promote effective policy dialogue and corporate social responsibility in the area of child labour.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-013161/13
à la Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(19 novembre 2013)

Objet: Typhon Haiyan: à quand une force européenne de réaction rapide

Suite aux ravages causés par le typhon Haiyan aux Philippines, l'ONU a estimé les besoins à 300 millions de dollars pour lancer un plan d'action sur la nourriture, la santé, l'assainissement, les abris, le retrait des débris et la protection des plus vulnérables. L'Union européenne a démontré sa générosité en débloquant 10 millions d'euros d'aide humanitaire d'urgence et 10 millions d'euros d'aide additionnelle pour la réhabilitation et la reconstruction des zones sinistrées. Vingt États membres participent également à l'effort en envoyant des fonds (portant ainsi à 100 millions l'aide totale européenne), du matériel, des experts et des équipes médicales. Certes ces efforts nationaux sont coordonnés au titre du Mécanisme européen de protection civile activé à la demande des autorités philippines, mais l'Union européenne pourrait faire plus et mieux. Trop souvent l'aide d'urgence européenne s'est révélé tardive, inadéquate, dispersée et peu visible sur le terrain comme lors de la gestion de la crise en Haïti. En sera-t-il réellement autrement cette fois? Après sa recommandation de décembre 2010 sur la création d'une capacité de réponse rapide, le Parlement européen adoptera en décembre prochain à Strasbourg sa résolution sur le Renforcement du Mécanisme de protection civile, plus d'un an après l'adoption du rapport de la commission de l'environnement sur le sujet en raison du manque d'enthousiasme de certains États membres lors des négociations. L'Union européenne doit davantage s'impliquer dans la gestion des crises internationales, notamment écologiques (catastrophes naturelles, effets du changement climatique). La création d'une véritable force européenne de protection civile, basée sur la mutualisation des moyens comme proposé par Michel Barnier dans son rapport de 2006, reste sans conteste la solution la plus efficace et la plus solidaire.

1. Quelle analyse la Commission européenne tire-t-elle du retard dans l'adoption de la proposition de décision relative au mécanisme de protection civile de l'Union (COM(2011)0934)?

2. Ce mécanisme sera-t-il utilisable aussi bien dans l'Union qu'à l'extérieur de l'Union pour réagir aux catastrophes naturelles?

3. La Commission européenne a-t-elle abandonné l'idée de proposer une véritable force européenne de protection civile malgré les déclarations de MM. Barroso et Van Rompuy au lendemain du séisme en Haïti?

Réponse donnée par Mme Georgieva au nom de la Commission
(16 janvier 2014)

La proposition de décision du Parlement européen et du Conseil relative au mécanisme de protection civile de l'Union, présentée le 20 décembre 2011 par la Commission, a été adoptée sans délai en première lecture dans le cadre de la procédure législative ordinaire. La décision n° 1313/2013 a été publiée au Journal officiel L 347 du 20 décembre 2013. Elle est entrée en vigueur le 1er janvier 2014, abrogeant la décision 2007/779/CE, Euratom, instituant un mécanisme communautaire de protection civile (refonte) et la décision instituant un instrument financier pour la protection civile (2007/162/CE, Euratom).

Conformément aux articles 15 et 16 de la nouvelle décision, le mécanisme de protection civile continuera de réagir aux catastrophes survenant tant à l'intérieur qu'à l'extérieur de l'Union. Le nouvel acte législatif en matière de protection civile est fondé sur une approche ascendante reposant sur les capacités dont disposent les États membres, afin de constituer une véritable capacité européenne de réaction d'urgence qui permettra à l'UE de réagir avec rapidité et détermination à une catastrophe survenant n'importe où dans le monde.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013161/13
to the Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: Typhoon Haiyan — when will Europe have a rapid response force?

Following the devastation caused by Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines, the United Nations has estimated that it will take USD 300 million to launch an action plan to provide food, healthcare, sanitation and shelter, to clear debris and to protect the most vulnerable. The European Union has shown its generosity by releasing EUR 10 million in emergency humanitarian aid and EUR 10 million in additional aid for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the affected areas. Twenty Member States are also contributing to the effort by sending equipment, experts, medical teams and funds, thus bringing total European aid to EUR 100 million. Granted, these national efforts are coordinated by the Community Civil Protection Mechanism — activated at the request of the Philippine authorities — but the Union could do more, and could do it better. All too often, European emergency aid has come too late and has been inadequate, scattered and relatively hard to see on the ground, as during management of the crisis in Haiti. Will it really be any different this time? Following its recommendation in December 2010 on setting up a rapid response capability, Parliament will adopt its resolution on strengthening the Civil Protection Mechanism in December in Strasbourg, over a year after the report on this subject by the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety was adopted. This delay is down to a lack of enthusiasm on the part of certain Member States during the negotiations. The EU must play a greater role in managing international crises, particularly environmental crises (natural disasters, effects of climate change). Creating a true European civil protection force based on pooling resources, as proposed by Michel Barnier in his 2006 report, remains without doubt the most effective and cohesive solution.

1. What conclusion does the Commission draw from the delay in the adoption of the proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on a Union civil protection mechanism (COM(2011)0934)?

2. Will this mechanism be usable both inside and outside the Union for responding to natural disasters?

3. Has the Commission abandoned the idea of proposing a true European civil protection force despite the declarations of Mr Barroso and Mr Van Rompuy in the aftermath of the earthquake in Haiti?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(16 January 2014)

The Commission proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism of 20 December 2011was adopted in first reading of the ordinary legislative procedure without undue delay. The decision 1313/2013/EU was published in the Official Journal L 347 of 20 December 2013. It entered into force on 1 January 2014, repealing Council Decision 2007/779/EC, Euratom establishing a Community Civil Protection Mechanism (recast) and Council Decision establishing a Civil Protection Financial Instrument (2007/162/EC, Euratom).

In line with Articles 15 and 16 of the new Decision, the Civil Protection Mechanism will continue to respond to disasters both inside and outside the Union. The new civil protection legislation has taken a bottom-up approach, based on existing Member States' capacities, to create a genuine European Emergency Response Capacity which will enable the EU to react quickly and forcefully to any disaster anywhere in the world.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013162/13
alla Commissione
Sergio Berlato (PPE), Magdi Cristiano Allam (EFD), Roberta Angelilli (PPE), Paolo Bartolozzi (PPE), Fabrizio Bertot (PPE), Mara Bizzotto (EFD), Lara Comi (PPE), Susy De Martini (ECR), Elisabetta Gardini (PPE), Giovanni La Via (PPE), Clemente Mastella (PPE), Barbara Matera (PPE), Cristiana Muscardini (ECR), Alfredo Pallone (PPE), Aldo Patriciello (PPE), Crescenzio Rivellini (PPE), Licia Ronzulli (PPE), Oreste Rossi (PPE) e Marco Scurria (PPE)
(19 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Precarizzazione del giornalismo che sottopone gran parte dei lavoratori dell'informazione, collaboratori e freelance, a condizioni di lavoro e trattamenti economici inaccettabili

La crescente precarizzazione che in Italia sta investendo in maniera esponenziale diversi ambiti lavorativi ha colpito anche il giornalismo, sottoponendo gran parte dei lavoratori dell'informazione, collaboratori esterni e freelance, a condizioni di lavoro e trattamenti economici inaccettabili. Attualmente i giornalisti «autonomi» superano quelli «dipendenti», sono infatti 28 408 mila su 47 727 mila giornalisti attivi, e hanno retribuzioni medie equivalenti al 18 % del salario medio annuo di un giornalista dipendente. Si parla di un reddito medio lordo annuo di 12 810 euro per le partite Iva, cifra che cala a 8 973 per i co.co.co, come si evince dai dati della gestione separata dell'Inpgi, la cassa previdenziale di categoria. In termini materiali, dunque, significa che un articolo di un cronista su un quotidiano può «valere» anche cinque euro lordi. Una situazione che è fotografata dal rapporto Lsdi (Libertà di stampa diritto all'informazione) relativa all'anno 2012, dove emerge che attualmente 6 giornalisti attivi su 10 svolgono infatti un lavoro autonomo, e fra il 2009 e il 2012 la percentuale del lavoro subordinato è scesa dal 46,4 % al 40,5 %. I giornalisti dipendenti rappresentano il 18,8 % degli iscritti all'ordine. La retribuzione media di un autonomo varia dai 9 000 ai 12 800 euro lordi all'anno (con spese, contributi e rischi a carico), e si rileva che il 53 % di questa popolazione percepisce un reddito annuo al di sotto dei 5 000 euro. Tenuto conto della risoluzione del Parlamento europeo del 20 ottobre 2010 sul ruolo del reddito minimo nella lotta contro la povertà e la promozione di una società inclusiva in Europa, che, al paragrafo 6, «sottolinea la necessità che gli Stati membri intervengano concretamente per definire una soglia di reddito minimo, in base a indicatori pertinenti, che garantiscano la coesione socioeconomica, ridurre il rischio di livelli di remunerazione differenti per la medesima attività, ridurre il rischio di una popolazione povera in tutta l'Unione europea e chiede raccomandazioni più risolute da parte dell'Unione europea in merito a questi tipi di azioni», può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se è già a conoscenza di questa situazione e se ritenga che sia un'anomalia solo italiana;

2. se ritiene che la situazione di precarietà nel campo dell'informazione, vista la conseguente mancanza di autonomia e indipendenza che il mestiere richiederebbe, vada inevitabilmente a incidere sul prodotto fornito e quindi ad abbassare il livello di qualità della stessa informazione;

3. se ritiene opportuno proporre la costituzione di una commissione d'inchiesta speciale, e in che tempi, per avviare un monitoraggio serio e concertato in tutti i paesi europei per fare luce sulla situazione relativa al lavoro autonomo giornalistico nel settore dell'informazione?

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

1. La Commissione è consapevole del fatto che il giornalismo è spesso un'occupazione precaria. Ciò è stato confermato da uno studio condotto di recente ([1]) sul lavoro precario e i diritti sociali che ha esaminato dodici Stati membri, Italia compresa.

2. La Commissione si adopera per assicurare il rispetto della libertà dei media e del pluralismo consacrati nella Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'Unione europea per quanto concerne le sue competenze. Conformemente all'articolo 51, paragrafo 1, la Carta si applica agli Stati membri soltanto allorché questi attuano la normative dell'UE. La Commissione ritiene che la disponibilità di giornali qualitativamente validi sia un fattore importante per la cultura politica e la democrazia europee. Non esistono però regole specifiche a livello europeo in merito alla sicurezza del posto di lavoro per i giornalisti.

([1]) «Study on precarious work and social rights», effettuato per conto della Commissione dalla London Metropolitan University, aprile 2012; reperibile sul sito: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=157&langId=en&furtherPubs=yes

3. La Commissione segue la questione cofinanziando progetti in questo ambito e in sede di comitati europei per il dialogo sociale e settoriale. In particolare, essa ha cofinanziato un progetto [2] condotto dalla Federazione europea dei giornalisti nel 2012 che ha prodotto un insieme di conclusioni e raccomandazioni [3] per assicurare che i giornalisti godano di pari diritti. La Commissione attira l'attenzione degli onorevoli deputati sul fatto che l'UE non ha competenza per disciplinare le questioni salariali [4]. Poiché non vi è una legislazione unionale che stabilisca criteri atti a determinare quali sono i lavoratori autonomi, la questione è lasciata alle autorità nazionali, anche nelle sedi giudiziarie. La Commissione non intende pertanto costituire un comitato speciale di indagine incaricato di esaminare la situazione dei giornalisti «indipendenti».

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[2] Nell'ambito del progetto pilota «Encourage conversion of precarious work into work with rights» condotto nel 2011 e 2012.
[3] «Equal rights for journalists — An analysis from the Thessaloniki conference», 2012; disponibile sul sito: http://europe.ifj.org/en/articles/equal-rights-for-journalists-learning-the-lessons-of-europes-journalists-unions
[4] Articolo 153, paragrafo 5, del trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013162/13
to the Commission
Sergio Berlato (PPE), Magdi Cristiano Allam (EFD), Roberta Angelilli (PPE), Paolo Bartolozzi (PPE), Fabrizio Bertot (PPE), Mara Bizzotto (EFD), Lara Comi (PPE), Susy De Martini (ECR), Elisabetta Gardini (PPE), Giovanni La Via (PPE), Clemente Mastella (PPE), Barbara Matera (PPE), Cristiana Muscardini (ECR), Alfredo Pallone (PPE), Aldo Patriciello (PPE), Crescenzio Rivellini (PPE), Licia Ronzulli (PPE), Oreste Rossi (PPE) and Marco Scurria (PPE)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: Increased job insecurity in journalism, which is imposing unacceptable working conditions and financial treatment on the majority of information workers, external contributors and freelance workers

The growing job insecurity that is spreading exponentially in Italy in various employment sectors has also hit journalism, and is imposing unacceptable working conditions and financial treatment on the majority of information workers, external contributors and freelance workers. Currently there are more 'independent' journalists than 'employees'. In fact, 28 408 of the 47 727 working journalists are freelance, with average pay equivalent to 18% of the average annual salary of an in-house journalist. This equates to an average annual gross income of EUR 12 810 for those who are VAT registered, a figure which falls to EUR 8 973 for 'continuous and coordinated contractual relationships', as can be seen from the separate management data of the INPGI, the social insurance fund for this category. In material terms, then, this means that an article by a reporter on a daily newspaper may be 'worth' something like EUR 5 gross. A snapshot of this situation is provided by the Freedom of the Press, Right to Information report for 2012, which reveals that currently six working journalists in 10 are self-employed, and between 2009 and 2012 the percentage of those in an employment relationship fell from 46.4% to 40.5%. Journalists who are employed account for 18.8% of those registered in the official register. Average pay for a self-employed journalist varies from EUR 9 000 to EUR 12 800 gross per year (with expenses, contributions and risks borne by the journalist), and it is stated that 53% of this group earns an annual income of less than EUR 5 000. Paragraph 6 of the European Parliament's resolution of 20 October 2010 on the role of minimum income in combating poverty and promoting an inclusive society in Europe '[h]ighlights the need for action at Member States level with a view to establishing a threshold for minimum income, based on relevant indicators, that will guarantee social-economic cohesion, reduce the risk of uneven levels of remuneration for the same activities and lower the risk of having poor populations throughout the European Union, and calls for stronger recommendations from the European Union regarding these types of actions'.

1. Is the Commission already aware of this situation, and does it believe that it is just an Italian anomaly?

2. Does it believe that job insecurity in the field of information, in view of the resulting lack of autonomy and independence that the profession would demand, inevitably has an effect on the product supplied, and thus lowers the quality of information?

3. Does it consider it appropriate to propose setting up a special enquiry committee, and if so, within what time frame, to begin comprehensive and coordinated monitoring throughout the countries of Europe in order to throw light on the situation regarding self-employment as a journalist in the information sector?

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

1. The Commission is aware that journalism is often a precarious occupation. This was confirmed by a recent study ([1]) on precarious work and social rights covering 12 Member States, including Italy.

2. The Commission seeks to ensure the respect for media freedom and pluralism enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union within its competences. According to Article 51(1), the Charter applies to Member States only when they are implementing EC law. The Commission considers quality newspapers to be an important factor in European political culture and democracy. However there are no specific rules at European level regarding job security of journalists.

([1]) 'Study on precarious work and social rights', carried out for the Commission by London Metropolitan University, April 2012; available at: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=157&langId=en&furtherPubs=yes

3. The Commission follows the issue by co-financing projects in this area and through the European sectoral social dialogue committees. In particular, it co-financed a project ([2]) carried out by the European Federation of Journalists in 2012 which gave rise to a set of conclusions and recommendations ([3]) for ensuring journalists enjoyed equal rights. The Commission draws the Honourable Members' attention to the fact that the EU has no competence for regulating matters of pay ([4]). Since there is no EU legislation setting criteria for determining who are self-employed workers, this matter is left to national authorities, including the courts. The Commission therefore does not intend to set up a special enquiry committee on the situation of 'independent' journalists.

([2]) Under the pilot project 'Encourage conversion of precarious work into work with rights' carried out in 2011 and 2012.
([3]) 'Equal rights for journalists — An analysis from the Thessaloniki conference', 2012; available at: http://europe.ifj.org/en/articles/equal-rights-for-journalists-learning-the-lessons-of-europes-journalists-unions
([4]) Article 153(5) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013163/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(19 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Fare chiarezza sulle banche tedesche

All'inizio della crisi finanziaria internazionale, quando circolavano voci di centinaia di miliardi di euro in titoli tossici negli istituti di credito della Germania, diverse banche sono state salvate con ingenti aiuti di Stato grazie a valutazioni generose di Bruxelles soprattutto nell'area delle Landesbanken (casse di risparmio), snodo essenziale dei partiti a livello locale.

Considerando che voci di enormi perdite occultate da banche tedesche tramite veicoli coperti dall'anonimato dei paradisi fiscali garantiscono sospetti e conferiscono contorni ancora misteriosi nella definizione dettagliata del problema, può la Commissione fare chiarezza sulla reale situazione delle banche tedesche?

Risposta di Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione
(17 gennaio 2014)

In effetti, come indicato dall'onorevole parlamentare, diverse banche tedesche, in particolare alcune Landesbanken, sono state salvate con denaro dei contribuenti. Tuttavia non vi sono state «valutazioni generose di Bruxelles». Le valutazioni della Commissione europea sono sempre state in linea con le severe norme UE in materia di aiuti di Stato e hanno portato a tagli importanti nei bilanci delle banche o addirittura alla liquidazione nel caso di WestLB.

Il problema specifico delle Landesbanken bisognose di misure di salvataggio era la loro mancanza di un modello aziendale sostenibile, che aveva portato anche ad acquisti di obbligazioni USA subprime il cui grado di rischio non era stato adeguatamente valutato. È importante rilevare che l'approvazione, da parte della Commissione, di aiuti di Stato è sempre stata condizionata ad un riorientamento dei modelli aziendali delle banche al fine di renderli sostenibili e in ogni caso ad una riduzione significativa dei rischi.

Per maggiori informazioni sulle banche tedesche si rinvia alle relazioni della Bundesbank sulla stabilità finanziaria per il periodo 2003-2013 ([1]).

Si ricorda che le banche tedesche saranno incluse nel prossimo esame della qualità degli attivi e nelle prove di stress.

([1]) http://www.bundesbank.de/Navigation/EN/Publications/Financial_stability_reviews/financial_stability_reviews.html?nsc=true

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013163/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: Throwing some light on German banks

At the start of the international financial crisis, when items amounting to hundreds of billions of euro were circulating in toxic assets in Germany's credit institutions, various banks were rescued with enormous sums of state aid thanks to generous assessments by Brussels, particularly in the area of the Landesbanks (savings banks), which are a vital element for parties at local level.

Since enormous losses concealed by German banks via vehicles enjoying the anonymity of tax havens give rise to suspicions and cast even greater mystery upon attempts to clarify the details of the issue, can the Commission throw some light on the real situation of German banks?

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

Indeed, as referred to by the honourable Member of the European Parliament, several German banks, in particular some Landesbanken, had been rescued with taxpayer money. However, it is no 'generous assessment by Brussels'. The evaluation by the European Commission is always governed by strict EU state aid rules. It resulted in major shrinkages of bank's balance sheets, down to outright resolution in the case of West LB.

The underlying problems of the Landesbanken in need of rescue measures had been their lack of a sustainable business model, leading also to purchases of US sub-prime bonds whose riskiness had not been appropriately assessed. Important to note is that the Commission's approval of state aid had been always linked to a re-orientation of those banks' business models with a view to making them sustainable, involving significant de-risking in all cases.

The Bundesbank's Financial Stability Reports for 2003-2013 can shed light on German banks ([1]),

German banks will be included in the forthcoming asset quality review and stress tests.

([1]) http://www.bundesbank.de/Navigation/EN/Publications/Financial_stability_reviews/financial_stability_reviews.html?nsc=true

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-013164/13
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(19 november 2013)

Betreft: Geen nieuwe grondwet Turkije

De Turkse parlementscommissie die een nieuwe grondwet moest formuleren, wordt vanwege aanhoudende onenigheid opgeheven. De vier partijen die in de commissie zaten, konden het niet eens worden. Een topman van de regerende partij AK-partij meldt dat het opstellen van een nieuwe grondwet daarmee voorlopig van de baan is.

1. Is de Commissie bekend met het falen van de Turkse parlementscommissie die een nieuwe grondwet moest formuleren ([1])?

2. Hoe ervaart en beoordeelt de Commissie deze ontwikkeling?

3. Wat vindt de Commissie ervan dat het opstellen van een nieuwe grondwet daarmee voorlopig van de baan is?

4. Is de Commissie thans teleurgesteld in Turkije? Zo ja, welke gevolgen heeft dat voor de toetredingsonderhandelingen tussen de EU en Turkije? Zo neen, waarop baseert de Commissie haar daarmee geïmpliceerde hoop op vooruitgang?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(31 januari 2014)

De Commissie is op de hoogte van de kwestie die door het geachte Parlementslid is gesignaleerd.

De Commissie staat volledig achter het proces van de opstelling van een nieuwe grondwet in overeenstemming met de Europese normen.

Inclusiviteit is van cruciaal belang aangezien een grondwet moet worden gebaseerd op een zo breed mogelijke consensus en een weerspiegeling moet zijn van de verwachtingen van de hele samenleving.

Bij talrijke gelegenheden heeft de Commissie gewezen op het belang van het opstellen van een nieuwe civiele grondwet, en de Commissie zal doorgaan met het aanmoedigen van Turkije om de laatste hand te leggen aan deze inspanningen.

([1]) http://www.volkskrant.nl/vk/nl/2668/Buitenland/article/detail/3547026/2013/11/18/Tegenslag-voor-nieuwe-grondwet-Turkije.dhtml.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013164/13
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: No new constitution for Turkey

The Turkish parliamentary commission, which was due to draft a new constitution, is being disbanded because of a continuing lack of consensus. The four parties which made up the commission were unable to reach agreement. A leading figure from the ruling AK Party stated that this means that the drafting of a new constitution has been shelved for the time being.

1. Is the Commission aware of the failure of the Turkish parliamentary commission, which was due to draft a new constitution ([1])?

2. How does the Commission feel about and view this development?

3. What does the Commission think about the drafting of a new constitution thereby being shelved for the time being?

4. Does the Commission now feel disappointed in Turkey? If so, what ramifications does this have for the accession negotiations between the EU and Turkey? If not, on what is the Commission basing its thereby implied hope for progress?

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

The Commission is aware of the issue raised by the Honourable Member.

The Commission fully supports the process of drafting a new constitution in line with European standards.

Inclusivity is central as a constitution should be based on the broadest possible consensus and should reflect the aspirations of society at large.

On numerous occasions, the Commission has stressed the importance it attaches to drafting a new civilian constitution, and will continue to encourage Turkey to finalise these efforts.

([1]) http://www.volkskrant.nl/vk/nl/2668/Buitenland/article/detail/3547026/2013/11/18/Tegenslag-voor-nieuwe-grondwet-Turkije.dhtml

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-013166/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Edite Estrela (S&D)
(19 de novembro de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Violação de direitos humanos nas prisões russas

Nadezhda Tolokonnikova, elemento da banda russa Pussy Riot, foi transferida para uma prisão na Sibéria, como castigo adicional por ter denunciado as degradantes condições existentes nas prisões da Rússia. A ativista tinha iniciado na passada semana uma greve de fome, com o objetivo de denunciar as condições de detenção e maus tratos contra as companheiras de prisão, práticas que violam os compromissos internacionais assumidos pela Rússia no âmbito dos direitos humanos. Numa carta enviada à imprensa, a ativista russa descreve as condições desumanas a que as reclusas estão sujeitas, fornecendo relatos detalhados de desrespeito pelos direitos e necessidades básicas das reclusas — como o repouso, a alimentação ou a higiene;

Tendo em conta que a União Europeia considera os direitos humanos universais e indivisíveis e está empenhada em promovê-los e defendê-los ativamente, tanto dentro das suas fronteiras como nas suas relações com os países terceiros, o que está neste momento a fazer a Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante para garantir que os direitos humanos são respeitados nas prisões russas e para contribuir para a melhoria das condições de detenção na Rússia?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(4 de fevereiro de 2014)

A União Europeia tem insistido com as autoridades russas para que garantam condições de detenção (incluindo a prisão preventiva e a detenção policial) que satisfaçam os seus compromissos europeus e internacionais. Concretamente, tem incentivado a Rússia a aplicar as recomendações formuladas pelo Comité Europeu para a Prevenção da Tortura e das Penas ou Tratamentos Desumanos ou Degradantes do Conselho da Europa (CPT). Esta mensagem tem sido transmitida às autoridades russas bilateralmente, no quadro do diálogo político e das consultas mantidas regularmente em matéria de direitos humanos, bem como no âmbito das instâncias multilaterais. A União tem igualmente prestado apoio às organizações não-governamentais russas e internacionais que procuram melhorar as condições de detenção neste país, nomeadamente através do Instrumento Europeu para a Democracia e os Direitos Humanos.

A situação de Nadezhda Tolokonnikova foi discutida com as autoridades russas em todas as ocasiões possíveis. A sua denúncia das condições de detenção desumanas na colónia penal n.° 14, na Mordóvia, foi debatida nas reuniões de diálogo político com a Rússia e também na última ronda de consultas em matéria de direitos humanos, em 28 de novembro de 2013. Nessa ocasião, a União instou a Rússia a esclarecer por que motivo o paradeiro desta ativista foi ocultado durante tanto tempo na sua última transferência. Em 20 de dezembro de 2013, a Alta Representante congratulou-se com a amnistia concedida por ocasião do 20.° aniversário da Constituição Russa e com o anúncio da libertação dos membros das Pussy Riot, Nadezhda Tolokonnikova e Maria Alyokhina, que teve lugar alguns dias depois.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013166/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Edite Estrela (S&D)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Human rights violations in Russian prisons

Nadezhda Tolokonnikova, a member of the Russian band Pussy Riot, has been moved to a prison in Siberia as further punishment for having spoken out about the degrading conditions in Russian prisons. The activist started a hunger strike last week in protest at the conditions prisoners are kept in and the ill-treatment meted out to them, practices which violate the international human rights commitments undertaken by Russia. In a letter sent to the press, the Russian activist describes the inhumane conditions prisoners are held in, describing in detail how inmates' rights are not respected and their basic needs, such as rest, food and hygiene, are not met.

Given that the European Union sees human rights as universal and indivisible, and it is committed to actively promoting and defending them, both within the EU and in its relations with third countries, what is the Vice-President/High Representative currently doing to ensure that human rights are respected in Russian prisons and to help improve prison conditions in Russia?

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

The EU is consistently calling on the Russian authorities to ensure that detention conditions (including pre-trial detention and police custody) are in conformity with European and International standards. In particular, it encourages Russia to implement the recommendations of the Council of Europe Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT). It conveys this message to the Russian authorities at bilateral level in the framework of its political dialogue and regular human rights consultations, as well as in the multilateral framework. The EU also supports Russian and International NGOs working to improve prison conditions in Russia, notably through the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights.

The case of Ms Tolokonnikova was raised with the Russian authorities on all possible occassions. The dire conditions of detention she highlighted in Penal Colony N 14 in Mordovia were addressed at political dialogue meetings with Russia, and also at the most recent round of the EU-Russia human rights consultations, which took place on 28 November 2013. The EU then also called on Russia to clarify why her whereabouts had remained unknown for such a long time during her last transfer. On 20 December 2013 the High Representative welcomed the amnesty approved on the 20th Anniversary of Russia's Constitution and the expected release of Pussy Riot members Nadezhda Tolokonnikova and Maria Alyokhina, which materialized several days later.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-013167/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(19 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Αυθαίρετη συμπεριφορά της τρόικα

Μια εξαρτησιακή σχέση αναπτύσσεται ανάμεσα στην τρόικα και τις κυβερνήσεις των χωρών του μνημονίου. Κάθε νέα αξιολόγηση συνοδεύεται με νέα μέτρα και νέους εκβιασμούς για εκταμίευση της επόμενης δόσης. Το είδαμε στην Ελλάδα. Το βλέπουμε τώρα στην Κύπρο.

Η δεύτερη αξιολόγηση άφησε να αιωρούνται εκβιασμοί για:

— ιδιωτικοποιήσεις κερδοφόρων ημικρατικών οργανισμών,

— απαγόρευση νομοθετικής ρύθμισης για μείωση των επιτοκίων,

— κατάργηση της νομοθετικής προσπάθειας για προστασία των πολιτών από τις εκποιήσεις της πρώτης κατοικίας,

— περαιτέρω περικοπές σε κοινωνικές παροχές.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Ποιος ελέγχει τους σχεδιασμούς, δράσεις και απαιτήσεις της τρόικα;

2. Ποια είναι η θέση της για ιδιωτικοποιήσεις κερδοφόρων ημικρατικών οργανισμών;

3. Ποια η θέση της στο θέμα των επιτοκίων; Τι προτείνει στην περίπτωση των υψηλών επιτοκίων στην Κύπρο;

4. Πως προστατεύει την πρώτη κατοικία Ευρωπαίων πολιτών από εκποιήσεις;

5. Συνειδητοποιεί πως με τη διαρκή συρρίκνωση των κοινωνικών παροχών, αποδυναμώνει το κράτος πρόνοιας και σπρώχνει τις ευάλωτες ομάδες πληθυσμού στην απόγνωση, την απαξίωση θεσμών, πολιτικών και στον ευρωσκεπτικισμό;

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

1. Η τρόικα εκτελεί το έργο της ως εντολοδόχος του ΕΜΣ [1] και της Ευρωομάδας. Αφού η Κύπρος ζήτησε βοήθεια, η Ευρωομάδα ανέθεσε στην τρόικα τη διαπραγμάτευση προγράμματος με τις κυπριακές αρχές. Η Ευρωομάδα αξιολογεί σε τακτική βάση το περιεχόμενο των διαπραγματεύσεων. Στις 25 Μαρτίου 2013, η Ευρωομάδα κατέληξε σε πολιτική συμφωνία με την Κύπρο ως προς τα βασικά στοιχεία ενός προγράμματος. Σε αυτό το πλαίσιο, επετεύχθη συμφωνία υπηρεσιακού επιπέδου με την τρόικα για το πρόγραμμα. Το διοικητικό συμβούλιο του ΕΜΣ ενέκρινε το σχέδιο του ΜΣ [2] στις 24 Απριλίου 2013.

2. Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει τον κ. βουλευτή στην πολιτική συμφωνία η οποία επετεύχθη το Μάρτιο του 2013 μεταξύ της Κύπρου και της Ευρωομάδας και η οποία περιλαμβάνει τη δέσμευση της Κύπρου να εντείνει τις προσπάθειες που καταβάλλει σχετικά με τις ιδιωτικοποιήσεις. Η Επιτροπή τοποθετείται ουδέτερα όσον αφορά τη δημόσια ή ιδιωτική κυριότητα, σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 345 της ΣΛΕΕ.

3. Τα επιτόκια λιανικής επηρεάζονται από τις συνθήκες της αγοράς. Τα εποπτικά μέτρα που έλαβαν οι αρμόδιες κυπριακές αρχές με σκοπό τον επηρεασμό της τάσης των επιτοκίων καταθέσεων φαίνεται να συμμορφώνονται με το κοινοτικό κεκτημένο.

4. Για την προστασία της πρώτης κατοικίας από εκποιήσεις, το ΜΣ που συνήφθη με την Κύπρο προβλέπει αύξηση της ανώτατης προθεσμίας σε 2,5 έτη. Η διαδικασία αυτή θα αρχίζει να εφαρμόζεται από τα τέλη του 2014, εφόσον οι μακροοικονομικές συνθήκες το επιτρέπουν. Η προστασία των συμφερόντων των δανειοληπτών διασφαλίζεται επίσης από εσωτερικές επιτροπές ενστάσεων των τραπεζών, καθώς επίσης και από τον οικονομικό διαμεσολαβητή.

5. Με σκοπό την ισότιμη προστασία των ευάλωτων ομάδων και την αποτελεσματική αξιοποίηση των δημοσίων πόρων, επιδιώκεται μεταρρύθμιση του συστήματος κοινωνικής πρόνοιας, η οποία αναμένεται να τεθεί σε ισχύ τον Ιούλιο του 2014.

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[1] Ευρωπαϊκός Μηχανισμός Σταθερότητας.
[2] Μνημόνιο Συμφωνίας.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013167/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: Arbitrary behaviour on the part of the Troika

A relationship of dependence is developing between the Troika and the governments of memorandum states. Every new assessment results in new measures and new demands before the next instalment is disbursed. We saw it in Greece. Now we are seeing it in Cyprus.

The second assessment has left demands hanging in the air concerning:

— the privatisation of profitable semi-public bodies;

— the ban on legislation to reduce interest rates;

— the abolition of legislative efforts to protect citizens from foreclosure of their primary residence;

— further cuts to social security benefits.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Who audits the Troika's plans, actions and demands?

2. What is its position on the privatisation of profitable semi-public bodies?

3. What is its position on the question of interest rates? What does it propose in connection with the high interests in Cyprus?

4. How does it protect the primary residence of European citizens from foreclosure?

5. Does it realise that, by continually cutting back social security benefits, it is weakening the welfare state and pushing vulnerable groups of the population into despair, disdain for institutions and politicians and euroscepticism?

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

1. The Troika works upon mandate of the ESM ([1]) and Eurogroup. After Cyprus requested assistance, the Eurogroup mandated the troika to negotiate a programme with the Cypriot authorities. The content of these negotiations was regularly reviewed by the Eurogroup. On 25 March 2013, the Eurogroup reached a political agreement with Cyprus on the key elements of a programme. On this basis, the Troika reached a staff-level agreement on a Programme and the draft MoU ([2]) was agreed by the ESM Board of Governors on 24 April 2013.

2. The Commission refers the Honourable Member to the political agreement reached between Cyprus and the Eurogroup in March 2013, including a commitment by Cyprus on a privatisation plan. The Commission has a neutral position on the public or private ownership, in accordance with Article 345 of the TFEU.

3. Retail interest rates are influenced by market conditions. The supervisory measures taken by the competent authorities in Cyprus for influencing the direction of deposit interest rates do not appear to be contradictory with the *acquis communautaire*.

4. The MoU concluded with Cyprus establishes a longer maximum time-span, 2.5 years, for seizing primary residence collateral. This procedure will be implemented from end 2014, macroeconomic conditions permitting. The protection of borrowers' interests will also be ensured by banks' internal appeal committees, as well as by the Financial Ombudsman.

5. With a view to an equitable protection of vulnerable groups and efficient use of public resources, a social welfare system reform, expected to enter into force in July 2014, is pursued.

([1]) European Stability Mechanism.
([2]) Memorandum of Understanding.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013168/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Linda McAvan (S&D)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Ongoing imprisonment in the Lao People's Democratic Republic

Two Lao men, Thongpaseuth Keuakoun and Seng-Aloun Phengphanh, have now been held in prison by the authorities for 14 years, after organising a peaceful demonstration in the Lao capital, Vientiane. Another political prisoner, Bouavanh Chanmanivong, was recently released after 12 years, which I welcome.

Following my previous question (E-007545/2011 [1]) and Question E-010855/2012 [2], what steps are being taken by the EU to secure the release of these two men?

What concrete action followed from raising their cases at the EU-Laos Human Rights Dialogue in February 2013? And how is the EU Delegation ensuring that, whilst detained, they are treated humanely and receive regular access to their families and medical care?

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

The EU continues to regularly raise the situation of the two jailed Lao men, Thongpaseuth Keuakoun and Seng-Aloun Phengphanh, with the authorities, including in the context of the regular EU-Lao PDR human rights dialogues.

Earlier this year EU officials have visited the prison where the two men are held, but were not accorded access to individual prisoners.

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[1] http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-%2f%2fEP%2f%2fTEXT%2bWQ%2bE-2011-007545%2b0%2bDOC%2bXML%2bV0%2f%2fEN&language=EN
[2] http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=WQ&reference=E-2012-010855&language=EN

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013169/13
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(19 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Controllo delle truffe bancarie

Il direttore generale della Hypo Bank in Italia, banca nazionale di diritto italiano con sede in Friuli (bilancio in attivo di 3,5 miliardi di euro e 370 dipendenti), insieme ai suoi tre vice direttori generali e all'ex responsabile del servizio legale, è stato raggiunto in agosto dall'avviso di garanzia per una truffa sui tassi d'interesse dei leasing, che ha colpito il portafoglio di migliaia di clienti. Per tutti il Pubblico ministero di Udine ha ipotizzato l'associazione per delinquere, finalizzata alla truffa aggravata e all'usura. Anche l'istituto bancario è nei guai, indagato in virtù del DL 231/01 sulla responsabilità amministrativa per reati commessi da dipendenti. La giustizia farà il suo corso, anche per scoprire il movente della truffa, che rimane per ora misterioso, poiché ad arricchirsi è stato solo il bilancio della banca, in quanto il denaro riscosso in eccesso figura tutto nella documentazione amministrativa della banca stessa.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione riferire:

1. se al corrente di questo caso;

2. come spiega la mancanza di controllo e di vigilanza interni e del collegio sindacale, oltre che della Banca d'Italia;

3. se questa banca è stata sottoposta alla prova di stress dall'Autorità bancaria europea;

4. se esiste uno strumento di tutela per i clienti eventualmente danneggiati; e

5. qual è la posizione della BCE per evitare il ripetersi di tali truffe?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(24 gennaio 2014)

La Commissione europea non esercita direttamente la vigilanza sulle banche per quanto riguarda i requisiti prudenziali e la condotta di mercato, materia di responsabilità delle autorità nazionali competenti o, nel quadro della nuova disciplina di vigilanza per le banche della zona euro, della BCE.

Nella sfera delle sue competenze in materia di concorrenza, tuttavia, la Commissione interviene in tutti i settori, compreso quello bancario. Il 4 dicembre 2013 ha ad esempio multato alcuni soggetti finanziari per costituzione di un cartello illegale sul mercato dei derivati sui tassi di interesse e per manipolazione dei tassi di riferimento del mercato interbancario.

La normativa europea in materia di vigilanza prudenziale sulle banche (ossia la direttiva e il regolamento sui requisiti patrimoniali) impone agli enti creditizi di disporre di un assetto robusto di governo societario e di meccanismi di controllo interno adeguati che permettano di individuare, gestire e monitorare tutti i rischi, compresi i rischi di frode. Le autorità di vigilanza dovrebbero esaminare tale assetto intervenendo opportunamente ove necessario. In termini di vigilanza, le cosiddette prove di stress mirano a verificare la solidità della banca nell'ipotesi di una sua esposizione a determinati scenari di mercato sotto pressione, non a individuare i casi di frode.

Dal settembre 2014 saranno attribuiti alla BCE poteri di vigilanza su tutti gli enti creditizi autorizzati negli Stati membri partecipanti alla nuova disciplina.

In caso di frode, è la legge nazionale a determinare le responsabilità e a stabilire chi debba sostenere le perdite subite dai clienti.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013169/13
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: Scrutiny of bank fraud

In August 2013 the director-general of Hypo Bank in Italy, a national bank under Italian law with headquarters in Friuli (with a positive balance sheet of EUR 3.5 billion and 370 employees), together with his three deputy director-generals and the former head of the legal department, were formally notified that they were being investigated for fraud in connection with leasing interest rates, which has affected the portfolios of thousands of customers. The Udine public prosecutor's office has alleged criminal conspiracy to commit aggravated fraud and usury in respect of each individual. The bank itself is also in trouble, and is being investigated under Legislative Decree 231/01 on administrative liability for offences committed by employees. Justice will run its course, including uncovering the motive for the fraud, which for the moment remains a mystery: only the bank's balance sheet benefited, since the excess monies levied all appear in the bank's administrative documents.

1. Is the Commission aware of this case?

2. How does it explain the lack of control and supervision internally, by the board of auditors and by the Bank of Italy?

3. Has this bank been stress-tested by the European Banking Authority?

4. Is there a mechanism for protecting customers who may have suffered loss?

5. What is the ECB's position with regard to avoiding a repetition of this type of fraud?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(24 January 2014)

The European Commission is not directly supervising banks as regards prudential requirements and market conduct. This is a matter for the competent national authorities or for the ECB in the framework of the new supervisory rules for banks in the Eurozone.

However, within its competition competencies the Commission takes actions in all sectors, including the banking sector. On 4 December 2013, the Commission imposed a fine on financial entities for membership of an illegal cartel on the interest rate derivatives market and for manipulating inter-bank interest rate benchmarks.

The European banking prudential legislation (i.e. the Capital Requirements Directive and Regulation) requires credit institutions to implement robust governance arrangements and adequate internal control mechanisms to identify, manage and monitor all risks, including risks of fraud. Supervisory authorities should review these arrangements and take appropriate action, as necessary. As far as the supervisory so-called stress-tests are concerned, the aim and purpose of these tests is to test the solidity of the bank if exposed to certain stressed market-scenarios. The purpose is not to detect cases of fraud.

As of September 2014, supervisory powers will be conferred on the ECB for all credit institutions authorised in the participating Member States.

In the event of fraud, the responsibility and the determination of who is to bear the losses incurred by the customers are to be determined under national law.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-013170/13
à la Commission (Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante)
Marc Tarabella (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(20 novembre 2013)

Objet: VP/HR — Épouses d'un mois

C'est au port de Calicut, dans l'État du Kérala, qu'est né le concept des «épouses d'un mois». Des commerçants du Golfe se marient avec une Indienne juste le temps de leur séjour là-bas, pour ne pas avoir de relations sexuelles «hors mariage», puis ils rentrent chez eux et divorcent. On croyait ce phénomène disparu, jusqu'à l'été dernier, quand une adolescente a porté plainte contre son époux, un Émirati. Les cas ne seraient pas si rares et les enfants de telles unions sont eux aussi chaque année plus nombreux.

1. Comment réagit la Commission?

2. Des contacts ont-ils été pris avec les autorités indiennes à ce sujet?

3. Dans la négative, les autorités européennes pourraient-elles le faire ou entendent-elle garder le silence?

4. Des contacts ont-ils été pris avec les autorités des Émirats à ce sujet?

5. Dans la négative, les autorités européennes vont-elles le faire ou garder elles aussi le silence?

Réponse donnée par Mme Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(17 janvier 2014)

L'UE est consciente de ces pratiques déplorables et observe que les autorités indiennes procèdent à une enquête en la matière. En outre, la presse locale et les ONG font œuvre de conscientisation à ce sujet.

L'UE soutient fermement les droits de la femme, qui font l'objet d'un rappel systématique auprès des autorités indiennes dans le cadre du dialogue sur les Droits de l'homme (le dernier a eu lieu à Delhi le 27 novembre 2013), ainsi qu'auprès des autorités des Émirats dans le cadre du nouveau groupe de travail informel sur les Droits de l'homme (la première réunion s'est tenue à Bruxelles le 14 novembre 2013).

L'UE soutient aussi une large gamme de projets à cet égard, dans le cadre du nouvel instrument européen pour la démocratie et les Droits de l'homme, et se réjouirait de recevoir des propositions spécifiques dans le cadre des appels à propositions lancés à cet égard au titre dudit instrument.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013170/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marc Tarabella (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(20 November 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — One-month wives

The concept of 'one-month wives' emerged at the port of Calicut, in the State of Kerala. Middle Eastern tradesmen would marry Indian women just for the length of their stay in India to avoid having non-marital sexual relations. They would then return home and divorce. It was thought that this phenomenon had died out, until a teenage girl reported her Emirati husband to the authorities last summer. Cases of this kind are apparently not that uncommon and every year an increasing number of children are born of such marriages.

1. What is the Commission's reaction to this?

2. Has any contact been made with the Indian authorities in this regard?

3. If not, is it possible for the European authorities to do so, or do they intend to remain silent?

4. Has any contact been made with the Emirati authorities in this regard?

5. If not, will the European authorities do so, or do they intend to remain silent too?

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

The EU is aware of these unfortunate practices and notes that the Indian authorities are investigating the matter: In addition, local media and NGOs are raising awareness on this issue.

The EU is a staunch supporter of women's rights, which are systematcally raised with the Indian authorities in the framework of the Human Rights Dialogue (the last one took place in Delhi on 27 November 2013), as well as with the Emirati authorities in the framework of the new informal working group on Human Rights (first meeting took place in Brussels on 14 November 2013).

The EU is also supporting a wide range of projects in that regard under the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights and would welcome specific proposals in the framework of the relevant calls for proposals under that instrument.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013172/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(20 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Ayuda a largo plazo en Filipinas

El tifón Haiyan es el 25° que ha pasado por Filipinas este año y es uno de los más fuertes que se han registrado hasta el momento en el país. Se estima que más del 10 % de la población filipina, unos 10 millones de personas, ha sido afectada por la catástrofe, y que la cifra de víctimas mortales supera ya las 3 700 personas.

La Comisión Europea ha aportado ya una ayuda de 13 millones de euros y otros 8 millones destinados a la recuperación socioeconómica del área de Mindanao y a los dispositivos de emergencia y rescate desplegados por los 28 Estados miembros de la UE.

Debido a que esta primera ayuda económica se considera de emergencia, me gustaría saber qué acciones va a tomar la Comisión a largo plazo para ayudar a que Filipinas recupere la normalidad.

Respuesta del Sr. Piebalgs en nombre de la Comisión
(22 de enero de 2014)

Tras el tifón Haiyan, la Comisión anunció una ayuda financiera de 30 millones EUR en concepto de ayuda humanitaria y una contribución de 10 millones EUR destinada a una recuperación y reconstrucción rápidas.

La Comisión determinará los detalles de su asistencia a medio y largo plazo a Filipinas cuando se sepan los resultados de la evolución en curso de las necesidades y las prioridades y los planes del Gobierno. La respuesta de la UE servirá de complemento al plan de recuperación y rehabilitación del Gobierno y a la ayuda facilitada por otros donantes internacionales.

La Comisión está estudiando también la manera en que se podrían emplear los fondos existentes en el marco de los programas en curso para contribuir a la reconstrucción. Por último, la ayuda a las zonas afectadas se examinará en el contexto de los sectores prioritarios de la programación correspondiente a 2014-2020.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013172/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(20 November 2013)

Subject: Long-term aid to the Philippines

Typhoon Haiyan is the 25th typhoon to pass through the Philippines this year and one of the strongest ever recorded in the country. It is estimated that over 10% of the Philippines' population, some 10 million people, have been affected by the disaster, and the death toll now stands at over 3 700.

The Commission has already provided EUR 13 million in aid and another EUR 8 million intended for socioeconomic recovery in the Mindanao area, in addition to the emergency rescue equipment deployed by the EU's 28 Member States.

Given that this initial financial aid is considered an emergency measure, I would like to know what action the Commission will take in the long term to help the Philippines return to normality?

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

Following Typhoon Haiyan, the Commission announced financial assistance of EUR 30 million for humanitarian support and a contribution of EUR 10 million for early recovery and reconstruction.

The Commission will determine the details of its intermediate and long term assistance to the Philippines once the results of the ongoing needs assessment and the priorities and plans of the Government are known. The EU's response will complement the Government's Recovery and Rehabilitation Plan and the assistance provided by other international donors.

The Commission is also assessing how funds available under ongoing programmes could be used to support reconstruction. Finally, support to the affected areas will be considered in the context of the focal sectors of the programming for 2014-2020.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013173/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(20 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Protección de los menores en Internet

La presencia de los menores en Internet es hoy algo incuestionable. El tiempo medio de conexión de los menores a Internet está experimentando en los últimos años un incremento realmente llamativo, muy probablemente debido a los cambios de hábitos entre los más jóvenes, además de a la alta penetración de los teléfonos móviles inteligentes —o *smartphone*— en estas franjas de edad.

Este cambio de hábitos está provocando que tanto las instituciones públicas como las privadas quieran regular normativamente aspectos directamente relacionados con la protección de los menores en Internet.

Ciertos Estados miembros ya están comenzando a legislar sobre este asunto tan importante, pero, teniendo en cuenta que Internet no tiene fronteras, me gustaría saber si la Comisión ha pensado presentar algún tipo de iniciativa legislativa de obligado cumplimiento en los Estados miembros.

Respuesta de la Sr. Kroes en nombre de la Comisión
(16 de enero de 2014)

La Comisión ya ha presentado una nueva legislación dedicada a los menores que utilizan Internet, o que establece normas específicas de protección. La Directiva sobre los servicios de comunicación audiovisual ([1]) abarca todos los servicios de contenido audiovisual, independientemente de las tecnologías utilizadas, y distingue entre servicios lineales y servicios no lineales. Los programas que «pueden perjudicar gravemente» al desarrollo de los menores están prohibidos y, en caso de que resulten simplemente «perjudiciales» para los menores, solo pueden ofrecerse si no son accesibles a ellos (servicios lineales). Asimismo, en el caso de los servicios a la carta (no lineales), los programas que pueden perjudicar gravemente al desarrollo de los menores solo pueden ofrecerse si no son accesibles a ellos.

Además, la Directiva relativa a la lucha contra la explotación sexual de los menores y la pornografía infantil ([2]) cubre los contenidos relacionados con el abuso sexual infantil en Internet y la Directiva sobre comercio electrónico ([3]) (artículo 13) incluye un procedimiento para la retirada de contenidos ilícitos, incluidos los contenidos relacionados con el abuso sexual infantil. La Comisión ha presentado una propuesta de Reglamento general de protección de datos ([4]) que reconoce que los menores merecen una protección específica de sus datos personales, ya que son más vulnerables que los adultos (artículo 8).

La Comisión ha emitido también una Comunicación titulada «Estrategia europea en favor de una Internet más adecuada para los niños» ([5]), que subraya el papel que deben desempeñar la corregulación y la autorregulación, dado que no se puede hacer frente eficazmente a algunos de los desafíos que se plantean en este ámbito exclusivamente a través de la legislación. La Comisión ha avanzado recientemente en esta cuestión a través de la labor de la Coalición CEO para hacer de Internet un lugar más adecuado para los niños ([6]), basada en acuerdos anteriores.

([1]) Directiva 2007/65/CE de 11.12.2007. http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/audiovisual_and_media/l24101a_es.htm
([2]) Directiva 2011/92/UE de 13.12.2011. http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:335:0001:0014:ES:PDF
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32000L0031:Es:HTML
([4]) COM(2012)11 de 25.1.2012. http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0011:FIN:ES:PDF
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/european-strategy-deliver-better-internet-our-children
([6]) https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/node/61973

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013173/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(20 November 2013)

Subject: Protection of children on the Internet

Nowadays, children spend a significant amount of time on the Internet. In recent years, the average time that children spend online has soared, most probably due to changes in the habits of young people and the high penetration of smartphones in this age range.

This behavioural change is leading both public and private institutions to seek the regulation of issues relating directly to the protection of children on the Internet.

Some Member States are already beginning to legislate on this important matter, but, given that the Internet has no borders, I would like to know whether the Commission has considered bringing forward any kind of legislative initiative that would be binding upon the Member States?

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

The Commission has already brought forward legislation focusing on children using the Internet or including specific protective rules. The Audiovisual Media Services Directive ([1]) covers all services with audio visual content irrespective of the technologies used, making a distinction between linear and nonlinear services. Programmes which 'might seriously impair' the development of minors are prohibited and if simply 'harmful' to minors they can only be made available if not accessible for minors (linear services). Also for on-demand (nonlinear) services, programmes which might seriously impair the development of minors may only be made available if not accessible for minors.

Furthermore, the directive ([2]) on combating sexual exploitation of children and child pornography covers child sexual abuse content on the Internet and the directive on electronic commerce ([3]) (Article 13) includes a procedure for the take-down of illegal content which includes child sexual abuse content. The Commission has made a proposal for a regulation on General Data Protection ([4]) which recognises that children deserve specific protection of their personal data for being more vulnerable than adults (Article 8).

The Commission also launched a communication on a 'European Strategy for a Better Internet for Children' ([5]) which underlines the role to be played by co- and self-regulation, given that some of the challenges in this area cannot effectively be met by legislation alone. The Commission has recently taken this forward through the work of the CEO Coalition to make the Internet a Better place for Children ([6]), which builds on previous agreements.

([1]) 2007/65/EC of 11.12.2007. http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/audiovisual_and_media/l24101a_en.htm
([2]) Directive 2011/92/EU (13.12.2011). http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:335:0001:0014:EN:PDF
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32000L0031:En:HTML
([4]) 25.1.2012, COM(2012) 11. http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0011:FIN:EN:PDF
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/european-strategy-deliver-better-Internet-our-children
([6]) https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/node/61973

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013174/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(20 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Conservación del patrimonio artístico y cultural europeo

Europa tiene un inmenso patrimonio artístico y cultural, creado a lo largo de su historia, que refleja los orígenes, el desarrollo y el presente de nuestra civilización. Su conservación es y debe seguir siendo un objetivo prioritario de la Unión Europea y de todos los Estados miembros.

Por desgracia, la crisis económica por la que atraviesan muchos Gobiernos europeos está mermando las inversiones en este capítulo, algo que, de mantenerse en el largo plazo, podría poner en serio peligro su mantenimiento.

¿Podría indicar la Comisión si se ha diseñado algún instrumento jurídico y financiero que sirva para fomentar y ayudar a la conservación del patrimonio artístico y cultural de la Unión Europea?

Respuesta de la Sra. Vassiliou en nombre de la Comisión
(23 de enero de 2014)

La Comisión está de acuerdo con Su Señoría en que la conservación del patrimonio artístico y cultural de Europa constituye una prioridad importante. Una serie de programas de la UE ofrecen apoyo a este respecto.

Durante el período 2007-2013, el programa Cultura ha invertido 40 millones EUR en más de ciento treinta proyectos relacionados con el patrimonio, mientras que el Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo Regional (FEDER) ha invertido 5 600 millones EUR en patrimonio, servicios e infraestructuras culturales.

Entre otras iniciativas de la UE cabe citar el Sello de Patrimonio Europeo, las Jornadas Europeas de Patrimonio y los galardones Premio Unión Europea de Patrimonio Cultural y Premio Europa Nostra.

Durante el período 2014-2020, entre las oportunidades de financiación para el patrimonio cultural y artístico estarán:

— el programa Europa Creativa: 1 460 millones EUR; incluye un capítulo en materia de cultura para proyectos de cooperación transnacional, redes, plataformas europeas y acciones especiales.

— el FEDER: 325 000 millones EUR; incluye cinco prioridades en las que pueden subvencionarse específicamente la cultura y el patrimonio: investigación, TIC, medio ambiente, empleo e inclusión social.

— Horizonte 2020: 70 200 millones EUR; el patrimonio cultural puede optar a financiación en el marco de capítulos como eficiencia energética, acción por el clima, PYME, digitalización, patrimonio inmaterial, patrimonio cultural bélico, diplomacia cultural europea y nanotecnología.

El patrimonio cultural también puede optar a financiación en el marco de otros programas de la UE, incluidos el FEOGA (patrimonio rural), el EMMF (patrimonio marítimo/costero), Europa con los Ciudadanos (memoria histórica común), becas Marie Sklodowska Curie (movilidad de los investigadores), Erasmus+ (aprendizaje y adquisición de aptitudes) y Conectar Europa (digitalización).

Por último, desde 2011 la Comisión publica convocatorias anuales de propuestas para apoyar el desarrollo del turismo transnacional relacionado con el patrimonio cultural europeo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013174/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(20 November 2013)

Subject: Preservation of Europe's artistic and cultural heritage

Europe has an immense cultural and artistic heritage, created throughout its history, reflecting the origins, development and present situation of our civilisation. Its preservation is, and should remain, a priority objective of the European Union and its Member States.

Unfortunately, the economic crisis that many European governments are going through is leading to less investment in this area, a situation that, if it continues, could seriously threaten the preservation of this heritage.

Could the Commission say whether it has developed any legal and financial instruments to promote and help preserve the EU's artistic and cultural heritage?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(23 January 2014)

The Commission shares the Member's view that the preservation of Europe's cultural and artistic heritage is an important priority. A range of EU programmes offer support in this regard.

During 2007-13, the Culture Programme has invested EUR 40m in over 130 projects on heritage, and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) EUR 5.6bn in cultural heritage, services and infrastructures.

Other EU initiatives include the European Heritage Label, the annual European Heritage Days, and the EU Prize for cultural heritage/Europa Nostra award.

During 2014-2020, funding opportunities for cultural and artistic heritage will include:

— Creative Europe programme: EUR 1.46bn: includes a culture strand for transnational cooperation projects, networks, European platforms, and special actions.

— ERDF: EUR 325bn: includes 5 priorities where culture and heritage are specifically eligible: research, ICT, environment, employment, and social inclusion.

— Horizon 2020: EUR 70.2bn: cultural heritage research will be eligible for funding under strands such as energy efficiency, climate action, SMEs, digitization, intangible heritage, cultural heritage of war, European cultural diplomacy, and nanotechnology.

Cultural heritage is also likely to be eligible for funding under other EU programmes, including EAGGF (rural heritage), EMMF (maritime/coastal heritage), Europe for Citizens (common European remembrance), Marie Sklodowska Curie (mobility of researchers), Erasmus + (learning and skills), and Connecting Europe (digitization).

Finally, since 2011, the Commission has launched annual Calls for Proposals to support the development of transnational tourism related to European cultural heritage.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-013175/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(20 novembre 2013)

Objet: Cybersécurité transversale

La Commission partage-t-elle l'avis du Parlement européen sur le fait que la politique en matière de cybersécurité se doit d'être mise en œuvre de manière transversale, afin d'établir des passerelles appropriées entre les politiques de sécurité intérieure et extérieure?

Compte-t-elle inciter tous les États membres à mettre au point ou à parfaire leurs stratégies nationales de cybersécurité et à rechercher une plus grande synchronisation au niveau de l'Union?

Comment compte-t-elle mettre en place une plus grande synchronisation?

Réponse donnée par Mme Malmström au nom de la Commission
(5 février 2014)

La Commission reconnaît pleinement la nécessité d'adopter une approche transversale lorsqu'il est question de cybersécurité et de lutte contre la cybercriminalité. L'Union européenne a, ainsi, pris plusieurs mesures importantes, notamment sa stratégie en matière de cybersécurité ([1]), adoptée en février 2013 et conçue comme un effort conjoint de la Commission et de la haute représentante de l'Union pour les affaires étrangères et la politique de sécurité. Cette stratégie préconise une approche coordonnée de tous les acteurs concernés, tant au niveau de l'UE qu'au niveau national. Elle recouvre l'action intérieure de l'Union — au niveau de l'UE et des États membres — ainsi que l'action internationale. En février 2014, soit un an après l'adoption de la stratégie, la Commission organisera une conférence à haut niveau pour faire le bilan des progrès réalisés et examiner la manière de favoriser les synergies entre les différents volets de cette stratégie et une meilleure coopération entre les divers acteurs.

La Commission encourage les États membres à agir sur la dimension tant intérieure qu'extérieure de la cybersécurité. En outre, la proposition de directive ([2]) de la Commission concernant la sécurité des réseaux et de l'information vise à garantir que tous les États membres se dotent de moyens comparables, y compris d'une stratégie nationale en matière de sécurité des réseaux et de l'information, et qu'ils mènent une coopération transfrontière dans ce domaine.

Par ailleurs, le Centre européen de lutte contre la cybercriminalité ([3]) (EC3), situé dans les locaux d'Europol, a démarré ses activités en janvier 2013 et a pour but, notamment, d'améliorer la réaction des services répressifs aux menaces informatiques.

Il est nécessaire de disposer des outils opérationnels, des cadres juridiques ainsi que des moyens appropriés pour faire face à l'évolution de cette menace. Les institutions de l'UE, les gouvernements des États membres, les entreprises et les particuliers doivent tous collaborer et partager la responsabilité de faire en sorte que l'internet soit sûr et sécurisé.

([1]) Stratégie de cybersécurité de l'Union européenne: un cyberespace ouvert, sûr et sécurisé, Bruxelles, 7.2.2013, JOIN(2013) 1 final.
([2]) Proposition de directive de la Commission concernant des mesures destinées à assurer un niveau élevé commun de sécurité des réseaux et de l'information dans l'Union, 7.2.2013, COM(2013) 48 final.
([3]) Combattre la criminalité à l'ère numérique: établissement d'un Centre européen de lutte contre la cybercriminalité, Bruxelles, 28.3.2012, COM(2012) 140 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013175/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(20 November 2013)

Subject: Cross-cutting cyber-security policy

Does the Commission agree with the European Parliament that cyber-security policy should be cross-cutting, so that its implementation can create effective pathways between internal and external security policy?

Will the Commission encourage all Member States to fine-tune their national cyber-security policies and to seek greater synchronisation at European Union level?

Does the Commission plan to introduce greater synchronisation?

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

The Commission fully recognises the need to adopt a cross-cutting approach when addressing cybersecurity and tackling cybercrime. The EU has taken a number of important measures, notably the EU Cybersecurity Strategy ([1]) adopted in February 2013 as a joint effort of the Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. This promotes a coordinated approach of all involved, both at EU and national level. The strategy covers EU internal action — at EU or Member State level — as well as the International dimension. In February 2014, one year after the adoption of the strategy, the Commission will organise a High level Conference to take stock of progress and examine how to foster more synergies between the components of the strategy and better cooperation between the different players.

The Commission encourages the Member States to work on both the internal and the external dimension of cybersecurity. Furthermore, the Commission proposal for a directive ([2]) on network and information security aims at ensuring that all the Member States have in place a comparable level of capabilities, including a national Strategy for network and information security, and that they cooperate with each other cross-border in this domain.

Furthermore, the European Cybercrime Centre ([3]) (EC3) was launched in January 2013 within Europol, to improve the law enforcement response to cyber threats

The right operational tools, legal frameworks and capabilities are needed to tackle this evolving threat. EU institutions, Member States' governments, businesses and individuals all need to work together and share responsibility for making the Internet safe and secure.

([1]) Cybersecurity Strategy of the European Union: An Open, Safe and Secure Cyberspace, Brussels, 7.2.2013, JOIN(2013) 1 final.
([2]) Commission proposal for a directive concerning measures to ensure a high common level of network and information security across the Union, 7.2.2013, COM(2013) 48 final.
([3]) Tackling Crime in our Digital Age: Establishing a European Cybercrime Centre, Brussels, 28.3.2012, COM(2012) 140 final.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-013176/13
au Conseil
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(20 novembre 2013)

Objet: Développement des capacités spatiales

Dans son rapport d'initiative voté en session plénière, le Parlement demande explicitement au Conseil de réaffirmer l'importance de l'espace, qui est à la base de l'autonomie stratégique de l'Union et de ses États membres et souligne la possibilité d'obtenir un accès autonome à l'espace en développant des lanceurs et des satellites.

1. Le Conseil compte-t-il le faire? Partage-t-il cet avis?

2. Que pense le Conseil du développement d'une politique spécialement destinée à soutenir le développement de capacités spatiales à usage multiple?

Réponse
(10 février 2014)

Dans les conclusions qu'il a adoptées le 31 mai 2013 sur l'industrie spatiale européenne ([1]), le Conseil a invité la Commission, en coopération étroite avec l'ASE et les États membres, à examiner de manière plus approfondie les différents aspects de l'objectif consistant à assurer un accès indépendant à l'espace et a rappelé qu'il invitait tous les acteurs institutionnels européens à envisager en priorité le recours à des lanceurs conçus en Europe et à examiner les questions relatives à leur éventuelle participation à des activités d'exploitation liées aux lanceurs, afin de maintenir un accès indépendant, fiable et rentable à l'espace à un coût qui ne soit pas trop élevé. L'importance de maintenir un accès indépendant, fiable et rentable à l'espace pour un coût qui ne soit pas trop élevé avait déjà été soulignée par le Conseil dans ses résolutions (UE/ASE) du 6 décembre 2011 et du 26 novembre 2010 ([2]).

Les programmes de surveillance de la Terre constituent un moyen important d'assurer à l'Europe un accès indépendant à des informations stratégiques essentielles pour un grand nombre de politiques de l'UE consacrées par le traité. Dans son orientation générale du 3 décembre 2013, le Conseil a reconnu que l'un des objectifs de Copernicus était de garantir aux services d'observation de la Terre et de géo-information un accès autonome aux connaissances environnementales et aux technologies clés afin que l'Europe soit indépendante dans ses prises de décisions et sa capacité d'action ([3]).

En ce qui concerne les programmes phares EGNOS et Galileo, il convient de souligner que le Conseil a récemment adopté, conjointement avec le Parlement européen, le «règlement relatif à la mise en place et l'exploitation des systèmes européens de radionavigation par satellite», qui établit les règles relatives à la nouvelle gouvernance des programmes ainsi qu'à leur financement au cours de la période 2014-2020. Les colégislateurs sont aussi très récemment parvenus à dégager un accord en première lecture concernant l'Agence du GNSS européen, afin de définir le nouveau rôle conféré à l'Agence en tant que responsable de la gestion journalière des programmes et de faire en sorte que les activités d'homologation de sécurité soient menées de manière strictement indépendante des autres tâches de l'Agence.

([1]) Doc. 10295/13.
([2]) Doc. 18232/11, 10901/11 et 16864/10.
([3]) Doc. 17235/13.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013176/13
to the Council
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(20 November 2013)

Subject: Space Capability Development

In its own-initiative report voted through in plenary, Parliament explicitly asked the Council to reaffirm the importance of space, which is fundamental to the strategic independence of the Union and the Member States, as well as highlighting the opportunities which exist for gaining independent access to space by developing launch facilities and satellites.

1. Does the Council intend to do so? Does the Council agree with this view?

2. What does the Council think of devising policy specifically aimed at developing multipurpose space capability?

Reply
(10 February 2014)

In its conclusions of 31 May 2013 on the European space industry ([1]), the Council called on the Commission, in close cooperation with the ESA and the Member States, to examine further the issues relating to the objective of securing independent access to space and reiterated its invitation to all European institutional actors, in order to maintain an independent, reliable and cost effective access to space at affordable conditions, to consider as a high priority the use of launchers developed in Europe and to explore issues relating to their possible participation in launcher-related exploitation activities. The importance of maintaining an independent, reliable and cost effective access to space at affordable conditions had been already highlighted by the Council in its (EU/ESA) Resolutions of 6 December 2011 and of 26 November 2010 ([2]).

Programmes for Earth monitoring play an important role in ensuring Europe's independent access to key strategic information supporting many EU policies enshrined in the Treaty. In its general approach of 3 December 2013, the Council recognised that one of COPERNICUS objectives is to ensure autonomous access to environmental knowledge and key technologies for Earth observation and geo-information services, thus enabling Europe with independent decision-making and action ([3]).

As concerns the EU flagship programmes EGNOS and Galileo, it is worth underlining that the Council, together with the European Parliament, has recently adopted the 'Regulation on the implementation and exploitation of European satellite navigation systems' establishing the new governance of the programmes as well as their financing for the period 2014-2020. The co-legislators have also very recently managed to reach an agreement at first reading as regards the EU GNSS Agency, in order to provide for the Agency's new role of day-to-day programme manager and to ensure that security accreditation will be performed in a manner strictly independent from the other tasks of the Agency.

([1]) 10295/13.
([2]) 18232/11, 10901/11, 16864/10.
([3]) 17235/13.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-013177/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(20 novembre 2013)

Objet: Développement des capacités spatiales

Dans le rapport d'initiative voté en session plénière, il est demandé explicitement à la Commission européenne de développer une politique spécialement destinée à soutenir le développement de capacités spatiales à usage multiple.

1. Compte-t-elle le faire?

2. Quand et comment?

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

La communication de la Commission du 28 février 2013 ([1]) intitulée «La politique industrielle spatiale de l'UE, libérer le potentiel de croissance économique dans le secteur spatial» recense les mesures et les actions susceptibles de promouvoir le potentiel de croissance économique dans le secteur spatial.

Elle analyse la situation sur le marché européen et constate que le marché ne suffit pas à lui seul pour maintenir le niveau actuel d'excellence de l'industrie spatiale européenne. La politique de celle-ci contribue à la réalisation des objectifs de la stratégie Europe 2020, une stratégie européenne de croissance pour une économie intelligente, durable et inclusive. Par conséquent, l'accroissement des capacités spatiales d'utilisations multiples est implicite dans cette politique, étant donné qu'il s'agit d'une manière de soutenir les activités spatiales en Europe. Les prochaines perspectives financières pluriannuelles pour 2014-2020 proposent plusieurs lignes d'action: favoriser l'extension internationale du système mondial de radionavigation par satellite et les capacités d'observation de la Terre en développant des marchés d'applications et de services spatiaux, en soutenant la recherche et l'innovation, qui sont des éléments clés de la compétitivité de l'industrie spatiale, mais aussi des composants essentiels d'une croissance économique durable, à court comme à long terme, grâce à laquelle l'Union européenne peut rester compétitive dans une économie de plus en plus mondialisée.

La partie même du programme «Horizon 2020» consacrée à l'espace vise à développer des capacités spatiales polyvalentes puisqu'elle s'intéresse aux technologies, productions et applications spatiales qui présenteront de l'intérêt dans d'autres secteurs. L'invitation lancée aux universités et à des acteurs extérieurs au secteur spatial à participer à certains thèmes et l'implication attendue de PME ([2]) s'inscrivent dans l'optique de développer des projets spatiaux en dehors du secteur spécifique de l'espace, comme moyen d'obtenir une économie durable et solidaire basée sur l'espace.

([1]) COM(2013) 108.
([2]) Plus de 20 %.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013177/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(20 November 2013)

Subject: Development of space capability

In the own-initiative report adopted in plenary, there was an explicit call on the Commission to devise policy specifically aimed at developing multipurpose space capability.

1. Does it intend to do so?

2. If so, when and how?

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

The Commission's Communication 'EU Space Industrial Policy, releasing the Potential for Growth in the Space Sector' of 28 February 2013 ([1]) identifies measures and actions likely to facilitate the potential for economic growth in the space sector.

The communication analyses the situation in the European market and observes that market alone is not sufficient to sustain the current level of excellence of the European space industry. Space industrial policy contributes to the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy, Europe's growth strategy for a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy. Therefore, the development of space capabilities of multiple use is implicit in this policy, since it constitutes one way of sustaining space activities in Europe. There are several lines of action proposed in the next Multiannual Financial Perspective 2014-2020: fostering the international expansion of European GNSS and Earth Observation capabilities by developing markets for space applications and services, supporting research and innovation, which are key elements of space industrial competitiveness, but also essential ingredients of a sustainable economic growth, in the short as in the long run, with effects on the ability of the EU to remain competitive in an increasingly globalised economy.

The Space theme under Horizon 2020 itself is aimed at developing multipurpose space capability as it addresses space technologies, products and applications that will be of interest in other sectors. The call for the participation of Academia and non-space actors in some topics and the expected participation of SMEs ([2]) are in the line of spreading the space developments beyond the space sector, as a way to obtaining a sustainable and inclusive space based economy.

([1]) COM(2013)108.
([2]) over 20%.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-013178/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(20 novembre 2013)

Objet: Gestion des microbes

Manger des microbes pour ne pas être malade, voilà la proposition de plusieurs scientifiques européens.

Ils sont convaincus que la solution d'avenir, dans les dix à vingt prochaines années, sera de rééquilibrer notre ingestion de micro-organismes pour réalimenter notre flore digestive parce qu'elle participe à notre santé à toutes les étapes de la vie. Dès le moment où l'on comprendra la relation favorable de certains micro-organismes avec la santé, on favorisera leur ingestion. On en vient à la notion des probiotiques qui sont, probablement, un moyen de vivre plus âgé. Ils ont des pistes dans ce domaine, qu'il faut encore confirmer. Grâce aux nouvelles technologies, ils sont persuadés que les progrès vont exploser dans les années à venir. Pour rééquilibrer la flore intestinale, l'idée, à terme, serait d'intégrer dans l'alimentation générale les probiotiques, actuellement administrés essentiellement sous forme de compléments alimentaires ou de médicaments.

1. Quelle est la position de la Commission en la matière?

2. Mène-t-elle des études sur le sujet?

Réponse donnée par Mme Geoghegan-Quinn au nom de la Commission
(20 janvier 2014)

La Commission est consciente des problèmes potentiels de santé liés aux espèces et à la composition du microbiote intestinal humain.

Au titre du septième programme-cadre pour des actions de recherche, de développement technologique et de démonstration (7e PC, 2007-2013), la Commission finance plusieurs projets, à hauteur de 50 millions d'euros au total, afin de mieux comprendre les effets à court et long termes de l'alimentation sur le système immunitaire et la santé (par exemple, Tornado ([1]), Fibebiotics ([2]), EARLY Nutrition ([3]), Metahit ([4]), Lactobody ([5])). Mynewgut ([6]) est un projet bénéficiant depuis peu d'un financement (de 9 millions d'EUR) et visant à étudier les facteurs qui influent sur l'intestin humain et l'influence de celui-ci sur l'évolution des maladies liées à l'alimentation et le développement du cerveau.

Au titre des défis de société «Santé, évolution démographique et bien-être» et «Sécurité alimentaire, agriculture durable, recherche marine et maritime», le programme-cadre pour la recherche et l'innovation «Horizon 2020» (2014-2020) offrira des possibilités d'engager d'autres activités de recherche sur le sujet. En matière de régime alimentaire, il sera proposé des solutions et des innovations permettant d'améliorer la santé et le bien-être.

([1]) http://fp7tornado.eu/
([2]) http://www.fibebiotics.eu/
([3]) http://www.early-nutrition.org/related-projects.html
([4]) http://www.metahit.eu/
([5]) http://ki.se/ki/jsp/polopoly.jsp?d=39838&l=en
([6]) Microbiome Influence on Energy balance and Brain Development-Function Put into Action to Tackle Diet-related Diseases and Behavior.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013178/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(20 November 2013)

Subject: Managing bacteria

Several European scientists are suggesting that we should eat bacteria to avoid becoming ill.

They are convinced that in the next 10 to 20 years we will be able to balance our diet of bacteria to replenish intestinal flora, which is essential to health throughout our lifetime. Once we have understood how beneficial some micro-organisms are to our health, it's easier to eat them. This explains why probiotics are probably a good way of helping us live longer. The scientists are following up leads in this field, but the results still need confirming. They believe that progress with new technology will take us forward in leaps and bounds in the years to come; the idea being that, in time, it will be possible to rebalance our gut flora by incorporating probiotics into ordinary food, whereas they are nowadays taken mainly as supplements or medicine.

1. What is the Commission's position on this subject?

2. Is the Commission undertaking research into this subject?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(20 January 2014)

The Commission is aware of the potential health problems linked to the species and composition of the human gut microbiome.

In the Seventh Framework Programmes for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7, 2007-2013), the Commission funds several projects for a total of EUR 50 million to better understand the short and long-term effects of food on the immune system and health (e.g. TORNADO ([1]), FIBEBIOTICS ([2]), EARLY NUTRITION ([3]), METAHIT ([4]), LACTOBODY ([5])). MYNEWGUT ([6]) is a project recently funded (EUR 9 million) aiming to study the factors influencing the human gut and its effects on the development of diet-related diseases and brain development.

Through the societal challenges 'Health, demographic change and well-being' and 'Food security, sustainable agriculture, marine and maritime research', Horizon 2020 — The framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020) will offer opportunities to address further research on this subject. Dietary solutions and innovations leading to improvements in health and well-being will be identified.

([1]) http://fp7tornado.eu/
([2]) http://www.fibebiotics.eu/
([3]) http://www.early-nutrition.org/related-projects.html
([4]) http://www.metahit.eu/
([5]) http://ki.se/ki/jsp/polopoly.jsp?d=39838&l=en
([6]) Microbiome Influence on Energy balance and Brain Development-Function Put into Action to Tackle Diet-related Diseases and Behaviour.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-013179/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(20 novembre 2013)

Objet: Capacités militaires de l'Union européenne

Dans son rapport A7-0360/2013, le Parlement européen charge la Vice-présidente de la Commission/Haute Représentante de l'Union (VP/HR) de formuler, en collaboration avec la Commission, de nouvelles propositions concrètes concernant le développement des capacités militaires pour la fin de 2014.

La Commission compte-t-elle s'exécuter?

Que compte-t-elle proposer?

Où en est la Commission en la matière?

Réponse donnée par Mme Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(31 janvier 2014)

Le 10 octobre 2013, la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante a remis son rapport final en vue du Conseil européen de décembre. Ce document, ainsi que la communication de la Commission, publiée le 24 juillet 2013, ont constitué la base des discussions menées avec les États membres à l'occasion de plusieurs réunions, notamment lors du Conseil des affaires étrangères du 19 novembre 2013 réunissant les ministres de la défense. Ces rapports ont également servi de base pour les discussions qui ont eu lieu entre les chefs d'État et de gouvernement lors du sommet européen de décembre 2013 et pour les conclusions formulées à cette occasion.

Le rapport de la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante fait le point sur un certain nombre d'actions en cours dans les trois volets des tâches confiées en 2012 au Conseil européen et propose de débattre de la définition des objectifs stratégiques sur lesquels repose l'évolution future de la PSDC.

En ce qui concerne les capacités militaires concrètes, le Conseil européen demande, dans le domaine plus large de la réponse rapide, que l'emploi réel des groupements tactiques de l'UE soit amélioré, avec d'éventuelles pistes envisageables portant sur la modularité, les exercices et la certification ainsi que la planification anticipée. Un accent particulier devrait être mis sur une coopération systématique et à plus long terme dans le domaine de la défense européenne, ce qui nécessite la convergence des plans relatifs aux capacités de défense des États membres et la rationalisation de la demande de manière à réduire le nombre de variantes des programmes de collaboration. La coopération multinationale doit être intensifiée dans des domaines nécessitant des capacités essentielles, principalement stratégiques, comme le ravitaillement en vol, les systèmes aériens pilotés à distance, la communication par satellite et la cyberdéfense.

Les rapports ont été distribués.

La communication de la Commission intitulée «Vers un secteur de la défense et de la sécurité plus compétitif et plus efficace» définit un certain nombre d'actions destinées à soutenir l'industrie européenne de la défense, portant notamment sur les PME, la normalisation, la certification, les capacités à double usage et la recherche dans ce domaine.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013179/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(20 November 2013)

Subject: The European Union's military capabilities

In its report A7-0360/2013, Parliament tasks the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative, in tandem with the Commission, to come forward with new practical proposals regarding the development of defence capabilities by the end of 2014.

Does the Commission intend to comply?

What does it intend to propose?

What stage is the Commission at in this regard?

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

The HR/VP has provided her final report in view of the European Council in December on 10 October 2013 which, together with the communication of the Commission, released on 24 July 2013, formed the basis for discussions with Member States in several meetings, *inter alia* the Foreign Affairs Council in the format of Ministers of Defence on 19 November 2013. The reports also formed the basis for the discussions and conclusions of the Heads of States and Government at the December 2013 EU summit.

The HR/VP report takes stock of a number of on-going activities within the three clusters of the 2012 tasking of the European Council and also calls for a debate on defining the strategic objectives that guide the further development of CSDP.

Regarding concrete military capabilities, the European Council calls, within the broader area of Rapid Response, for improving the effective employment of EU Battle Groups with possible avenues regarding modularity, exercises and certification and advanced planning. A main focus should be on a systematic and more long term European defence cooperation, which requires convergence of Member States' defence capability plans and rationalisation of demand to reduce the number of variants within collaborative programmes. Multinational collaboration needs to be intensified in critical, mainly strategic capability areas such as Air-to-Air Refuelling, Remotely Piloted Air Systems, Satellite Communication and Cyber Defence.

The reports have been distributed.

As regards the Commission's Communication 'Towards a More Competitive and Efficient Defence and Security Sector', it sets up a number of actions in support of the EU defence industry including, inter alia, actions related to SMEs, standardisation, certification and dual use research and capabilities.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-013180/13
à la Commission (Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante)
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(20 novembre 2013)

Objet: VP/HR — Capacités militaires de l'Union européenne

Dans son rapport A7-0360/2013, le Parlement européen charge la Vice-présidente de la Commission/Haute Représentante de l'Union (VP/HR) de formuler, en collaboration avec la Commission, de nouvelles propositions concrètes concernant le développement des capacités militaires pour la fin de 2014.

Comptez-vous accéder à la demande du Parlement?

Que comptez-vous proposer?

Réponse donnée par Mme Asthon, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(11 février 2014)

Dans son rapport A7-0360/2013, le Parlement européen «demande donc au Conseil européen de lancer un débat sur le cadre stratégique qui serait approprié pour l'Union, de charger la VP/HR de formuler des propositions à cet égard avant la fin de 2014 et d'assurer un suivi durable».

Les 20 et 21 décembre 2013, le Conseil européen a adopté des conclusions sur la politique de sécurité et de défense commune (PSDC), y compris les conclusions du Conseil du 25 novembre, et a salué deux contributions majeures: le rapport de la HR/VP sur la PSDC, publié en octobre, et la communication de la Commission en matière de sécurité et de défense, publiée en juillet.

Le Conseil européen a demandé aux États membres de renforcer la coopération dans le domaine de la défense afin d'améliorer le développement et la disponibilité des capacités civiles et militaires requises. Il a souligné son engagement à assurer la disponibilité de capacités essentielles et à corriger les insuffisances au travers de projets concrets menés par les États membres. Afin d'encourager une coopération plus systématique et à long terme, le Conseil européen a invité la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante et l'Agence de défense européenne à définir un cadre d'action d'ici la fin de 2014.

Tout en saluant la communication de la Commission concernant la sécurité et la défense, le Conseil européen a souligné la nécessité d'établir une base industrielle et technologique de défense européenne (BITDE) plus intégrée, plus durable et plus compétitive pour développer et maintenir des capacités de défense.

Le Conseil prévoit un mécanisme de suivi rigoureux afin de favoriser des progrès concrets et de les contrôler ainsi que de maintenir la dynamique dans l'ensemble des trois axes constitués par l'efficacité, la visibilité et l'impact de la PSDC, le développement des capacités ainsi que l'industrie et le marché. Un rapport de suivi, attendu pour la mi-2014, comportera des propositions concrètes dans les domaines d'action énumérés dans les conclusions du Conseil, couvrant notamment le développement des capacités de défense.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013180/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(20 November 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — The European Union's military capabilities

In its report A7-0360/2013, the European Parliament tasks the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative, in tandem with the Commission, to come forward with new practical proposals regarding the development of defence capabilities by the end of 2014.

Do you intend to comply with Parliament's request?

What do you intend to propose?

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

In its report A7-0360/2013, the EP 'requests therefore that the European Council launch a debate on the appropriate strategic framework for the Union, mandate the HR/VP to come forward with proposals in this respect before the end of 2014 and ensure sustainable follow-up'.

On 20/21 Dec 2013 the European Council (EC) adopted conclusions on Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), including the endorsement of the 25 November Council conclusions and welcomed two major contributions: the HR/VP report on CSDP issued in October and the Commission Communication on security and defence published in July.

The EC called on the Member States to deepen defence cooperation in order to improve the development and availability of the required civilian and military capabilities. It stressed its commitment to delivering key capabilities and addressing shortfalls through concrete projects by Member States. In order to foster more systematic and long-term cooperation, the EC invited the HR/VP and the European Defence Agency to put forward a policy framework by the end of 2014.

Welcoming the Commission Communication on security and defence, the EC underlined the need for a more integrated, sustainable, and competitive European Defence Technological and Industrial Bas to develop and sustain defence capabilities.

The Council provides for a robust follow-up process to ensure and monitor concrete progress, and sustain the momentum across all three clusters of effectiveness, visibility and impact of CSDP, capability development, and industry and market. A progress report is expected by mid-2014 and shall include concrete proposals in the work strands enumerated in the Council conclusions including the development of defence capacities.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-013181/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(20 novembre 2013)

Objet: Défense européenne

Certains sont préoccupés par les réductions des investissements en faveur de la défense.

La Commission européenne va-t-elle adopter des dispositions afin de lutter contre le fait que la Base industrielle et technologique de défense européenne (BITDE) sera de plus en plus exposée au risque d'être contrôlée et limitée dans ses activités par des puissances tierces aux intérêts stratégiques différents?

Que compte faire la Commission européenne pour renforcer la coopération industrielle européenne afin que les États membres puissent garantir le plus possible leur autonomie stratégique en développant et en produisant des capacités militaires et de sécurité efficaces basées sur les technologies les plus avancées?

La Commission européenne prévoit-elle d'élaborer une stratégie commune pour la Base industrielle et technologique de défense européenne (BITDE) à l'avenir, fondée sur les propres expériences des États membres?

Réponse donnée par M. Tajani au nom de la Commission
(12 février 2014)

En 2013, la Commission a adopté une communication ([1]) visant à renforcer le marché intérieur de la défense et la compétitivité de l'industrie de la défense ainsi qu'à favoriser une plus grande coopération entre les États membres. Cette communication a constitué un élément clé de la contribution de la Commission au Conseil européen de décembre.

Bien que l'exposition à un contrôle externe soit avant tout du ressort des États membres, la Commission a proposé de publier un livre vert sur le contrôle des capacités industrielles de défense pour étudier plus en détail les avantages potentiels de mesures prises à l'échelle de l'Union dans ce domaine.

Le Conseil européen de décembre a reconnu la nécessité d'une base industrielle et technologique de défense européenne (BITDE) plus intégrée et plus compétitive pour développer et maintenir les capacités nécessaires à l'autonomie stratégique de l'Union. Afin de renforcer la coopération industrielle européenne et la BITDE, la Commission présente dans sa communication des mesures en faveur de la normalisation et de la certification, des PME, des compétences et du double usage potentiel des travaux de recherche, notamment par une action préparatoire pour des travaux de recherche dans le domaine de la politique de sécurité et de défense commune (PSDC). Le Conseil a accueilli avec satisfaction la communication de la Commission, a explicitement mis l'accent sur les actions décrites ci-dessus et examinera les progrès accomplis en juin 2015.

La stratégie de la BITDE est élaborée par l'Agence européenne de défense (AED), qui travaille déjà en étroite collaboration avec les États membres, et s'appuie sur l'expérience de ceux-ci, pour consolider la BITDE dans des domaines clés tels que la sécurité d'approvisionnement, le soutien aux PME, la surveillance du marché, la normalisation et la certification.

([1]) COM(2013) 542 du 24 juillet 2013, «Vers un secteur de la défense et de la sécurité plus compétitif et plus efficace» (http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/defence/defence-industrial-policy/index_en.htm).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013181/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(20 November 2013)

Subject: European Defence

Some people are concerned by the reduction of investment in defence.

Will the European Commission adopt provisions to counter the risk of the European Defence Technological and Industrial Base (EDTIB) becoming exposed to external control and limitations exerted by other powers with divergent strategic interests?

What does the European Commission intend to do to step up European industrial cooperation to ensure that Member States remain strategically independent by developing and producing effective military and security capability based on the most up-to-date technology?

Does the European Commission intend to develop a common strategy for the European Defence Technological and Industrial Base (EDTIB), drawing on Member States' experience?

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

In 2013 the Commission adopted a communication ([1]) that aims to reinforce the internal market for defence, strengthen the competitiveness of the defence industry and facilitate more cooperation among Member States. The communication was a key Commission contribution to the December European Council.

Although exposure to external control is primarily a matter for Member States, the Commission has proposed issuing a Green Paper on the control of defence industrial capabilities to explore in greater detail potential benefits of taking action at an EU level in this area.

The December European Council recognised the need for a more integrated and competitive European Defence Technological and Industrial Base (EDTIB) to develop and sustain capabilities necessary for the EU's strategic autonomy. In order to step up European industrial cooperation and strengthen the EDTIB, the Commission's Communication set out actions in support of standardisation and certification, SMEs, skills and dual-use potential of research, including through a Preparatory Action on CSDP-related research. The Council welcomed the communication, explicitly highlighted the abovementioned actions and shall review progress in June 2015

The EDTIB strategy is established by the European Defence Agency (EDA). EDA is already working closely with Member States to consolidate EDTIB, building on their experience, in key areas such as security of supply, support to SMEs, market monitoring, standardisation and certification.

([1]) COM(2013)542 of 24 July 2013, 'Towards a more competitive and efficient defence and security sector' http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/defence/defence-industrial-policy/index_en.htm

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-013184/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(20 novembre 2013)

Objet: Cour suprême et NSA

La Cour suprême des États-Unis a refusé lundi de se saisir d'un recours sur le vaste programme de surveillance des communications téléphoniques et électroniques des Américains mis en place par l'Agence nationale de sécurité (NSA). Sans aucun commentaire, la plus haute instance du pays a rejeté l'appel de l'association de défense de la vie privée électronique (Electronic Privacy Information Center — EPIC), premier recours déposé directement devant la haute Cour depuis que l'ex-agent de la NSA, Edward Snowden, a dévoilé le vaste programme de surveillance. Dans son recours, l'EPIC demandait à la Cour suprême de mettre fin au programme de surveillance de la NSA car elle estimait qu'en «collectant les informations téléphoniques de millions d'Américains, indépendamment de toute enquête particulière, la NSA outrepassait les pouvoirs conférés par le Congrès» au tribunal de surveillance du renseignement (Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court — FISC). Le gouvernement américain avait demandé à la Cour suprême de rejeter ce recours, précisant que le programme de surveillance, en place depuis 2006, avait été dûment autorisé par le FISC. D'autres litiges sur le programme de la NSA pourraient être confiés prochainement à la Cour suprême après leur examen par les juridictions de première instance de Washington et de New York.

1. Comment la Commission réagit-elle à cette décision de justice?

2. Comment la Commission réagit-elle à la position officielle du gouvernement américain, qui a demandé à la Cour suprême de rejeter ce recours en précisant que le programme de surveillance, en place depuis 2006, avait été dûment autorisé par le FISC?

Réponse donnée par Mme Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(24 janvier 2014)

La Commission européenne ne s'immisce pas dans les procédures judiciaires ni ne les commente.

Cependant, elle a exprimé ses préoccupations et demandé des éclaircissements au gouvernement américain en ce qui concerne les programmes de surveillance évoqués dans la presse, leur base juridique et leur contrôle. Ces questions ont été examinées dans le cadre du groupe de travail ad hoc UE-États-Unis sur la protection des données.

Le 27 novembre 2013, la Commission a publié une communication sur les transferts de données transatlantiques, qui présente les enjeux et les risques à la suite des révélations sur les programmes américains de collecte de renseignements ([1]), ainsi que les mesures à prendre pour y répondre, une analyse du fonctionnement de la «sphère de sécurité» ([2]), qui régit les transferts de données à des fins commerciales entre l'Union européenne et les États-Unis, et le rapport factuel sur les conclusions du groupe de travail UE-États-Unis sur la protection des données ([3]), créé en juillet 2013.

En outre, le président Obama a mis sur pied un groupe d'examen des technologies d'espionage et de communication («Review Group on Intelligence and Communications Technologies») pour évaluer si, à la lumière des progrès accomplis dans le domaine des technologies de communication, les États-Unis utilisent leurs capacités de collecte technique d'une manière qui assure un juste équilibre entre la sécurité nationale et la vie privée, les intérêts diplomatiques et autres qui sont en jeu.

La Commission continuera à suivre cette problématique.

([1]) COM(2013) 846 final.
([2]) COM(2013) 847 final.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/data-protection/files/report-findings-of-the-ad-hoc-eu-us-working-group-on-data-protection.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013184/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(20 November 2013)

Subject: The Supreme Court and the NSA

On Monday the United States Supreme Court refused to hear a challenge concerning the vast programme of surveillance of Americans' telephone and electronic communications put in place by the National Security Agency (NSA). The highest court in the land, without comment, rejected the writ from the Electronic Privacy Information Center (EPIC). This was the first petition made directly to the Supreme Court since the former NSA agent, Edward Snowden, disclosed the vast surveillance programme. In its petition, EPIC called on the Supreme Court to put an end to the NSA's surveillance programme, considering that 'the collection of the domestic telephone records of millions of Americans by the NSA, untethered to any particular investigation, is beyond the authority granted by Congress' to the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court (FISC). The United States Government had asked the Supreme Court to reject the petition, arguing that the surveillance programme, which has been in place since 2006, had been duly authorised by the FISC. Other lawsuits concerning the NSA's programme might soon be referred to the Supreme Court after hearings in Washington and New York district courts.

1. What is the Commission's reaction to this ruling?

2. What is the Commission's reaction to the United States Government's official position, which requested the Supreme Court to reject the petition by arguing that the surveillance programme, which has been in place since 2006, had been duly authorised by the FISC?

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

The Commission does not interfere with, or comment on, judicial proceedings.

However, the European Commission has expressed concerns and requested clarifications from the US Government regarding the surveillance programmes reported in the press, their legal base and oversight. These issues were discussed in the framework of an ad-hoc EU-US working group on data protection.

On 27 November 2013, the Commission published a communication on transatlantic data flows setting out the challenges and risks following the revelations of U.S. intelligence collection programmes ([1]), as well as the steps that need to be taken to address these concerns, an analysis of the functioning of 'Safe Harbour' ([2]) which regulates data transfers for commercial purposes between the EU and U.S. as well as the factual report on the findings of the EU-US Working Group on Data Protection ([3]) which was set up in July 2013.

In addition, President Obama set up a Review Group on Intelligence and Communications Technologies to assess whether, in light of advancements in communication technologies, the United States employs its technical collection capabilities in a manner that properly balances national security with privacy, diplomatic and other interests at stake.

The Commission will continue following this matter.

([1]) COM(2013) 846 final.
([2]) COM(2013) 847 final.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/data-protection/files/report-findings-of-the-ad-hoc-eu-us-working-group-on-data-protection.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013188/13
to the Commission
Paul Murphy (GUE/NGL)
(20 November 2013)

Subject: Fish farms in Galway, Ireland

Is the Commission aware of the controversy surrounding the report to the Commission from the Irish Government on the development of further sea fish farms in Galway Bay, stemming from the fact that a critical report from Inland Fisheries Ireland on the dangers of sea lice that would result from such a development was suppressed and not sent to the Commission? This is now the subject of an investigation by the Ombudsman in Ireland.

What impact will this fact have on the Commission's investigation and when is its report due?

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

The Commission are aware of the risks that sea lice (which result from salmon farming) may have an impact on the populations of wild salmons in Galway Bay and elsewhere. The matter was investigated by the Commission and closed in 2012 on the basis of lack of evidence that would indicate a breach of the applicable EU environmental law. This investigation was re-opened in November 2013 on the basis of new scientific information submitted by the Irish environmental NGOs. The Commission have raised these new circumstances with the Irish authorities and are currently waiting for their reply.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013189/13
a la Comisión
Alejo Vidal-Quadras (PPE)
(20 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Situación de la producción combinada de calor y electricidad (PCCE) en la industria europea

Teniendo en cuenta el elevado consumo de energía en la industria europea (315 millones de toneladas equivalentes de petróleo (tep) en 2010), la política energética y climática de la UE ha fomentado la producción combinada de calor y electricidad (PCCE) en la industria. Hoy en día este método es ampliamente utilizado en los sectores alimentario, químico, de refinado de petróleo y de producción de papel y de cerámica, en los que las plantas PCCE proporcionan electricidad a la red con una baja emisión de carbono. Actualmente la cogeneración en la industria permite que Europa se ahorre importar unos 15 millones de tep al año.

La UE tiene el objetivo a largo plazo de explotar todo su potencial de eficiencia energética, y por ello sigue apoyando la PCCE mediante diferentes directivas, como la Directiva relativa a la eficiencia energética.

Sin embargo, en este momento la PCCE en la industria se enfrenta a una serie de retos de mercado, en un momento en el que el mercado de la electricidad se encuentra en un lento proceso de transición. El alto precio del gas agrava aún más esta situación.

En el contexto de la fabricación avanzada, ¿qué medidas está tomando la DG Empresa e Industria para garantizar que tecnologías como la PCCE mantienen y mejoran la competitividad energética de la industria europea? Las actuales políticas nacionales en materia de mercado energético podrían provocar una disminución en el uso de la PCCE en una serie de países, debido a la creciente inseguridad de los inversores y a la falta de un marco de actuación claramente definido a largo plazo. ¿Son conscientes la DG Empresa e Industria y la DG Energía de estos acontecimientos y hacen un seguimiento de la situación? ¿Qué puede hacer la Comisión para seguir apoyando en el difícil periodo de transición actual a esta tecnología, que permite una mayor productividad con menores emisiones de carbono?

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

El fomento de la producción combinada de calor y electricidad de alta eficiencia (PCCE o cogeneración) está recogido en la Directiva de la UE sobre eficiencia energética y contribuye al logro del objetivo de competitividad de las industrias de la Unión. En este contexto, la Directiva sobre eficiencia energética aborda las deficiencias del mercado y las incertidumbres del mercado a corto plazo que periódicamente pueden afectar a determinados tipos de PCCE, tal como las recientemente experimentadas por algunas centrales de cogeneración por gas. Por otra parte, la Comisión supervisa regularmente la evolución del mercado y está poniendo en práctica diversas iniciativas destinadas a facilitar la inversión en la PCCE y a ofrecer perspectivas a largo plazo. Estas iniciativas incluyen una plataforma específica en relación con la aplicación de las disposiciones relativas a la industria de la Directiva sobre eficiencia energética, que contempla, en particular, auditorías de la PCCE y auditorías energéticas, cuya creación está prevista en 2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013189/13
to the Commission
Alejo Vidal-Quadras (PPE)
(20 November 2013)

Subject: Situation of industrial combined heat and power (CHP) in Europe

Recognising the very high energy consumption in European industry (315 Mtoe in 2010), EU energy and climate policy has encouraged industry to adopt combined heat and power (CHP). This is now widely used in the refining, food, paper, ceramic and chemical sectors, in which CHP plants supply low-carbon electricity to the grid. Cogeneration in industry currently saves Europe around 15 million toe of energy imports each year.

The EU has a long-term interest in developing all its energy efficiency potential and continues to support CHP through several directives, including the Energy Efficiency Directive.

However, at the moment industrial CHP is facing several market challenges as the electricity market slowly makes the transition. The situation is made more severe by current high gas prices.

Within the context of advanced manufacturing, what action is DG Enterprise taking to ensure that technologies such as CHP maintain and improve the energy competitiveness of industries in Europe? Current national energy market policies could lead to decreasing use of CHP in a number of countries because of growing investor uncertainty and a lack of clearly-defined long term policy structures. Are DG Enterprise and DG Energy aware of these developments and monitoring them? What can the Commission do to support this higher productivity and lower carbon enabling technology, in this difficult transitional period?

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

The promotion of high-efficiency combined heat and power (CHP or cogeneration) is enshrined in the EU's Energy Efficiency Directive and serves the objective of competitiveness of EU industries. In this context, the Energy Efficiency Directive adresses market failures and short-term market uncertainties that periodically may affect certain types of CHP, such as recently experienced by some industrial gas-fired CHP. In addition, the Commission regularly monitors market developments and is putting in place various initiatives aiming at further facilitating investment in CHP and providing long-term outlook. These include a dedicated platform on the implementation of the industry related provisions of the Energy Efficiency Directive, in particular CHP and energy audits, to be set up in 2014.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-013190/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE) und Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(20. November 2013)

Betrifft: Zwei F-16-Kampfflugzeuge im Luftraum über Zypern

Am 18. November 2013 kam es erneut zu einer Verletzung des zyprischen Luftraums, als zwei türkische F-16-Kampfflugzeuge Nikosia überflogen und dadurch die Bewohner in Unruhe versetzt haben.

1. Wie beurteilt die Kommission diesen Vorfall?

2. Wie kann die Kommission dafür sorgen, dass sich Provokationen dieser Art in Bezug auf den zyprischen Luftraum nicht wiederholen?

3. Wie kann die Kommission sicherstellen, dass es selbst in dieser entfernten Grenzregion im östlichen Mittelmeer nicht erneut zu einer Verletzung des europäischen Luftraums kommt?

4. Wird die Kommission diesen Vorfall der Internationalen Zivilluftfahrt-Organisation (ICAO) melden, damit Sanktionen gegen das betreffende beitrittswillige Land verhängt werden?

Antwort von Herrn Füle im Namen der Kommission
(28. Januar 2014)

Die Kommission verweist die Frau Abgeordnete und den Herrn Abgeordneten auf ihre Antwort auf die schriftlichen Anfrage E-001634/2013 ([1]).

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

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-013190/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE) και Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(20 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Δύο μαχητικά F-16 πάνω από την Κύπρο

Κατόπιν της τελευταίας παραβίασης του κυπριακού εναέριου χώρου από δύο τουρκικά μαχητικά F-16 που πέταξαν πάνω από τη Λευκωσία, αναστατώνοντας με αυτόν τον τρόπο τους κατοίκους στις 18 Νοεμβρίου 2013:

1. Πώς κρίνει η Επιτροπή αυτό το περιστατικό;

2. Πώς μπορεί η Επιτροπή να εξασφαλίσει ότι δεν θα συμβούν ξανά προκλητικά περιστατικά αυτού του είδους όσον αφορά τον κυπριακό εναέριο χώρο;

3. Πώς μπορεί η Επιτροπή να εξασφαλίσει ότι δεν θα παραβιασθεί ξανά ο ευρωπαϊκός εναέριος χώρος, έστω και σε αυτή την απομακρυσμένη παραμεθόρια περιοχή της ανατολικής Μεσογείου;

4. Προτίθεται η Επιτροπή να επιστήσει την προσοχή του Διεθνούς Οργανισμού Πολιτικής Αεροπορίας (ΔΟΠΑ) στο περιστατικό, ούτως ώστε να επιβληθούν κυρώσεις στην εμπλεκόμενη υποψήφια χώρα;

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

Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει τις κυρίες βουλευτές στην απάντησή της στη γραπτή ερώτηση E-001634/2013 [1].

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013190/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE) and Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(20 November 2013)

Subject: Two F-16s over Cyprus

Following the latest violation of Cypriot airspace, by two Turkish F-16 fighter jets that flew over Nicosia, thereby upsetting the residents on 18 November 2013:

1. How does the Commission view this incident?

2. How can the Commission ensure that provocative incidents of this kind do not happen again with regard to Cypriot airspace?

3. How can the Commission ensure that European airspace is not be violated again, even in this distant Eastern Mediterranean border region?

4. Does the Commission intend to bring this to the attention of the ICAO, so that sanctions will be imposed on the candidate country involved?

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

The Commission refers the Honourable Members to its answer to Written Question E-001634/2013 ([1]).

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

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013191/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(20 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Opinión de la troika sobre la gestión de la SAREB

La troika, formada por Comisión Europea, el BCE y el FMI ha firmado un documento en el que se critican algunas decisiones adoptadas por la SAREB desde su creación ([1]).

Este hecho es contradictorio con las respuestas de la Comisión Europea a preguntas parlamentarias relacionadas con la SAREB. Así, por ejemplo, en su respuesta E-002220/13 de 28 de mayo de 2013 la Comisión decía: «SAREB es una empresa con estructuras de gobernanza y de gestión propias por lo que no incumbe a la Comisión juzgar si procede que SAREB acepte o rechace ofertas de inversores extranjeros.»

A una pregunta relacionada con la operación Bull, la Comisión afirmaba también: «como empresa privada gestionada por profesionales, SAREB toma decisiones de manera independiente con el fin de cumplir mejor sus objetivos.»

Además, el 28 de agosto de 2013, el Parlamento Europeo remitió una carta en la que rechazaba cuatro preguntas presentadas sobre la SAREB (E-006556/13, E-006557/13, E-006558/13, E-006559/13) con el argumento que la Comisión no era competente en la materia.

A la luz de todo lo anterior,

¿Por qué la Comisión firma un informe que incluye conclusiones sobre la gestión de la SAREB y a la vez no expresa su opinión sobre los mismos temas cuando un diputado europeo pregunta sobre ellas con el argumento de que la SAREB es independiente?

Si como miembro de la troika y co-firmante del memorándum de entendimiento (MoU) del Estado español, la Comisión expresa su opinión sobre las decisiones de la SAREB, ¿no debería hacer lo mismo cuando recibe una pregunta parlamentaria?

¿Tiene intención la Comisión de responder a las preguntas E-006556/13, E-006557/13, E 006558/13 y E 006559/13 relacionadas con la gestión de la SAREB y que han sido rechazadas de forma incoherente por el Parlamento Europeo?

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

La pregunta hace referencia a un artículo de periódico que resume el cuarto informe de seguimiento del programa de ayuda financiera encaminado a la recapitalización de las entidades financieras en España, que fue realizado por la Comisión Europea, en cooperación con el Banco Central Europeo, y se publicó a mediados de noviembre [Financial Assistance Programme for the Recapitalisation of Financial Institutions in Spain. Fourth Review — Autumn 2013 (Occasional Papers 163, noviembre 2013)]. Dicho informe no ha sido corredactado por el FMI, que no forma parte de ninguna «troika» en relación con este programa.

La creación de la SAREB ha sido un importante elemento del programa de ayuda al sector financiero, con el objetivo de que España facilite una desinversión oportuna y ordenada de los activos relacionados con los sectores de la construcción y de la promoción inmobiliaria. Como empresa privada, gestionada por profesionales, la SAREB toma decisiones de manera independiente con el fin de cumplir mejor sus objetivos. A la luz del importante papel de la SAREB en el contexto del programa de ayuda al sector financiero, la Comisión, en colaboración con el BCE, sigue de cerca sus actividades en el marco del seguimiento general de los avances alcanzados en el programa mencionado. La Comisión no opina sobre operaciones individuales de la SAREB.

([1]) http://www.elconfidencial.com/empresas/2013-11-19/sareb-incumplira-sus-objetivos-en-2013-por-su-erronea-politica-de-precios-segun-la-troika_56122/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013191/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(20 November 2013)

Subject: The Troika's opinion on how SAREB is run

The Troika, made up of the Commission, the European Central Bank (ECB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), has signed a document critical of some of the decisions taken by SAREB (the Management Company for Assets resulting from Restructuring of the Spanish Banking System) since it was created ([1]).

This stands at odds with answers given by the Commission to parliamentary questions concerning SAREB. For example, in its answer to Question E-002220/13 of 28 May 2013, the Commission stated that 'SAREB is a company with its own governance and management structure and it is not up to the Commission to pass judgment on whether SAREB accepts or rejects offers from foreign investors'.

In response to a question about Operation Bull, the Commission also stated that 'as a private company, managed by professional staff, SAREB takes decisions independently in order to best fulfil its goals'.

Moreover, on 28 August 2013, Parliament sent a letter rejecting four questions about SAREB (E-006556/13, E-006557/13, E-006558/13, E-006559/13), arguing that the matter was not within the Commission's remit.

Why is it that the Commission has signed a report that includes conclusions about how SAREB is run but will not express an opinion when questioned about these same issues by a Member of Parliament, arguing that SAREB is independent?

If, as a member of the Troika and co-signatory of Spain's Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), the Commission expresses its opinion on the decisions taken by SAREB, should it not do the same when it receives a parliamentary question?

Does the Commission intend to answer Questions E-006556/13, E-006557/13, E-006558/13 and E-006559/13, which concern the running of SAREB and which Parliament has rejected in an inconsistent manner?

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

The question refers to a newspaper article that summarises the fourth monitoring report by the European Commission, in liaison with the European Central Bank, of the financial assistance programme for the recapitalisation of financial institutions in Spain, which has been published mid-November (Financial Assistance Programme for the Recapitalisation of Financial Institutions in Spain. Fourth Review — Autumn 2013 (Occasional Papers 163, November 2013)). This report has not been co-drafted by the IMF, which is not member of any 'Troika' of this programme.

The creation of Sareb has been an important element of the financial sector assistance programme for Spain to facilitate timely and orderly disinvestment of legacy assets linked to the construction and the real estate development sectors. As a private company, managed by professional staff, Sareb takes decisions independently in order to best fulfil its goals. In the light of the important role of SAREB in the context of the financial sector assistance programme, the Commission, in liaison with the ECB, monitors closely SAREB's activities within the context of the general monitoring of progress with the mentioned programme. The Commission does not comment on individual transactions of SAREB.

([1]) http://www.elconfidencial.com/empresas/2013-11-19/sareb-incumplira-sus-objetivos-en-2013-por-su-erronea-politica-de-precios-segun-la-troika_56122/

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013192/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(20 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Morosidad en el sector bancario español

La morosidad en los créditos de la banca sufrió en septiembre la mayor subida mensual de lo que va de 2013 y escaló hasta el 12,6 %, según los datos que ha publicado el Banco de España este lunes. El repunte de los préstamos irrecuperables, que ya rozan los 187 830 millones tras siete meses consecutivos empeorando, se explica porque el proceso de refinanciaciones va tocando a su fin y porque las entidades están ajustando sus cuentas con vistas a cerrar el ejercicio.

La estadística del supervisor muestra que los créditos impagados aumentaron en 6 890 millones en septiembre, lo que representa un incremento del 3,7 % con respecto a agosto y la mayor subida desde octubre de 2012. Tras esta nueva alza, tanto la tasa de morosidad como el total del volumen de dudosos están en máximos de toda la serie histórica, que arranca en 1962.

Por otro lado, el saldo del dinero prestado vuelve a retroceder y baja en 8 900 millones, hasta los 1,42 billones, su valor mínimo desde 2006 ([1]).

A la luz de lo anterior:

¿Conoce estos datos la Comisión? ¿Está preocupada por esta nueva alza de la morosidad? ¿Hasta qué punto cree la Comisión que esta alza puede perjudicar el balance de los bancos españoles?

¿Detecta la Comisión un aumento de la morosidad en algunos sectores específicos de la economía?

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

La Comisión Europea es muy consciente de la situación del sector bancario español, que abarca la calidad de los activos en general, así como la gran cantidad de préstamos fallidos. Está observando muy de cerca y de forma periódica la evolución de estos préstamos. Con todo, a la Comisión, en general, no le sorprende esta tendencia. En efecto, se esperaba que se produjera este aumento, y también se ha tenido en cuenta tal nuevo incremento en la prueba de resistencia y la subsiguiente recapitalización de los bancos españoles de 2012 y 2013. Se puede encontrar un análisis más detallado de las tendencias y los determinantes de las mismas en los respectivos informes de revisión elaborados por la Comisión Europea en lo referente al programa para el sector financiero español; el último, el cuarto, fue confeccionado en noviembre de 2013 ([2]).

([1]) http://economia.elpais.com/economia/2013/11/18/actualidad/1384766962_128708.html
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/ocp163_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013192/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(20 November 2013)

Subject: Credit default rate in the Spanish banking sector

The rise in the bank credit default rate in September was the biggest monthly increase so far in 2013, reaching 12.6%, according to figures published by the Bank of Spain on Monday. The rise in bad loans — which, having got worse for seven consecutive months, now stand at EUR 187.830 billion — is explained by the fact that the refinancing process is coming to an end and institutions are adjusting their accounts in order to close the financial year.

According to the supervisor's statistics, the amount of outstanding debt increased by EUR 6.89 billion in September — 3.7% up on August and the biggest increase since October 2012. After this new rise, both the default rate and the total volume of bad debt are at their highest since records began in 1962.

Meanwhile, the balance of money lent was down again, this time by EUR 8.9 billion, to 1.42 billion, the lowest level since 2006 ([1]).

Is the Commission aware of these figures? Is it concerned about this new rise in the default rate? How damaging does the Commission think this rise will be to the balance sheets of Spanish banks?

Has the Commission detected increases in the default rate in specific sectors of the economy?

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

The European Commission is well aware of the situation of the Spanish banking sector, including the quality in assets in general and the large amount of non-performing loans. It is watching this development in non-performing loans very closely and regularly. However, the Commission is in general not surprised by this trend. Such a further increase has been widely expected, and such a further rise has also been factored in the stress test and the ensuing recapitalisation of Spanish banks in 2012 and 2013. Further analysis of the trends and determinants of these trends can also be found in the respective review reports by the European Commission of the Spanish financial-sector programme, the latest, fourth, one of November 2013 ([2]).

([1]) http://economia.elpais.com/economia/2013/11/18/actualidad/1384766962_128708.html
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/ocp163_en.pdf

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-013193/13
komissiolle
Eija-Riitta Korhola (PPE)
(20. marraskuuta 2013)

Aihe: EU:n ja USA:n ilmanlaatustandardit

Vaikka monien ilmansaasteiden päästöt ovat Euroopassa vähentyneet merkittävästi viime vuosikymmenten aikana, Euroopan ympäristöviraston tutkimuksen mukaan lähes jokainen Euroopan kaupungeissa asuvista altistuu vaarallisen huonolle hengitysilmalle, joka voi johtaa muun muassa hengitysteiden sairauksiin, sydänongelmiin ja eliniänodotteen laskuun. Ilmansaasteiden pitoisuudet ovat liian korkeita, ja erityisesti otsonin, typpidioksidien ja hiukkasten aiheuttama ilman saastuminen aiheuttaa vakavia terveysriskejä.

EU:n alueella kuolee ilmansaasteiden takia ennenaikaisesti jopa 430 000 ihmistä, ja ilmansaasteista aiheutuvien sairauksien hoitoon kuluu vuosittain miljardeja euroja. Lisäksi ilmansaasteet aiheuttavat mm. happosateita, luonnon monimuotoisuuden heikkenemistä sekä vahinkoa rakennuksille ja materiaaleille. Ilman saastumisen syitä ovat esimerkiksi fossiilisten polttoaineiden käyttö sähköntuotannossa, liikenteessä, teollisuudessa ja kotitalouksissa sekä teolliset prosessit, maatalous ja jätehuolto.

Tästä johtuen ilmanlaatua parantavat toimet hillitsevät usein myös ilmastonmuutosta, joten saasteita rajoittavien toimenpiteiden hyödyt voivat olla mittavia. Esimerkiksi Kiinan kasvihuonekaasupäästöjen kasvun hidastumisen yhtenä tekijänä nähdään voimakas panostaminen ilmanlaadun parantamiseen. Myös USA:ssa päästöt ovat nopeasti vähentyneet ja ilmanlaatu vastaavasti parantunut viime vuosina.

Onko komissiolla uusia päivitettyjä tutkimuksia siitä, miten EU:n ilmanlaatustandardit vertautuvat USA:n ilmanlaatuvaatimuksiin?

Miten vertautuvat erityisesti keskeiset päästöt, kuten rikki, typpi, pienhiukkaset, otsoni?

Miten komissio aikoo puuttua ilmanlaatuongelmaan, varsinkin kun on esimerkkejä siitä, että EU:n ilmasto- ja energiapoliittiset toimet ovat paikoin huonontaneet ilmanlaatua, esimerkiksi polttoainevalintojen kautta?

Janez Potočnikin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(17. tammikuuta 2014)

Ilman pilaantumista koskevan teemakohtaisen strategian uudelleentarkastelun ([1]) yhteydessä komissio vertasi EU:n ilmanlaatuvaatimuksia ([2]) muun muassa Yhdysvaltojen vastaaviin vaatimuksiin ([3]) ja Maailman terveysjärjestön ([4]) ohjearvoihin. Tulokset esitetään seuraavassa taulukossa.

	SO_2, µg/m^3 keskimäärä tunnissa	NO_2, µg/m^3 keskimäärä vuodessa	$PM_{2.5}$, µg/m^3 keskimäärä vuodessa	O_3, µg/m^3 keskimäärä 8 tunnissa
EU	350	40	25	120
Yhdysvallat	200	101	12	150
WHO	500[a]	40	10	100

Huomautus: [a] Luvut ilmaistaan 10 minuutin mittausten keskimääräisinä µg/m^3-pitoisuuksina.

Uudelleentarkastelua valmistellessaan komission yksiköt pyrkivät yhdessä varmistamaan ilmasto- ja energiapolitiikan sekä ilmanlaatupolitiikan välisen johdonmukaisuuden. Uudelleentarkastelun perusteella komissio on hyväksynyt uuden ilmanlaatua koskevan säädöspaketin, johon sisältyy useita toimenpiteitä, joilla vahvistetaan olemassa olevan ilmanlaatua koskevan lainsäädännön noudattamista, sekä ehdotetaan uusia keskipitkän aikavälin tavoitteita ilmansaasteiden vähentämiseksi.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/air/review_air_policy.htm
([2]) Ks. http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:152:0001:0044:FI:PDF.
([3]) http://www.epa.gov/air/criteria.html
([4]) http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/environment-and-health/Housing-and-health/publications/pre-2009/air-quality-guidelines.-global-update-2005.-particulate-matter,-ozone,-nitrogen-dioxide-and-sulfur-dioxide.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013193/13
to the Commission
Eija-Riitta Korhola (PPE)
(20 November 2013)

Subject: Air quality standards in the EU and the United States

Although emissions of many air pollutants have declined substantially in Europe in the past few decades, a study by the European Environment Agency suggests that virtually everyone living in European cities is exposed to dangerously poor quality air, and this can lead, for example, to respiratory illnesses, heart problems and lower life expectancy. Air pollutant concentrations are too high, and pollution of the air due, in particular, to ozone, nitrogen oxides and particulate matter, creates serious health risks.

As many as 430 000 people die prematurely each year in the EU because of air pollutants, with billions of euros being spent on the treatment of the diseases they cause. Air pollutants also cause acid rain, loss of biodiversity and damage to buildings and materials. The causes of air pollution include, for example, the use of fossil fuels in the generation of electricity and in transport, industry and households, and industrial processes, agriculture and waste management.

It follows that action to improve air quality will often also curb climate change, so the benefits derived from measures to control pollution may be enormous. For example, one factor involved in the slowdown in the increase in greenhouses gases in China is thought to be the heavy investment in improvements to air quality. Furthermore, emissions in the United States have seen a rapid fall in recent years, with a corresponding improvement in air quality.

Has the Commission any up-to-date research on how air quality standards in the EU compare to those in the US?

How, in particular, do the major pollutants, such as sulphur, nitrogen, fine particles and ozone compare?

How does the Commission intend to address the problems of air quality, in particular as there are cases where EU measures associated with its policy on climate and energy have, in places, worsened air quality, as a result of fuel choices, for example?

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

In the process of reviewing ([1]) the Thematic Strategy on air pollution, the Commission made a comparison of the EU Ambient Air Quality standards ([2]) with those of the United States ([3]) (US) amongst other countries, and also with the World Health Organisation ([4]) guidelines values. The results are presented in the table below.

	SO_2, µg/m^3 averaged over 1 hour	NO_2, µg/m^3 averaged over one year	$PM_{2.5}$, µg/m^3 averaged over one year	O_3, µg/m^3 averaged over 8 hours
EU	350	40	25	120
US	200	101	12	150
WHO	500[a]	40	10	100

Note: [a] Figure expressed as concentrations in µg/m^3 averaged over 10 minutes.

When preparing the review, the Commission's services have worked together to ensure consistency between policies on climate & energy as well as air quality. As a result of the review, the Commission has adopted a new Air Quality package, including a set of measures that set out the pathway to compliance with existing air quality legislation and propose new medium-term objectives for cutting air pollution.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/air/review_air_policy.htm
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:152:0001:0044:EN:PDF
([3]) http://www.epa.gov/air/criteria.html
([4]) http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/environment-and-health/Housing-and-health/publications/pre-2009/air-quality-guidelines.-global-update-2005.-particulate-matter,-ozone,-nitrogen-dioxide-and-sulfur-dioxide

(Leagan Gaeilge)

Ceist i gcomhair freagra scríofa E-013194/13
chuig an gCoimisiún
Liam Aylward (ALDE)
(20 Samhain 2013)

Ábhar: An Treoir maidir le Sábháilteacht Bréagán

Tá thart ar 80 milliún leanbh faoi 14 bliana d'aois san AE. D'fhéadfadh bréagáin nach gcloíonn le caighdeáin sábháilteachta dochar a dhéanamh don aoisghrúpa leochaileach sin. B'éigean do na Ballstáit Treoir 2009/48 maidir le Sábháilteacht Bréagán a thrasuíomh sa dlí náisiúnta roimh 20 Eanáir 2011. An bhféadfadh an Coimisiún eolas a thabhairt maidir lena athbhreithniú ar fhorfheidhmiú na Treorach agus cineálacha nua bréagán agus ábhair agus próisis déantúsaíochta á bhforbairt go leanúnach?

Tháinig forálacha na Treorach i dtaca le substaintí ceimiceacha i mbréagáin i bhfeidhm ar an 20 Iúil 2013. Cad atá déanta chun a áirithiú nach gcuirfear na bréagáin sin ina bhfuil substaintí ceimiceacha contúirteacha ar díol roimh an dáta sin sna siopaí? An bhféadfadh an Coimisiún cur síos a dhéanamh ar fhorfheidhmiú na bhforálacha i dtaca le substaintí ceimiceacha i mbréagáin sna Ballstáit?

Freagra ón gCoimisinéir Tajani thar ceann an Choimisiúin
(10 Eanáir 2014)

Chuir na Ballstáit uile bearta trasuímh maidir le Treoir 2009/48/CE in iúl ([1]). Le hAirteagal 48 den Treoir ceanglaítear ar na Ballstáit tuairisc a chur chuig an gCoimisiún ar a chur i bhfeidhm, ina bhfuil meastóireacht ar an staid a bhaineann le sábháilteacht bréagán agus ar éifeachtacht na Treorach. Tá an chéad tuarascáil le teacht faoin 20 Iúil 2014. Mar sin féin, toisc go leagann an Treoir síos ceanglais ghinearálta sábháilteachta, seachas cineálacha bréagán, ábhair agus próisis monaraíochta a shonrú, tá sé feistithe chun aghaidh a thabhairt ar chineálacha nua bréagán, ábhar agus próiseas déantúsaíochta.

Cuireann Airteagal 53(2) den Treoir ceanglas ar Bhallstáit go gceadóidh siad bréagáin a chur ar fáil ar an margadh, a cuireadh ar fáil ar an margadh den chéad uair roimh an 20 Iúil 2013, má chomhlíonann siad ceanglais cheimiceacha Threoir 88/378/CÉ ([2]).

Is cúram de chuid na mBallstát sa chéad áit é forfheidhmiú dhlí an Aontais. Ba chóir go mbeadh cur i láthair ar ghníomhaíochtaí faireachais margaidh a dhéanann gach Ballstát sna tuarascálacha thuasluaite ó na Ballstáit.

([1]) Treoir 2009/48/CE ó Pharlaimint na hEorpa agus ón gComhairle an 18 Meitheamh 2009 maidir le sábháilteacht bréagán, IO L 30.6.2009, lch. 1.

([2]) Treoir 88/378/CE ó Pharlaimint na hEorpa agus ón gComhairle an 18 Meitheamh 2009 maidir le comhfhogasú dhlíthe na mBallstát a bhaineann le sábháilteacht bréagán, IO L 187, 16.7.1988, lch. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013194/13
to the Commission
Liam Aylward (ALDE)
(20 November 2013)

Subject: Directive on the safety of toys

There are approximately 80 million children under the age of 14 in the EU. Toys that do not comply with safety standards may damage this vulnerable age group. Member States were obliged to transpose Directive 2009/48/EC on the safety of toys into national law by 20 January 2011. Could the Commission provide information on its review of the implementation of the directive as new types of toys and materials and manufacturing processes are being continually developed?

On 20 July 2013 the directive's provisions with regard to chemical substances in toys came into force. What has been done to ensure that toys which contain dangerous chemicals have not been put on sale before that date in stores? Could the Commission describe the enforcement of provisions relating to chemical substances in toys in Member State?

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

All Member States have notified transposition measures for Directive 2009/48/EC ([1]). Article 48 of the directive requires Member States to send a report to the Commission on its application, containing an evaluation of the situation concerning toy safety and of the directive's effectiveness. The first report is due by 20 July 2014. Nevertheless, as the directive lays down general and particular safety requirements, rather than specifying toy types, materials and manufacturing process, it is equipped to address new types of toys, materials and manufacturing processes.

Article 53(2) of the directive requires Member States to allow the making available on the market of toys, first made available on the market before 20 July 2013, that comply with the chemical requirements of Directive 88/378/EEC ([2]).

Enforcement of Union law is in the first place a task of the Member States. The aforementioned Member States' reports should contain a presentation of the market surveillance activities performed by each Member State.

([1]) Directive 2009/48/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 June 2009 on the safety of toys, OJ L 30.6.2009, p. 1.
([2]) Council Directive 88/378/EEC of 3 May 1988 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States concerning the safety of toys, OJ L 187, 16.7.1988, p. 1.

(Leagan Gaeilge)

Ceist i gcomhair freagra scríofa E-013195/13
chuig an gCoimisiún
Liam Aylward (ALDE)
(20 Samhain 2013)

Ábhar: Cúrsaí sábháilteachta i gcás bréagáin a allmhairítear

Tá bréagáin a allmhairíodh ó thríú tír ag roinnt mhaith den 80 milliún leanbh atá san AE. An bhféadfadh an Coimisiún eolas a thabhairt maidir lena bhfuil á dhéanamh chun a chinntiú go gcomhlíonann bréagáin a dhéantar i dtíortha lasmuigh de AE riachtanais sábháilteachta agus go gcloíonn siad le forálacha na Treorach maidir le Sábháilteacht Bréagán?

An 25 Deireadh Fómhair 2012, shínigh an tÚdarás um Shábháilteacht Táirgí Bia agus Tomhaltais san Ísiltír agus an tArd-Riarachán Cáilíochta, Maoirseachta agus Coraintín sa tSín comhaontú maidir le cúrsaí comhoibrithe i dtaca le sábháilteacht bréagán. Leis an gcomhaontú sin, tiocfaidh laghdú ar an méid bréagán nach gcomhlíonann riachtanais sábháilteachta a thagann isteach san AE trí chalafort Rotterdam, an calafort idirnáisiúnta is tábhachtaí atá againn san AE. An bhfuil sé i gceist ag an gCoimisiún comhaontuithe cosúla a chur i bhfeidhm leis an tSín do chalafoirt idirnáisiúnta eile AE? An bhféadfadh an Coimisiún eolas a thabhairt freisin faoin bhféidearthacht a bhainfeadh le comhchóras rialaithe agus caighdeáin do bhréagáin a chur i bhfeidhm sa tSín agus san AE araon, agus i dtíortha eile freisin ina mbíonn bréagáin á ndéanamh ar scála réasúnta suntasach?

Freagra ón gCoimisinéir Tajani thar ceann an Choimisiúin
(3 Feabhra 2014)

Is faoi údaráis na mBallstát um fhaireachas margaidh atá sé a áirithiú go bhfuil bréagáin ó thíortha taobh amuigh den AE ach a chuirtear ar fáil ar mhargadh an AE i gcomhréir leis na ceanglais sábháilteachta is infheidhme ([1]). Aon bheart a dhéantar maidir le bréagáin a bhfuil priacal ag baint leo, ní mór é a chur in iúl do RAPEX, an córas mearmhalartaithe faisnéise atá á bhainistiú ag an gCoimisiún ([2]).

Leanann an Coimisiún go dlúth an Comhaontú Comhair idir an tSín agus an Ísiltír maidir le sábháilteacht bréagán agus tacaíonn sé freisin le rannpháirtíocht naoi stát eile (idir Bhallstáit agus stáit de chuid an LEE) ([3]) sa tionscnamh sin trí 70% dá gcostais a íoc, is é sin thart ar 300,000 EUR idir mí Iúil 2013 agus Iúil 2015. Is é an aidhm fhoriomlán go mbeifear in ann na modhanna oibre tástáilte agus na prótacail a forbraíodh in éineacht le húdaráis na Síne a chur i bhfeidhm i mBallstáit eile.

Ós rud é gur ón tSín is mó a allmhairítear na bréagáin atá ar fáil ar mhargadh an AE, tá an Coimisiún ag obair i ndlúthchomhar leis an tSín ó 2006, faoi threoirlíne le haghaidh gníomhú comhair chun sábháilteacht na mbréagán a thagann isteach san Eoraip ón tSín a neartú. Cuireadh an treoirlíne sin i gcrích le hÚdarás Riaracháin Ginearálta na Síne um Cháilíocht, Faireachán, Cigireacht agus Coraintín (AQSIQ) agus tá sé d'aidhm aici ardleibhéal sábháilteacha a bhaint amach do bhréagáin a tháirgtear sa tSín. Faoin treoirlíne sin, malartaíodh faisnéis faoi rialacha agus caighdeáin sábháilteachta go rialta agus reáchtáladh seimineáir faoi shábháilteacht bréagán agus cúrsaí oiliúna do lucht foirne AQSIQ chun gníomhaíochtaí forfheidhmithe a fheabhsú ag an bhfoinse. Faoi chóras 'RAPEX-an tSín', tugtar sonraí iomlána do AQSIQ faoi fhógraí RAPEX maidir le bréagáin a táirgeadh sa tSín agus sa dóigh sin is féidir le AQSIQ beart a dhéanamh i gcoinne na mbréagán sin ag an bhfoinse. Déantar gníomhaíochtaí AQSIQ a dhoiciméadú i dtuarascálacha ráithiúla aiseolais.

Níl aon treoirlínte tugtha i gcrích ag an gCoimisiún le haon tíortha eile go fóill féin.

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[1] Treoir 2009/48/CE ó Pharlaimint na hEorpa agus ón gComhairle an 18 Meitheamh 2009 maidir le sábháilteacht bréagán, IO L 30.6.2009, lch. 1.
[2] http://www.ec.europa.eu/rapex
[3] An Bheilg, Poblacht na Seice, an Danmhairg, an Íoslainn, an Laitvia, an Liotuáin, an Pholainn, an Spáinn agus an Ríocht Aontaithe.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013195/13
to the Commission
Liam Aylward (ALDE)
(20 November 2013)

Subject: Safety of imported toys

Toys imported from third countries fall into the hands of a substantial number of the EU's 80 million children. Could the Commission provide information on what it is doing to ensure that toys manufactured in countries outside the EU comply with safety requirements and with the provisions of the Toy Safety Directive?

On 25 September 2012, the Dutch Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority and China's General Administration of Quality, Supervision and Quarantine signed an agreement on cooperation in the field of toy safety. This agreement will result in the reduction of toys not complying with safety requirements arriving into the EU via the port of Rotterdam, the most important international seaport in the EU. Does the Commission intend to conclude similar agreements with China in relation to other international EU ports? Could the Commission provide information on the possibility of introducing a common system of control and standards for toys in both China and the EU, as well as in other countries which manufacture toys on a reasonably substantial scale?

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

Ensuring that toys from non-EU countries placed on the EU market comply with applicable safety requirements ([1]) is the role of Member State market surveillance authorities. Any measure on toys presenting a risk must be notified to the RAPEX rapid information exchange system managed by the Commission ([2]).

The Commission closely follows the bilateral Chinese-Dutch cooperation agreement on toy safety and also supports the involvement of nine other Member States and EEA States ([3]) in this initiative, covering 70% of their costs, some 300 000 EUR between July 2013 and July 2015. The common aim is that the tested working methods and protocols developed together with Chinese authorities can also be applied in other Member States.

Since toys on the EU market are mostly imported from China, the Commission is working closely with China since 2006, under a 'Guideline for action on cooperation for strengthening EU-China toys safety', concluded with China's General Administration of Quality, Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine (AQSIQ) and aiming to achieve a high level of safety of toys produced in China. Under this guideline, regular information exchanges on toy safety rules and standards have taken place as well as toy safety seminars and training of AQSIQ staff to improve enforcement activities at source. The 'RAPEX-China system' provides full details of RAPEX notifications on China-produced toys to AQSIQ enabling them to take action against such toys on the ground. Regular quarterly feedback reports document AQSIQ's activities.

The Commission has not concluded guidelines with other countries for the time being.

([1]) Directive 2009/48/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 June 2009 on the safety of toys, OJ L 170, 30.6.2009, p. 1.
([2]) http://www.ec.europa.eu/rapex
([3]) Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Spain and the United Kingdom.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-013196/13
à Comissão
Edite Estrela (S&D)
(20 de novembro de 2013)

Assunto: Reforma e posterior contratação pela Comissão do seu representante na troika em Portugal

Foi veiculada pela imprensa portuguesa a notícia da reforma do representante da Comissão na troika, que acompanha a aplicação do Memorando de Entendimento (MoU) em Portugal, e a sua contratação como «conselheiro especial» da Comissão para a mesma função.

Com a nova situação contratual, o ex-representante da Comissão passa a acumular a pensão por aposentação com a retribuição decorrente do novo estatuto.

No processo de avaliação do MoU, o ex-representante da Comissão tem defendido o aumento da idade de reforma e o corte nas pensões e subsídios, precisamente o oposto do que usufrui.

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Quais os critérios objetivos fixados pela Comissão que determinaram esta situação?

2. Se a Comissão precisava do funcionário, por que razão autorizou a sua aposentação?

3. Tenciona a Comissão aprovar legislação aplicável aos seus funcionários que impeça a acumulação da reforma com a remuneração de trabalho no mesmo organismo a que pertencia?

4. A Comissão não acha que este tipo de práticas lhe retira autoridade moral para exigir tantos sacrifícios aos portugueses?

Resposta dada por Maroš Šefčovič em nome da Comissão
(6 de fevereiro de 2014)

Em primeiro lugar, a Comissão gostaria de esclarecer que o seu ex-representante na troika, não foi contratado, após a reforma, como conselheiro especial para desempenhar a «mesma função». Enquanto conselheiro especial, trabalha para um grupo de apoio criado para ajudar Portugal a aplicar o seu programa de ajustamento (e, em especial, para promover modos eficientes de cooperação entre Portugal e os serviços da Comissão).

O funcionário em questão reformou-se em 2013 em conformidade com as normas aplicáveis nesse ano. Atendendo à sua experiência específica, foi posteriormente selecionado como conselheiro especial. É de assinalar que, nessa qualidade, não adquiriu direitos de pensão adicionais nem aufere um salário fixo, mas sim um emolumento por cada dia efetivo de trabalho. Mesmo tendo em conta estes emolumentos, o seu rendimento total proveniente de fundos da UE é mais baixo do que a remuneração que receberia enquanto funcionário no ativo.

É igualmente digno de nota que, na sequência de uma proposta da Comissão, foi entretanto adotada uma grande reforma do Estatuto dos Funcionários da União Europeia. Esta reforma entrou em vigor a 1 de janeiro de 2014. Inclui — além da redução de pessoal de 5 % num período de cinco anos, do congelamento dos salários durante dois anos, da semana de trabalho de 40 horas e de impostos mais altos — uma reforma do regime de pensões, com o aumento da idade da reforma para os 66 anos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013196/13
to the Commission
Edite Estrela (S&D)
(20 November 2013)

Subject: Retirement and subsequent recruitment by the Commission of its Troika representative in Portugal

According to reports in the Portuguese press, the Commission's representative in the Troika, who monitors implementation of the memorandum of understanding (MoU) in Portugal, has retired and been subsequently taken on as the Commission's 'special adviser' to carry out the same task.

His new contractual situation means that the former Commission representative is accruing a retirement pension while being paid in his new role.

In his assessment of the MoU, the former Commission representative advocated increasing the retirement age and cutting pensions and allowances, in direct contrast to his own situation.

1. On the basis of which objective criteria set by the Commission has this situation come about?

2. If the Commission needed the official, why did it let him retire?

3. Does the Commission intend to adopt legislation applicable to its officials, preventing them from accruing retirement benefits while being paid for work in the same organisation they used to belong to?

4. Does the Commission not think that practices such as this mean that it has no moralauthority to ask the Portuguese people to make so many sacrifices?

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

In the first place, the Commission would like to clarify that the former Commission representative in the Troika has, following his retirement, not been engaged as special adviser in order to carry out the 'same task'. As special adviser, he works for a support group which has been set up in order to assist Portugal in the implementation of its adjustment programme (and in particular to allow for efficient cooperation processes between Portugal and the Commission services).

The official retired in 2013 in accordance with the then applicable rules. In view of his specific experience, he was subsequently selected as special adviser. It must be underlined that, as special adviser, he does not acquire any additional pension rights and that he does not receive a fixed salary, but a fee for each day effectively worked. Even taking account of these fees, his total income from EU sources is lower than the remuneration that he would receive as official in active service.

It should also be noted that, following a Commission proposal, a major reform of the Staff Regulations of officials of the European Union has in the meantime been adopted. This reform entered into force on 1 January 2014. It includes — in addition to a 5% staff cut over five years, a two-year freeze of salary, a 40-hour working week and higher taxes — also a pension reform with an increase of the pension age to 66 years.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013197/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(20 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Ley de Evaluación Ambiental

Unas enmiendas —número 306 y 307— presentadas al texto de la Ley de Evaluación Ambiental remitido al Senado español por el actual partido en el gobierno que, no es baladí, gobierna con mayoría absoluta, permitirán, en caso de ser aprobadas, que el MAMA —Ministerio de Agricultura y Medio Ambiente— autorice transferencias de agua entre cuencas sin debate previo y sin necesidad de contar, como hasta ahora, con la autorización de las comunidades autónomas.

Dichas enmiendas no autorizan la construcción de las infraestructuras necesarias para conectar cuencas, pero sí eliminan controles y garantías que hacían muy complicado transferir agua de una cuenca a otra salvo en situaciones excepcionales ([1]).

A la luz de lo anterior y teniendo en cuenta la Directiva marco sobre el agua (2000/60/CE), y en particular los artículos 4 y 13, y el Anexo V:

1. ¿Tiene la Comisión conocimiento de dichas enmiendas?

2. ¿Cree la Comisión que dichas enmiendas son la antesala a la realización de los trasvases de agua entre cuencas que no se pudieron llevar a cabo en el pasado?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013198/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(20 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Ley de Evaluación Ambiental II

Según se desprende del informe jurídico elaborado por la fundación Nueva Cultura del Agua, Seo/Birdlife, Ecologistas en Acción y la Red del Tajo, a partir de ahora sería posible que con el pago de una tasa se pudieran hace trasvases de agua entre cuencas ([2]).

Unas enmiendas —números 306 y 307— presentadas al texto de ley de Evaluación Ambiental remitido en el Senado español por el actual partido en el gobierno que, no es baladí, gobierna con absoluta mayoría, permitirán, si se aprueban, que el MAMA — Ministerio de Agricultura y Medio Ambiente— autorice transferencias de agua entre cuencas sin debate previo y sin necesidad de contar, como hasta ahora, con la autorización de las Comunidades Autónomas.

A la luz de lo anterior y teniendo en cuenta la Directiva 2011/92/EU y la Directiva del Consejo 92/43/EEC,

1. ¿Cuál es la razón que ha esgrimido el Gobierno del Reino de España ante la Comisión con referencia a dicho repentino cambio de ley, cuya consecuencia es que sin trámite legislativo ni debate alguno se puedan hacer trasvases del río Ebro o del río Xúcar?

2. ¿Cree la Comisión que las mencionadas enmiendas facilitan futuros trasvases de agua entre cuencas?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013199/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(20 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Ley de Evaluación Ambiental III

Unas enmiendas —números 306 y 307— presentadas en el texto de Ley de Evaluación Ambiental remitido al Senado español por el actual partido en el gobierno que, no es baladí, gobierna con absoluta mayoría, si son aprobadas, permitirán que el Ministerio de Agricultura y Medio Ambiente autorice transferencias de agua entre cuencas sin debate previo y sin necesidad de contar, como hasta ahora, con la autorización de las Comunidades Autónomas.

([1]) http://xuquerviu.blogspot.be/2013/11/xuquer-viu-alerta-junt-altres.html
([2]) http://www.levante-emv.com/comunitat-valenciana/2013/11/13/enmiendas-pp-rescatan-trasvases-contar/1050395.html

Según varias organizaciones ecologistas, dicha Ley de Evaluación Ambiental, que fue aprobada hace unos días por el Congreso de los Diputados, tendrá que ser modificada en menos de dos años para incorporar las nuevas directrices de la Directiva europea en materia de evaluación ambiental ([3]).

¿Cree la Comisión que mediante la aprobación de dichas enmiendas se profundiza en las medidas necesarias para evitar el deterioro de los hábitats y los graves problemas de las especies de fauna y flora que los habitan?

Respuesta conjunta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión

(17 de enero de 2014)

La Comisión ha tenido noticia de las recientes modificaciones legales a las que se hace referencia en la pregunta escrita a través de la prensa española y de comunicaciones de ONG de protección del medio ambiente. La Comisión preguntará a las autoridades españolas sobre la compatibilidad de las nuevas normas legales con la Directiva 2000/60/CE ([4]) (Directiva marco del agua), la Directiva 2011/92/UE ([5]) (Directiva EIA) y la Directiva 92/43/CEE ([6]) (Directiva de los hábitats).

([3]) http://www.europapress.es/epsocial/ong-y-asociaciones/noticia-ong-ambientales-advierten-ley-evaluacion-ambiental-tendra-ser-modificada-menos-dos-anos-20131030181201.html

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

([5]) Directiva 2011/92/UE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 13 de diciembre de 2011, relativa a la evaluación de las repercusiones de determinados proyectos públicos y privados sobre el medio ambiente (DO L 26 de 28.1.2012).

([6]) Directiva 92/43/CEE del Consejo, de 21 de mayo de 1992, relativa a la conservación de los hábitats naturales y de la fauna y flora silvestres (DO L 206 de 22.7.1992).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013197/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(20 November 2013)

Subject: Environmental Assessment Act

Certain amendments — numbers 306 and 307 — presented in the text of the Environmental Assessment Act, sent to the Spanish Senate by the party currently governing with an absolute majority — not an insignificant point –, if approved, will allow the Ministry of Agriculture and the Environment to authorise water transfers between river basins without prior debate and without authorisation, as required up to now, from the autonomous communities.

These amendments do not authorise construction of the infrastructure needed to connect river basins, but they do eliminate checks and guarantees that made it very difficult to transfer water from one basin to another except in exceptional situations. ([1])

In light of the above, and taking into account the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC), particularly Articles 4 and 13 and Annex V thereof:

1. Is the Commission aware of these amendments?

2. Does the Commission believe that these amendments open the way to carrying out water transfers between basins that were not previously possible?

Question for written answer E-013198/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(20 November 2013)

Subject: Environmental Assessment Act II

According to the legal report prepared by the New Water Culture Foundation, SEO/Birdlife, Ecologists in Action and the Tajo River Network, as of now it will be possible, upon payment of a fee, to make water transfers between river basins. ([2])

Certain amendments — numbers 306 and 307 — presented in the text of the Environmental Assessment Act, sent to the Spanish Senate by the party currently governing with an absolute majority — not an insignificant point –, if approved, will allow the Ministry of Agriculture and the Environment to authorise water transfers between river basins without prior debate and without authorisation, as required up to now, from the autonomous communities.

In view of the above, and taking into account Directive 2011/92/EU and Council Directive 92/43/EEC:

1. What reason has the Spanish Government given to the Commission for such a sudden change to the law, the consequence of which is that transfers can be made from the River Ebro and the River Xúcar without any legislative process or debate?

2. Does the Commission believe that these amendments will facilitate future water transfers between river basins?

Question for written answer E-013199/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(20 November 2013)

Subject: Environmental Assessment Act III

Certain amendments — numbers 306 and 307 — presented in the text of the Environmental Assessment Act, sent to the Spanish Senate by the party currently governing with an absolute majority — not an insignificant point –, if approved, will allow the Ministry of Agriculture and the Environment to authorise water transfers between river basins without prior debate and without authorisation, as required up to now, from the autonomous communities.

([1]) http://xuquerviu.blogspot.be/2013/11/xuquer-viu-alerta-junt-altres.html
([2]) http://www.levante-emv.com/comunitat-valenciana/2013/11/13/enmiendas-pp-rescatan-trasvases-contar/1050395.html

According to several environmental organisations, the Environmental Assessment Act, passed a few days ago by the Spanish Congress, will have to be amended in less than two years to incorporate the new guidelines arising from the EU Directive on environmental assessment ([3]).

Does the Commission believe that the adoption of these amendments represents progress in taking the measures needed to prevent the deterioration of habitats and the serious problems faced by the flora and fauna species that inhabit them?

Joint answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission

(17 January 2014)

The Commission has been made aware of the recent legal modifications referred to in the written question through the Spanish press and communications from environmental NGOs. The Commission will inquire Spanish authorities about the compatibility of the new legal provisions with Directive 2000/60/EC ([4]) (Water Frame Work Directive), Directive 2011/92/EU ([5]) (EIA Directive) and Directive 92/43/EEC ([6]) (Habitats Directive).

([3]) http://www.europapress.es/epsocial/ong-y-asociaciones/noticia-ong-ambientales-advierten-ley-evaluacion-ambiental-tendra-ser-modificada-menos-dos-anos-20131030181201.html

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

([5]) Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment OJ L 26, 28/01/2012.

([6]) Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora OJ L 206, 22/07/1992.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-013200/13
à la Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(20 novembre 2013)

Objet: AOP Roncal

Par acte du 1er mars 2013, le syndicat AOP Ossau-Iraty (France — Pays Basque et Béarn) a déposé auprès de l'Institut national de l'origine et de la qualité (INAO), situé à Paris, une «Déclaration d'opposition motivée» à la demande de modification du cahier des charges de l'AOP Roncal (Espagne — Navarre).

La modification envisagée prévoit en effet d'autoriser le lait cru de brebis de race Assaf (race exogène à la zone géographique de l'appellation) pour la fabrication des fromages reconnus sous l'AOP Roncal. Le cahier des charges actuel prévoit, pour sa part, que seul le lait de brebis des races Lacha ou Rasa (races traditionnelles de la Navarre) peut être utilisé.

Autoriser une telle modification altérerait donc le lien entre le produit et sa zone géographique de production.

Dans ces conditions, la Commission a-t-elle l'intention de s'opposer à la demande de modification du cahier des charges de l'AOP Roncal, en préservant par là-même la raison d'être des appellations d'origine contrôlée?

Réponse donnée par M. Cioloș au nom de la Commission
(21 janvier 2014)

Les services de la Commission ont reçu une déclaration d'opposition de la part des autorités françaises dans les délais prévus par le règlement (UE) n° 1151/2012 ([1]). Cette déclaration a été jugée recevable et a donc été transmise aux autorités espagnoles. Les services de la Commission ont invité les autorités espagnoles à procéder à des consultations avec les autorités françaises.

Par lettre datée du 4 septembre 2013, les autorités espagnoles ont informé les services de la Commission qu'aucun accord n'avait pu être dégagé à l'issue de ces consultations.

Les services de la Commission analysent actuellement les informations présentées par les autorités françaises et espagnoles. Avant de se prononcer, la Commission recueillera l'avis du comité de la politique de qualité des produits agricoles.

([1]) JO L 343 du 14.12.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013200/13
to the Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(20 November 2013)

Subject: Roncal Protected Designation of Origin (PDO)

On 1 March 2013, the Ossau-Iraty PDO syndicate (France — Basque Country and Bearn) lodged a 'motivated statement of objection' at the Paris-based Institut national de l'origine et de la qualité (INAO) to the request to modify the specifications for the Roncal PDO (Spain — Navarre).

The proposed modification entails authorising the use of raw ewe's milk from the Assaf race, which is exogenous to the geographic area of the designation, to produce cheeses labelled Roncal PDO. The current specifications stipulate that only ewe's milk from the Lacha or Rasa races, which are traditional in Navarre, can be used.

To authorise this modification would therefore adversely affect the link between the product and its geographical area of production.

In these circumstances, does the Commission intend to oppose the request to modify the specifications for the Roncal PDO and thus preserve the rationale behind registered destinations of origin?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(21 January 2014)

The services of the Commission received a declaration of opposition from the French authorities within the required time provided by Regulation (EU) No1151/2012 [1] . This declaration was deemed admissible and was therefore forwarded to the Spanish authorities. The Commission services invited them to hold consultations with the French authorities.

The Spanish authorities informed the Commission services by letter, dated 4th September 2013, that no agreement could be found at the end of these consultations.

The Commission services are now in the process of analysing the information presented by both the French and Spanish authorities. Before reaching a decision, the Commission shall seek the opinion of the Agricultural Product Quality Policy Committee.

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(1) OJ L 343 du 14.12.2012.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013201/13
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(20 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Moria degli uccelli catturati con le reti in deroga alla direttiva 2009/147/CE e mancanza di attuazione di metodi alternativi alle deroghe previste dall'art.9 della direttiva

In relazione alla propria interrogazione del 4 ottobre 2013 con oggetto «Cattura di uccelli in Veneto con mezzi vietati dalla direttiva Uccelli» e alla risposta della Commissione ([1]) del 15.11.2013 lo scrivente evidenzia quanto segue.

Molti uccelli selvatici catturati in deroga alla direttiva 2009/147/CE muoiono durante le prime ore di detenzione a causa dello stress causato dal mezzo di cattura, le reti, e dal contatto con l'uomo. In merito si invita la Commissione a visionare il filmato realizzato da ignoti in un centro di distribuzione dei richiami vivi ([2]) dal quale risulta che alcuni soggetti di Tordo sassello, Tordo bottaccio e Merlo, detenuti tra l'altro in singole cellette privi di acqua e cibo, erano deceduti dopo la cattura.

Si evidenzia inoltre che la delibera del 28 giugno 2013 ([3]), con la quale la Regione Veneto ha autorizzato l'esercizio di ben 37 impianti con reti per la cattura di 14.000 uccelli a fini di richiamo per la stagione 2013/2014, a differenza delle delibere delle stagioni precedenti, nelle sue premesse non ha più citato il «Progetto Turdus». Questo progetto prevedeva una ricerca sperimentale per l'attività di allevamento degli uccelli usati come richiami vivi tesa a dimostrare che la Regione Veneto si impegnava a trovare «altre soluzioni soddisfacenti», così come richiesto dal comma 1 dell'art. 9 della direttiva 2009/147/CE e dall'ISPRA ([4]), che con lettera del 24 maggio 2013 ha dato alla Regione Veneto parere sfavorevole in merito alla cattura in deroga per la stagione 2013/2014 e ha sottolineato la necessità di metodi alternativi alla cattura, quali l'allevamento. L'ente regionale responsabile del progetto, Veneto Agricoltura, in seguito a una richiesta dello scrivente, con lettera del 22.10.2013 ([5]) ha confermato la cessazione del progetto a causa del mancato finanziamento per l'anno 2013. La Regione Veneto pertanto, con la chiusura del progetto, ha cessato ogni attività per mettere in pratica le alternative alle deroghe richieste dalla direttiva 2009/147/CE e dall'ISPRA.

Può la Commissione riferire se la Regione Veneto e le altre regioni italiane che autorizzano la cattura in deroga di uccelli selvatici a fini di richiami vivi comunicano, anche ai fini di cui al comma 4 dell'art.9 della direttiva: a) il numero di uccelli deceduti durante e dopo le operazioni di cattura, appartenenti a specie protette e a specie catturabili, e b) il numero degli uccelli protetti catturati?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(23 gennaio 2014)

Gli Stati membri non sono tenuti a comunicare alla Commissione il numero di uccelli che muoiono durante o dopo la cattura, né il numero di uccelli protetti catturati accidentalmente in seguito a delibere di autorizzazione della cattura di uccelli selvatici da utilizzare come richiami vivi in deroga alla direttiva 2009/147/CE concernente la conservazione degli uccelli selvatici ([6]).

([1]) Risposta con numero E-011412/2013.
([2]) Link filmato: http://youtu.be/uN1DSnjNiA8
([3]) Delibera della Giunta Regionale numero 1099.
([4]) Istituto Superiore per la Protezione e la Ricerca Ambientale.
([5]) Lettera con protocollo numero 29420.
([6]) GU L 20 del 26.1.2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013201/13
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(20 November 2013)

Subject: Death of large quantities of birds caught with nets by way of derogation from Directive 2009/147/EC and failure to apply alternative methods to the derogations provided for in Article 9 of the directive

Further to my written question of 4 October 2013 entitled 'Capture of birds in the Veneto Region using methods prohibited under the Birds Directive' and to the Commission's answer ([1]) of 15 November 2013, I wish to point out the following.

Many wild birds caught by way of derogation from Directive 2009/147/EC die during their first few hours in captivity from the stress caused by the method of capture — nets — and by contact with humans. On this point, the Commission is asked to watch the video footage shot anonymously inside a live-decoy distribution centre ([2]). The footage shows that a number of birds belonging to the redwing, song thrush and blackbird species, which were kept, *inter alia*, in small individual cells without food or water, died after being caught.

Furthermore, the decision by the Veneto Region of 28 June 2013 ([3]) authorising the use of no fewer than 37 net installations to catch 14 000 birds for use as decoys during the 2013/2014 season, unlike the decisions of previous seasons, failed to mention the 'Turdus project' in its preamble. The aim of this project was to carry out experimental research into the breeding of birds used as live decoys in order to show that the Veneto Region was striving to find 'other satisfactory solutions', as required by Article 9(1) of Directive 2009/147/EC and by ISPRA ([4]). In a letter of 24 May 2013, ISPRA gave the Veneto Region a negative opinion regarding captures by way of derogation from the Birds Directive for the 2013/2014 season and stressed the need for alternative methods to capture, such as breeding. In a letter of 22 October 2013 ([5]) sent in response to a request of mine, the regional body in charge of the project, Veneto Agricoltura (Veneto Agriculture), confirmed that the project had ended due to a lack of funding for 2013. With the project aborted, the Veneto Region has therefore put a stop to all the efforts to implement alternatives to the derogations, as required by Directive 2009/147/EC and by ISPRA.

Can the Commission say whether the Veneto Region and the other Italian regions that permit wild birds to be caught for use as live decoys by way of derogation from the Birds Directive disclose the following information, including for the purposes referred to in Article 9(4) of the directive: a) the number of birds belonging to protected species and species that may be captured that die during or after capture, and b) the number of protected birds caught?

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

The Member States are not required to report to the Commission the number of birds that die during or after capture, nor the number of protected birds accidentally caught as a result of decisions to authorise trapping of wild birds to be used as live decoys by way of derogation from Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds ([6]).

([1]) Answer under document number E-011412/2013.
([2]) Link to video footage: http://youtu.be/uN1DSnjNiA8
([3]) Decision No 1099 of the Regional Council.
([4]) Institute for Environmental Protection and Research.
([5]) Letter with reference number 29420.
([6]) OJ L 20, 26.1.2010.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013202/13
alla Commissione
Susy De Martini (ECR)
(20 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Sanità: prevenzione quale strumento per alleggerire i bilanci dei sistemi sanitari nazionali

— Le spese dei sistemi sanitari nazionali rappresentano una parte importante dei bilanci pubblici degli Stati membri e si prevede che tali spese cresceranno di un terzo entro il 2060;

— L'Analisi annuale della crescita 2014, che definisce le priorità del Semestre europeo in corso (COM(2013) 0800), raccomanda di riformare i sistemi sanitari degli Stati membri per garantire la loro efficienza e sostenibilità e per assicurare la loro efficacia e adeguatezza a rispondere ai bisogni della popolazione;

— Il documento di lavoro della Commissione «Investire nella Sanità» (SWD(2013)0043) allegato alla Comunicazione «Verso investimenti sociali per la crescita e la coesione» (COM(2013) 0083) stabilisce che investire nella sanità ha il doppio significato di investire in sistemi sanitari sostenibili e migliorare la salute della popolazione;

— In Italia il diabete e l'ipertensione sono due delle malattie che colpiscono maggiormente la popolazione;

— Ad oggi, in Italia queste malattie vengono diagnosticate solo tardivamente e, per la maggior parte dei casi, in pronto soccorso, quando gli effetti dannosi di dette patologie sono già conclamati;

— Per queste malattie la prevenzione è molto importante e, se diagnosticate in tempo, si possono ridurre in modo significativo i costi per il sistema sanitario nazionale oltreché l'incidenza e gli effetti negativi sulla popolazione;

— Investire nello screening preventivo di queste malattie è pertanto di fondamentale importanza.

Alla luce di quanto sopra, si chiede alla Commissione di far sapere:

1. se intende investire nello screening preventivo di diabete e ipertensione negli Stati membri;

2. in caso di risposta affermativa, quali misure intende adottare al fine di migliorare la diagnosi preventiva delle suddette malattie e alleggerire di conseguenza i relativi costi a carico dei sistemi sanitari nazionali;

3. se ha incluso la prevenzione nel pacchetto di riforme suggerite agli Stati membri e, in particolare all'Italia, per migliorare la sostenibilità dei sistemi sanitari nazionali e la salute della popolazione?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(23 gennaio 2014)

La Commissione non intende investire in screening preventivo per il diabete e l'ipertensione negli Stati membri, né adottare misure volte a migliorare la diagnosi precoce del diabete o dell'ipertensione, dato che la fornitura di servizi diagnostici o di screening compete agli Stati membri.

Tuttavia, la Commissione europea cofinanzia nell'ambito del programma di sanità un'azione comune contro le malattie croniche. L'azione comune comprende un pacchetto di lavoro principale dedicato esclusivamente al diabete, e mira a identificare e ad eliminare gli ostacoli che si frappongono alla prevenzione, allo screening e al trattamento del diabete.

Nel 2013, la Commissione ha raccomandato ad Austria, Germania, Finlandia, Lussemburgo e Slovenia di dare maggior risalto alla prevenzione, nel contesto dell'assistenza di lunga durata. All'Italia non è stata rivolta nessuna raccomandazione specifica a questo riguardo.

Nell'ambito di Orizzonte 2020, la Commissione prevede di finanziare la ricerca volta a sviluppare metodi e programmi efficaci di prevenzione e di screening e a migliorare la valutazione della predisposizione alle malattie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013202/13
to the Commission
Susy De Martini (ECR)
(20 November 2013)

Subject: Health: prevention as a means of easing the pressure on national healthcare system budgets

Spending on national healthcare systems accounts for a significant proportion of the Member States' budgets, and is expected to increase by a third by 2060.

The Annual Growth Survey 2014 (COM(2013)0800), which sets out the priorities of the current European Semester, recommends that the Member States reform their healthcare systems in order to guarantee their efficiency and sustainability and to ensure their effectiveness and adequacy in meeting the needs of the population.

The Commission Staff Working Document 'Investing in Health' (SWD(2013)0043) accompanying the communication 'Towards Social Investment for Growth and Cohesion' (COM(2013)0083) states that investing in health means both investing in sustainable health systems and improving the health of the population.

In Italy diabetes and hypertension are two of the most common disorders affecting the population.

Until now, in Italy, these disorders have only been diagnosed at a late stage and in the majority of cases in accident and emergency departments, when they have already caused obvious damage.

Prevention is very important where these disorders are concerned, and if they are diagnosed in time, the costs to the national healthcare system, as well as the negative impact and effects on the population, can be significantly reduced.

Investing in preventive screening for these disorders is therefore vitally important.

1. Does the Commission plan to invest in preventive screening for diabetes and hypertension in the Member States?

2. If so, what measures will it adopt in order to improve the early diagnosis of the above-mentioned disorders and so reduce the cost burden on national healthcare systems?

3. Has it included prevention in the package of reforms recommended to the Member States, and in particular to Italy, so as to improve the sustainability of national healthcare systems and the health of the population?

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

The Commission does not intend to invest in preventive screening for diabetes and hypertension in the Member States or to adopt measures to improve the early diagnosis of diabetes or hypertension as the provision of diagnostic or screening services is within the competence of Member States.

However, the European Commission is co-financing through the health programme a joint action on chronic diseases. This joint action has one core work package dedicated exclusively to diabetes, and aims to identify and address barriers to prevention, screening and treatment of diabetes.

In 2013, the Commission recommended to Austria, Germany, Finland, Luxembourg and Slovenia to put a stronger focus on prevention, in the context of long-term care. No specific recommendation has been addressed to Italy in this respect.

Under Horizon 2020, the Commission foresees to fund research to develop effective prevention and screening methods and programmes and improve the assessment of disease susceptibility.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013203/13
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(20 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Grave inquinamento dell'aria da PM10 e ossidi di azoto e nuovi insediamenti industriali nella zona IT0705 in Valbormida, provincia di Savona, regione Liguria, Italia

Nella zona «Bormida» IT0705 (comuni di Altare, Carcare e Cairo Montenotte, in provincia di Savona) non vengono rispettati i limiti della direttiva 2008/50/CE «Aria» dal 2006 per il valore medio giornaliero di PM10 e dal 2010 per il limite medio annuo di biossido di azoto ([1]). Per il biennio 2006-2007, anche in relazione a questa zona, l'Italia è stata condannata dalla Corte di giustizia europea per violazione della direttiva «Aria» ([2]) per gli elevati livelli di PM10, mentre per gli ossidi di azoto la Commissione europea ha stabilito che la conformità al valore limite dovrà avvenire entro il 1° gennaio 2014 ([3]).

Nella zona IT0705 sono in attività tre vetrerie, una cokeria ed è presente un parco minerario aperto contenente mediamente 400.000 t di carbone.

Solamente il 5 agosto 2013 la Regione Liguria ha deliberato uno stralcio di piano per l'adeguamento delle azioni di risanamento della qualità dell'aria nella zona in questione ([4]). I risultati delle azioni contenute potrebbero però essere vanificati dai nuovi insediamenti industriali autorizzati recentemente nella zona ([5]), nonostante i livelli di inquinamento presenti. Tra gli impianti autorizzati figurano una centrale cogenerativa a biomasse, una centrale termoelettrica a biogas, una cartiera e un impianto per la riattivazione di filtri ai carboni attivi esausti.

Tenendo conto che ulteriori ritardi per ridurre gli inquinanti in questione possono significare un aumento dei danni per la salute umana, nonché per la flora e la fauna esposta, si chiede se, in attesa di poter verificare se il recente stralcio di piano riuscirà a far rientrare i livelli di inquinanti entro quanto stabilito dalla direttiva «Aria», la Commissione non ritenga che in casi come il presente, per il principio di precauzione, sia utile evitare l'autorizzazione di nuove fonti di inquinamento dell'aria.

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(30 gennaio 2014)

La Commissione è a conoscenza dell'attuale situazione di inquinamento dell'aria nella zona «Bormida» IT0705, poiché ogni anno l'Italia presenta alla Commissione i dati di riferimento conformemente alle disposizioni della direttiva 2008/50/CE ([6]) relativa alla qualità dell'aria ambiente e per un'aria più pulita in Europa. L'ultima relazione presentata dall'Italia mostra che i valori limite giornalieri di PM10 ([7]) sono stati superati per 36 giorni, mentre sono stati rispettati i valori limite annui.

Lo Stato membro che dovesse superare uno o più valori limite in zone specifiche ne deve tenere conto prima di autorizzare nuovi insediamenti industriali, così come contemplato dalla direttiva 2010/75/UE ([8]) relativa alle emissioni industriali (prevenzione e riduzione integrate dell'inquinamento). In particolare, gli Stati membri sono tenuti al rispetto degli obblighi di cui all'articolo 18 della direttiva summenzionata, che recita: «qualora una norma di qualità ambientale richieda condizioni più rigorose di quelle ottenibili con le migliori tecniche disponibili, l'autorizzazione contiene misure supplementari, fatte salve le altre misure che possono essere adottate per rispettare le norme di qualità ambientale».

([1]) ARPAL, Valutazione Annuale della Qualità dell'Aria 2011. Disponibile sul link: http://goo.gl/whnveS
([2]) Causa C-68/11 del 16.2.2011, cfr. http://goo.gl/jv7v2J
([3]) Decisione della Commissione C(2012)4524 final del 6.7.2012, cfr. http://goo.gl/xApKNc
([4]) Deliberazione della Giunta Regionale della Liguria n. 1011/2013 del 5.8.2013.
([5]) Cfr. denuncia alla Commissione europea con oggetto «Esposto riguardante criticità ambientali nella zona IT0705» presentata in data 16.6.2013 dall'Associazione WWF Savona.
([6]) GU L 152 dell'11.6.2008.
([7]) Particolato con un diametro inferiore a 10µm.
([8]) GU L 334 del 17.12.2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013203/13
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(20 November 2013)

Subject: Severe air pollution caused by PM10 and oxides of nitrogen and new industrial facilities in zone IT0705 in Val Bormida, in the Province of Savona in the Region of Liguria, Italy

Zone Bormida IT0705 (comprising the municipalities of Altare, Carcare and Cairo Montenotte in the Province of Savona) has failed to comply with the limit values set in the Air Quality Directive (2008/50/EC) for daily PM_{10} averages since 2006, and with the annual average limit value for nitrogen dioxide ([1]) since 2010. The European Court of Justice found Italy in breach of the Air Quality Directive ([2]) during the two-year period 2006-2007 because of the high levels of PM_{10} in that zone, among others, while the Commission has stipulated that Italy must comply with the limit value for oxides of nitrogen by 1 January 2014 ([3]).

In zone IT0705 there are three glassworks, one coking plant and one open mining site containing an average of 400 000 tonnes of coal.

As recently as 5 August 2013, the Region of Liguria approved a specific plan to adjust the air quality improvement measures in the zone in question ([4]). However, the results of the measures contained in the plan could be undermined by the new industrial facilities that have recently been allowed in the zone ([5]), despite the pollution levels there. The facilities given the green light include a biomass cogeneration plant, a biogas thermal power plant, a paper mill and a plant for reactivating spent activated carbon filters.

Further delays in reducing the pollutants in question may cause more harm to human health and to the flora and fauna exposed to them. While we wait to see whether the recent specific plan has succeeded in bringing the pollutant levels within the limits set in the Air Quality Directive, does the Commission not believe that in cases such as this, it would be helpful to apply the precautionary principle so as to stop the green light being given to new sources of air pollution?

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

The Commission is aware of the air pollution situation in air quality zone Bormida IT0705 as Italy submits every year the relevant data to the Commission in line with the requirements of Directive 2008/50/EC ([6]) on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe. The latest report submitted by Italy shows that the daily limit value for PM10 ([7]) was exceeded for 36 days, while the annual limit value was complied with.

In air quality zones where one or more limit values are exceeded, the Member State concerned is under the obligation to take this into account before permitting new industrial activities covered by Directive 2010/75/EU ([8]) on industrial emissions (integrated pollution prevention and control). In particular, they are subject to the obligation laid down in Article 18 of the directive, which reads as follows: 'where an environmental quality standard requires stricter conditions than those achievable by the use of the best available techniques, additional measures shall be included in the permit, without prejudice to other measures which may be taken to comply with environmental quality standards'.

([1]) ARPAL (Regional Environmental Protection Agency of Liguria), Annual Air Quality Assessment 2011. Available at: http://goo.gl/whnveS
([2]) Case C-68/11 of 16 February 2011, see http://goo.gl/jv7v2J
([3]) Commission Decision C(2012) 4524 final of 6 July 2012, see http://goo.gl/xApKNc
([4]) Resolution of the Regional Council of Liguria No 1011/2013 of 5 August 2013.
([5]) See the complaint 'Petition regarding environmental concerns in zone IT0705' lodged with the Commission on 16 June 2013 by WWF Savona.
([6]) OJ L 152, 11.6.2008.
([7]) Particulate matter with a diameter of less than 10µm.
([8]) OJ L 334, 17.12.2010.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-013204/13
aan de Commissie
Patricia van der Kammen (NI)
(20 november 2013)

Betreft: 3 miljard euro onterechte uitkeringen landbouwsubsidies in 2012

Het jaarverslag over de uitvoering van de begroting van de Europese Unie door de Europese Rekenkamer over 2012 ([1]) bevat in hoofdstuk 3 en 4 de uitkomsten van de door de Rekenkamer uitgevoerde onderzoeken met betrekking tot de (betalings)verrichtingen (Landbouw).

In de door de Rekenkamer uitgevoerde onderzoeken werd in 41 % van de steekproefgevallen fouten aangetroffen bij marktondersteuning en rechtstreekse steun en in 63 % van de steekproefgevallen bij plattelandsontwikkeling, milieu, visserij en gezondheid. Uit het jaarverslag blijkt verder dat het totale foutenpercentage de laatste jaren gestegen is. Tevens blijkt dat de Commissie weinig kritisch is ten opzichte van haar eigen rol, de uitkomsten betreffende foutpercentages bagatelliseert, de meetmethoden van de Rekenkamer in twijfel trekt en veel aanbevelingen uit eerdere jaren niet of nauwelijks opvolgt.

Op de totale vastleggingen van 44 685 miljard euro voor marktondersteuning en rechtstreekse steun en van 16 972 miljard euro voor plattelandsontwikkeling, milieu, visserij en gezondheid komt men op een geschat bedrag van ongeveer 3 miljard euro aan onterecht uitgekeerde landbouwsubsidies, oftewel maar liefst 5 %.

1. Is de Commissie op de hoogte van het jaarverslag van de Europese Rekenkamer over 2012[1]?

2. Concludeert de Commissie nu ook eindelijk dat het landbouwbeleid terug moet naar de lidstaten inclusief de bijbehorende middelen, zeker nu blijkt dat de foutenpercentages in de besteding van de landbouwsubsidies alleen maar toenemen? Zo nee, waarom niet?

Antwoord van de heer Cioloș namens de Commissie
(8 januari 2014)

1. De Commissie is op de hoogte van het jaarverslag 2012 van de Rekenkamer. De antwoorden van de Commissie op de opmerkingen van de Rekenkamer zijn in het document opgenomen.

2. Het is de Commissie niet bekend dat de Europese Rekenkamer ooit tot de conclusie is gekomen dat het landbouwbeleid, inclusief de bijbehorende financiële middelen, terug naar de lidstaten moet. Op het gebied van het gemeenschappelijk landbouwbeleid worden de bevoegdheden gedeeld tussen de Europese Unie (EU) en de lidstaten. Het is de speciale bevoegdheid van de wetgever om de fundamentele elementen van het gemeenschappelijk landbouwbeleid te regelen en de politieke besluiten te nemen die vorm geven aan de structuur, de instrumenten en de effecten van dat beleid. In een poging om de foutenpercentages voor landbouw binnen de perken te houden, heeft de Commissie samen met de lidstaten maatregelen genomen en neemt ze nog altijd maatregelen in het kader van de alomvattende actieplannen voor plattelandsontwikkeling, rechtstreekse steun en marktondersteuning. Om de financiële belangen van de EU te beschermen legt de Commissie de lidstaten voor landbouw jaarlijks ook ongeveer één miljard euro aan financiële correcties op omdat de EU-regelgeving niet is nageleefd of de controleprocedures ontoereikend waren. Dit geld wordt teruggestort in de begroting van de EU. Indien hiermee rekening wordt gehouden, blijft het risico voor de landbouwuitgaven binnen de eerste pijler op een aanvaardbaar niveau, d.w.z. onder de materialiteitsdrempel van 2 % van de Europese Rekenkamer. Voor landbouwuitgaven binnen de tweede pijler wordt het begrotingsrisico daardoor aanzienlijk beperkt.

([1]) http://www.eca.europa.eu/Lists/ECADocuments/AR12/AR12_NL.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013204/13
to the Commission
Patricia van der Kammen (NI)
(20 November 2013)

Subject: EUR 3 billion of undue allowances given as farm subsidies in 2012

The Annual Report from the Court of Auditors on the implementation of the 2012 budget of the European Union ([1]) includes in Chapters 3 and 4 the outcomes of the investigations carried out by the Court of Auditors into (payment) transactions (Agriculture).

In the investigations carried out by the Court of Auditors, 41% of the samples were affected by errors in the case of market and direct support, and 63% of the samples had errors in the case of rural development, environment, fisheries and health. The annual report also indicates that the total error rate has risen in the last few years. It also shows that the Commission is not very critical regarding its own role, trivialises the outcomes in terms of error percentages, casts doubt on the measuring methods used by the Court of Auditors, and hardly or does not follow up at all many recommendations from previous years.

Based on the total commitments of EUR 44 685 billion for market and direct support and of EUR 16 972 billion for rural development, environment, fisheries and health, an estimated amount of about EUR 3 billion is arrived at in undue farm subsidies paid, which is at least 5%.

1. Is the Commission au fait with the annual report from the Court of Auditors for 2012([1])?

2. Does the Commission also finally come to the conclusion that agricultural policy needs to be handed back to Member States, including the corresponding funds, as it definitely seems now that the error percentages in the allocation of farm subsidies are only going to rise? If not, why not?

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

1. The Commission is aware of the Court of Auditors' annual report 2012. The Commission's replies to the Court's observations are presented within the document.

2. The Commission is not aware that the European Court of Auditors has ever come to the conclusion that agricultural policy, including the corresponding funds, needs to be handed back to Member States. The common agricultural policy is an area in which competence is shared between the European Union (EU) and the Member States. It is the Legislator's prerogative to regulate its fundamental elements and take the political decisions that shape its structure, instruments and effects. In an effort to contain the error rates for agriculture, the Commission, together with the Member States, has and is in the process of taking actions in the framework of comprehensive action plans for rural development, direct payments and market measures. Moreover, in order to protect the financial interests of the EU, in agriculture, the Commission imposes net financial corrections of around EUR 1 billion per year on Member States because of non-compliance with EU rules or inadequate control procedures. This money is reimbursed to the EU budget. If this is taken into account, the risk for agricultural expenditure under pillar 1 is at a tolerable level (i.e. below the European Court of Auditors' materiality threshold of 2%). For agricultural expenditure under pillar 2, this mitigates the risk for the budget significantly.

([1]) http://www.eca.europa.eu/Lists/ECADocuments/AR12/AR12_EN.pdf

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-013205/13
do Komisji
Janusz Wojciechowski (ECR)
(20 listopada 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Dofinansowanie eksportu wołowiny z Unii Europejskiej

Czy w okresie ostatnich 3 lat Unia Europejska dofinansowywała eksport wołowiny z Unii Europejskiej do krajów trzecich? Jeśli tak, to jaka była kwota tego dofinansowania, jakie państwa członkowskie były największymi beneficjentami tych refundacji, a także na jakie rynki kierowany był eksport objęty tymi refundacjami?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Daciana Cioloşa w imieniu Komisji
(27 stycznia 2014 r.)

Subsydia wywozowe dotyczące wołowiny eksportowanej z Unii Europejskiej do krajów trzecich (refundacje wywozowe), obowiązywały do września 2012 r., a od tego czasu mają one wartość zerową dla wszystkich produktów z wołowiny.

Aby ubiegać się o refundacje wywozowe, eksporter musi najpierw uzyskać pozwolenie na wywóz. W przypadku wołowiny to pozwolenie musi zawierać wskazanie miejsca przeznaczenia wywozu. Wydane pozwolenie jest ważne we wszystkich państwach członkowskich. Po dokonaniu fizycznego wywozu eksporter otrzymuje refundację od krajowych organów państwa członkowskiego, które wydało pozwolenie.

Załączony dokument zawiera przegląd refundacji wypłaconych w ramach subsydiowanego wywozu wołowiny z ostatnich trzech lat GATT (od 1 lipca do 30 czerwca), z wyszczególnieniem państw członkowskich wywozu, miejsc przeznaczenia i wielkości wywozu w tonach. Zawarto w nim również dokładniejszą analizę głównych eksporterów spośród państw członkowskich.

Dane w załączniku pochodzą z rejestru pozwoleń na wywóz. Wskazano państwa członkowskie, w których złożono wnioski o pozwolenia, gdzie zostały one udzielone i gdzie wypłacono refundacje. Produkty z wołowiny mogą pochodzić z innych państw członkowskich niż państwo eksportera, a wywóz może odbywać się przez terytorium trzeciego państwa członkowskiego, dlatego zestawione dane mają charakter orientacyjny, podobnie jak podane miejsca przeznaczenia, jako że pozwolenia umożliwiają wywóz do innych kwalifikujących się miejsc przeznaczenia, przy czym korekta refundacji następuje w trakcie wypłaty. Kwota refundacji w euro jest wylicza się na podstawie wniosku o pozwolenie na wywóz: mnożąc wielkość wywozu przez kwotę refundacji obowiązującą dla danego produktu w danym czasie.

W danych tych mogą występować rozbieżności z wielkością fizycznego wywozu, ale wyodrębnienie wywozu refundowanego z podanej przez służby celne ogólnej wielkości fizycznie dokonanego wywozu możliwe jest tylko na podstawie pozwoleń.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013205/13
to the Commission
Janusz Wojciechowski (ECR)
(20 November 2013)

Subject: Subsidies for beef exports from the European Union

Has the European Union provided any subsidies for beef exports from the European Union to third countries over the past three years? If so, what was the value of these subsidies, which Member States were the biggest beneficiaries and to which markets were the relevant goods exported?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(27 January 2014)

Export subsidies for the export of beef products (export refunds) have been granted until September 2012, and are set at zero for all beef products since that date.

In order to receive an export refund, the exporter must first request an export licence. In the case of beef products, this licence should indicate the destination. Once issued, the export licence is valid in all the Member States. After physical export has taken place, the refund is paid to the exporter by the national authorities of the Member State where the licence was issued.

The attached file gives an overview, for the last three GATT years (1 July — 30 June) with positive refunds, of subsidised beef exports, the Member States of application and their destinations, in tonnes. It also contains a more detailed analysis for the main exporting Member States.

The information in the attached file is gathered from the database on export licences. The Member States indicated are those where the licences were requested and issued, and where the refunds were paid. The beef products can originate from another Member State and be exported via a third Member State, so this information remains indicative. The destinations are also indicative, as export licences can be used to other eligible destinations, the refund being adjusted at the time of payment. The refund expenditure in euros is based on export licences requested, multiplying volumes by the amount of refund fixed for a given product at a given date.

This data can show discrepancies with data on physical exports, but the licence source is the only one which can differentiate export with refunds in the overall physical export data provided by customs sources.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-013206/13
à Comissão
Edite Estrela (S&D) e Luis Manuel Capoulas Santos (S&D)
(20 de novembro de 2013)

Assunto: Partidarização de visitas de informação à Comissão Europeia

Tendo tomado conhecimento da deslocação a Bruxelas, nos dias 13, 14 e 15 de novembro de 2013, de uma comitiva de cerca de 40 pessoas do distrito de Castelo Branco, incluindo jornalistas e 2 deputados da Assembleia da Republica eleitos pelo Partido Social Democrata no círculo eleitoral de Castelo Branco, que participaram numa visita de informação à Comissão Europeia;

Tendo em conta que os convites foram feitos pelos Centros Europe Direct da Cova da Beira e Beira Interior Sul, não tendo sido convidados a participar na referida iniciativa deputados de outros partidos políticos eleitos no mesmo círculo eleitoral;

Tendo em conta que do programa da iniciativa constou uma visita ao Parlamento Europeu, onde os participantes puderam reunir apenas com um eurodeputado eleito pelo Partido Social Democrata;

Considerando que os centros Europe Direct desempenham um papel fundamental para aproximar os cidadãos das instituições da União Europeia, não podendo ser instrumentos de apropriação do ideário europeu por agentes partidários para benefício particular, designadamente quando se aproximam eleições europeias;

Pode a Comissão esclarecer quais os critérios que devem nortear a elaboração dos convites e programas das visitas de informação à Comissão Europeia e se considera que os mesmos foram respeitados no caso aqui exposto?

Resposta dada por Viviane Reding em nome da Comissão
(17 de janeiro de 2014)

A fim de reunir em Bruxelas grupos de alto nível e de representantes suscetíveis de agir como «multiplicadores» de grande relevância, o Centro de Visitas da Comissão trabalha em estreita cooperação com as representações nos Estados-Membros, visto estas estarem melhor posicionadas para identificar estes grupos.

Para a visita em causa, a Representação em Portugal solicitou à rede de centros de informação Europe Direct (CIED) da Beira Interior e da Cova da Beira que identificasse, convidasse e reunisse 15 a 20 representantes multiplicadores de relevo. Incluíam-se no grupo representantes da administração pública, de estabelecimentos de ensino, de associações da sociedade civil, de ONG e jornalistas. O grupo, com uma percentagem de 30 % de jornalistas, foi escolhido como forma de alargar o número de «multiplicadores regionais». A filiação num partido político não desempenhou qualquer papel na escolha dos participantes.

A visita de grupo ao Parlamento Europeu não foi organizada pelo Centro de Visitas da Comissão.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013206/13
to the Commission
Edite Estrela (S&D) and Luis Manuel Capoulas Santos (S&D)
(20 November 2013)

Subject: Politicisation of information visits to the Commission

On 13, 14 and 15 November 2013, a group of around 40 people from the district of Castelo Branco, including journalists and two members of the Portuguese Parliament, representing the Social Democratic Party in the Castelo Branco constituency, travelled to Brussels on an information visit to the Commission.

The invitations were issued by the Europe Direct centres of Cova da Beira and Beira Interior Sul. Members of the Portuguese Parliament belonging to other political parties and elected in the same constituency were not invited on the trip.

The agenda for the trip included a visit to Parliament, where the participants had the opportunity to meet only one MEP, who belonged to the Social Democratic Party.

Europe Direct centres play a vital role in bringing citizens closer to the European Union institutions and they cannot be instruments to be used by party members to appropriate European thinking for personal gain, particularly in the run-up to the European elections.

Can the Commission clarify what criteria should govern invitations to and the agendas of information visits to the Commission and does it think that they were respected in the case described above?

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

In order to bring high-level groups and key multipliers to Brussels, the Commission's Visitors' Centre works closely with the Representations in the Member States as they are best placed to identify these groups.

For the visit in question, the Representation in Portugal asked the Europe Direct Information Centres (EDICs) of Beira Interior and Cova da Beira to identify, invite and bring together 15 to 20 relevant multipliers. This included representatives of public administration, schools, civil society associations, NGOs and journalists. The group, which included 30% of journalists, was chosen as a way to broaden the number of regional multipliers. Membership of a political party played no role for the choice of the participants.

The group's visit to the European Parliament was not organised by the Commission's Visitors' Centre.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013207/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE) y Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE)
(21 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Fortificación de la valla de Melilla

El Ministerio del Interior de España ha decidido volver a colocar, sobre la doble verja que rodea Melilla, las llamadas concertinas. Este alambre de púas se había quitado en 2007 después de presión social, ya que provocaba profundos cortes en las manos y piernas de las personas que intentan entrar. A cambio, se instaló una «sirga tridimensional», conocida como la tercera valla, que consiste en un cable trenzado situado entre las dos vallas, cuyo objetivo es impedir el tránsito entre las mismas. La valla fue presentada como un sistema único en el mundo. Su instalación y la elevación de la verja de tres a seis metros habrían costado unos 30 millones de euros.

A pesar de la crisis europea, la presión migratoria sobre Melilla y Ceuta es similar a la de 2005, y la Delegación del Gobierno en Melilla afirma que esa sirga ya no sirve. Por eso, el Gobierno ha decidido reforzar la valla y reintroducir las cuchillas. Estas serán colocadas en un tercio del recorrido de 9 km de la valla.

Además, se colocará una malla metálica en la que las personas migrantes no podrán introducir sus dedos para trepar. La Guardia Civil dispondrá de un segundo helicóptero, mientras que el primero ha sido equipado con una cámara térmica y un potente foco. El Instituto Armado cuenta, además, con dos módulos de intervención rápida que se desplazan para repeler los asaltos. En Ceuta, donde se han producido muchas entradas por mar, está previsto prolongar el espigón para dificultar el acceso a la playa donde llegan a nado.

Eurosur supuestamente introduce un sistema seguro y menos lesivo de control de fronteras en Europa. Eurosur fue calificado como un nuevo sistema de vigilancia fronteriza tecnológicamente avanzado y sofisticadísimo; sin embargo, parece también contar con la reintroducción de cuchillas en el perímetro de Melilla.

¿Conoce la Comisión detalles sobre la fortificación de las fronteras en Melilla? ¿Conoce un presupuesto detallado de los gastos en que incurrirá el Estado español? ¿Aportará la UE, vía Eurosur u otro programa, fondos para este proyecto? ¿Considera que la reintroducción de las cuchillas atenta contra la seguridad de las personas migrantes y el derecho de estas a solicitar asilo en territorio europeo?

Respuesta de la Sra. Malmström en nombre de la Comisión
(7 de febrero de 2014)

En lo referido a la primera y la cuarta preguntas de Sus Señorías, la Comisión remite a su respuesta conjunta a las preguntas escritas E-012537/2013, E-012538/2013 y E-12929/2013.

La Comisión no ha apoyado financieramente la construcción de verjas y su refuerzo con alambre de púas. Por consiguiente, la Comisión no dispone de datos sobre los costes de instalación de los alambres de púas en Melilla.

En lo referido a la tercera pregunta, el Sistema Europeo de Vigilancia de Fronteras ([1]) (Eurosur), que empezó su primera fase de operaciones el 2 de diciembre de 2013, es un sistema polivalente para el intercambio de información y la cooperación entre agencias a efectos de la vigilancia de fronteras sobre la base de análisis de riesgos. A la hora de consultar a los Estados miembros sobre el Manual de Eurosur, la Comisión insistirá en sus recomendaciones, que no incluyen el uso de verjas o de alambre de púas.

([1]) Véase el Reglamento (UE) n° 1052/2013 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 22 de octubre de 2013, por el que se crea un Sistema Europeo de Vigilancia de Fronteras (Eurosur), DO L 295 de 6.11.2013.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-013207/13
an die Kommission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE) und Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE)
(21. November 2013)

Betrifft: Verstärkung des Zaunes von Melilla

Das spanische Innenministerium hat entschieden, am doppelten Zaun, der Melilla umrundet, den sogenannten NATO-Draht wieder anzubringen. Dieser Stacheldraht wurde im Jahr 2007 nach Protesten entfernt, da Personen, die versuchen, über den Zaun zu klettern, tiefe Schnittverletzungen an den Händen und Beinen erleiden. Stattdessen wurde eine als dritter Zaun bezeichnete dreidimensionale Grenzbarriere errichtet, die aus einem Drahtgeflecht besteht, der zwischen den zwei Zäunen angebracht ist, und damit ein Durchkommen zwischen diesen verhindert wird. Der Zaun wurde als weltweit einzigartige Neuerung vorgestellt. Die Errichtung und Erhöhung des Zauns von drei auf sechs Meter kostete etwa 30 Mio. EUR.

Trotz der Krise in Europa ist der Migrationsdruck auf Melilla und Ceuta genauso groß wie im Jahr 2005, und die Regierungsdelegation in Melilla behauptet, dass diese Barriere nicht mehr ausreicht. Deshalb hat die Regierung beschlossen, den Zaun zu verstärken und den Stacheldraht wieder anzubringen, und zwar auf einer Länge von einem Drittel des 9 km langen Zaunes.

Zusätzlich dazu wurde ein Drahtgeflecht angebracht, damit die Migranten ihre Finger nicht in den Zaun stecken können, um hinüber zu klettern. Der Guardia Civil wird ein zweiter Helikopter zur Verfügung gestellt, nachdem der erste bereits mit einer Wärmebildkamera und einem mächtigen Fokus ausgestattet wurde. Die Militäreinheit rechnet zudem mit zwei Modulen für schnelles Eingreifen, die sich auf den Weg machen, um Eindringlinge abzuwehren. In Ceuta, wo viele Flüchtlinge über das Meer angekommen sind, sollen die Stacheln verlängert werden, damit der Zugang über den Strand erschwert wird, an den die Flüchtlinge schwimmend gelangen.

Eurosur führt angeblich ein sicheres und weniger Verletzungen verursachendes System von Kontrollen an den Grenzen Europas ein. Es wird als neues System der Grenzüberwachung bezeichnet, das technisch hoch entwickelt ist. Dennoch soll im Umkreis von Melilla der Stacheldrahtverhau wieder errichtet werden.

Sind der Kommission Details über die Verstärkung der Grenzen in Melilla bekannt? Ist der Kommission bekannt, welche Kosten sich der spanische Staat damit aufbürdet? Wird die EU Mittel für dieses Projekt über Eurosur oder ein anderes Programm beisteuern? Wird dabei bedacht, dass die Sicherheit der Migranten durch die Wiedereinführung des Stacheldrahtes gefährdet wird und dies einen Verstoß gegen deren Recht auf Asyl in Europa darstellt?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(7. Februar 2014)

Hinsichtlich der ersten und der vierten Frage verweist die Kommission die Frau und den Herrn Abgeordneten auf ihre Antwort auf die schriftlichen Anfragen E-012537/2013, E-012538/2013 und E-12929/2013.

Die Kommission hat weder den Bau der Zäune noch deren Verstärkung durch Stacheldraht finanziell unterstützt. Sie verfügt daher auch über keine näheren Informationen über die Kosten für das Anbringen des Stacheldrahts in Melilla.

Die Antwort auf die dritte Frage lautet folgendermaßen: Das Europäische Grenzüberwachungssystem ([1]) (Eurosur), das die erste Phase seiner Operationen am 2. Dezember 2013 aufgenommen hat, ist ein vielseitig einsetzbares System zur Förderung des Informationsaustauschs und der behördenübergreifenden Zusammenarbeit bei der Grenzüberwachung auf der Grundlage einer Risikoanalyse. Im Rahmen der Konsultation der Mitgliedstaaten zum Eurosur-Handbuch wird die Kommission mit Nachdruck Empfehlungen unterstützen, die die Verwendung von Zäunen oder Stacheldraht nicht vorsehen.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013207/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE) and Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Fortification of the Melilla border fence

The Spanish Ministry of the Interior has decided to reintroduce concertina wire on the double fence system that surrounds Melilla. This barbed wire had been removed in 2007 in response to social pressure, due to the deep cuts inflicted on the hands and legs of those who tried to enter. Instead, a 'three-dimensional rope maze' was installed, known as the third fence, which consists of a criss-cross of cables situated between the two fences, the objective of which is to impede transit between them. The fence was presented as the only one of its kind in the world. The installation of the fence and the extension of its height from three to six metres cost some 30 million euros.

Despite the European crisis, the migratory pressure on Melilla and Ceuta has remained at similar levels to those seen in 2005, and the Government Delegation in Melilla now asserts that this rope maze is not sufficient. Consequently, the Government has decided to reinforce the fence and reintroduce the razor wire, which will be placed along a third of the 9 km long perimeter fence.

Furthermore, a metallic mesh will be installed through which migrants will not be able to insert their fingers to climb the fence. The Spanish Civil Guard will be provided with a second helicopter, while the first has been equipped with a thermal imaging camera and a powerful search light. The Civil Guard also has two rapid response units at its disposal that are deployed to repel the assaults. In Ceuta, where the sea is a popular entry point for migrants, there are plans to extend the breakwater to make access to the beach more difficult when trying to swim in.

Eurosur is supposedly introducing a secure and less harmful border control to Europe. Eurosur was put forward as a new, technologically advanced and highly sophisticated, border surveillance system; however, it appears also to include the reintroduction of razor wire around the Melilla perimeter fence.

Does the Commission have any details regarding the fortification of the borders in Melilla? Does it have a detailed budget for the cost of this to the Spanish State? Will the EU, via Eurosur or any other programme, be contributing funding to this project? Does it believe that the reintroduction of razor wire is an attack on the safety of migrants and their right to apply for asylum in European territory?

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

With regard to the first and fourth questions of the Honourable Members, the Commission would refer them to its joint answer to written questions E-012537/2013, E-012538/2013, and E-12929/2013.

The Commission has not financially supported the construction of fences and their reinforcement with barbed wire. It therefore does not have details of the costs for installing barbed wire in Melilla.

As regards the third question, the European Border Surveillance System ([1]) (Eurosur), which began its first phase of operations on 2 December 2013, is a multipurpose system aimed at promoting information exchange and inter-agency cooperation for border surveillance based on risk analysis, . When consulting the Member States on the Eurosur Handbook, the Commission will insist on recommendations which do not include the use of fences or barbed wire.

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

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013208/13
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(21 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Obligaciones de servicio para las entidades financieras

La Comisión Europea y el Banco Central Europeo han publicado, el 18 de noviembre, el cuarto informe relativo al «Programa de asistencia financiera para la recapitalización de las entidades financieras en España — otoño 2013». En este informe se resalta que las operaciones de crédito a favor de las familias y de las pequeñas y medianas empresas siguen disminuyendo, mientras que los beneficios de las entidades financieras han crecido, entre otras razones porque obtienen liquidez a muy bajo interés del Banco Central Europeo que destinan a la adquisición de deuda pública, mejor remunerada ([1]).

A mi juicio, el Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea y los Estatutos del Banco Central Europeo otorgan suficientes facultades para modular las condiciones de las subastas que realiza o los depósitos que ofrece.

No obstante, también considero que la Comisión podría promover una regulación con el fin de precisar algunas obligaciones de financiación de las entidades de crédito. He leído el nuevo Programa COSME para la Competitividad de las Empresas y para las Pequeñas y Medianas Empresas que acaba de presentar esa Comisión. Sin embargo, podrían arbitrarse otras líneas de actuación. Si las entidades financieras han conseguido una ingente cantidad de fondos públicos, porque se invocó hasta el hartazgo su trascendencia y el símil del sistema circulatorio, esas ayudas deberían compaginarse con el establecimiento de algunas obligaciones. Otras muchas empresas privadas prestan «servicios económicos de interés general» y han de satisfacer «obligaciones de servicio». Resulta ocioso que recuerde a esa Comisión las obligaciones que el Derecho de la Unión Europea impone, por ejemplo, a las empresas de telecomunicaciones o a las suministradoras de energía.

En vista de lo expuesto:

¿Ha considerado la Comisión la posibilidad de establecer unas obligaciones mínimas de servicio para, por ejemplo, obligar a aquellas entidades que superaran un porcentaje de beneficios anuales a reservar una cantidad para créditos a pequeñas y medianas empresas o para fines sociales? ¿O a situar un pequeño establecimiento financiero en los núcleos de población que han quedado sin oficinas, como ha ocurrido debido a la drástica reestructuración de las cajas de ahorro españolas? ¿O a facilitar créditos en determinadas condiciones a las pequeñas empresas locales? Por último, en los casos en los que la falta de liquidez de una pequeña empresa se deba a las cuantiosas deudas generadas por la morosidad de las administraciones, ¿no sería otra opción promover la novación de esos créditos?

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

La Comisión es plenamente consciente de las graves dificultades con que se enfrentan muchos prestatarios, hogares y empresas debido al endurecimiento de las condiciones crediticias en el sector bancario español durante los últimos años. Igualmente es consciente de que la profunda crisis financiera española vino motivada por la expansión extremadamente marcada del crédito al sector privado no financiero que se registró en los años previos. En particular cuando el rápido crecimiento del sector inmobiliario español tocó a su fin, la calidad de muchos de estos préstamos se deterioró considerablemente, lo que originó pérdidas masivas para el sector bancario y puso en peligro la estabilidad financiera nacional en su conjunto. A fin de corregir esos desequilibrios masivos y superar la grave crisis, varios bancos tuvieron que ser recapitalizados y sometidos a una profunda reestructuración, con vistas a restablecer modelos de negocios que hicieran posibles los beneficios, y la deuda agregada española hubo de ajustarse. El programa en favor del sector financiero español respaldó la estabilización y reestructuración de la banca española. Dicho programa mostró las primeras señales claras de éxito, al restablecerse globalmente la solvencia y la liquidez de los bancos españoles. Paralelamente a la recuperación económica y al mayor ajuste del endeudamiento, en concreto, de ciertas partes del sector empresarial, los bancos españolas podrán proporcionar a medio plazo un mayor volumen de crédito a la economía privada. Es importante señalar que los planes de reestructuración aprobados por la Comisión van dirigidos a lograr que los bancos estén en condiciones de mantener e incrementar el crédito a la economía real, en particular las PYME. El Memorando de Entendimiento relativo al programa del sector financiero no prevé ninguna de las obligaciones mínimas de servicio que se mencionan en la pregunta.

([1]) http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2012/12/28/pdfs/BOE-A-2012-15651.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013208/13
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Service obligations for financial institutions

On 18 November, the Commission and the European Central Bank published the fourth report on 'Financial assistance for the recapitalisation of financial institutions in Spain — autumn 2013'. This report highlights that loans to families and SMEs are continuing to fall while the profits of financial institutions have grown, because, among other reasons, they are obtaining liquidity at very low interest rates from the European Central Bank and using it to buy public debt, which is better remunerated ([1]).

In my opinion, the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and the Statute of the European Central Bank provide sufficient powers to regulate the conditions of the auctions it undertakes or the deposits it offers.

However, I am also of the view that the Commission could promote a regulation specifying certain financing obligations for lending institutions. I have read the new COSME Programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and SMEs that the Commission recently presented. Other approaches could be taken however. If the financial institutions have obtained huge amounts of public funds, because we were reminded ad nauseam of their transcendence, comparing it to the human circulatory system, , this aid should be counterbalanced by the establishment of certain obligations. Many other private companies provide 'economic services of general interest' and are required to meet 'service obligations'. I hardly need to remind the Commission of the obligations that EC law imposes, for example, on telecommunications companies or energy providers.

In view of the above:

Has the Commission considered the possibility of establishing some minimum service obligations requiring institutions whose annual profits exceed a certain percentage, for example, to reserve a portion of this for loans to SMEs or social purposes? Or of placing small financial institutions in towns that have been left without branches as a result of the drastic restructuring of the Spanish savings banks? Or of providing credit under certain conditions to small local companies? Finally, where small companies lack liquidity due to the substantial debts generated by the slowness of settlements from government institutions, would another option not be to promote a renewal of these loans?

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

The Commission is acutely aware of the severe difficulties that many borrowers, households or companies, face due to the tightening of credit conditions in the Spanish banking sector over recent years. It is equally aware of the fact that the deep financial crisis in Spain had its origins in the previous very strong expansion of credit to the non-financial private sector. Notably with the end of the rapid expansion of the Spanish real-estate sector, the quality of many of these loans deteriorated sharply and led to massive losses of the banking sector, threating financial stability in Spain at large. In order to correct for these massive imbalances and to overcome the severe crisis, several banks had to be recapitalised and thoroughly restructured to find back to business models allowing for positive profits, and aggregate debt in Spain had to be adjusted. The financial-sector programme in favour of Spain supported the stabilisation and restructuring of the Spanish banking sector. That programme showed first clear signs of success, as the solvency and liquidity of Spanish banks has been broadly restored. In parallel to the economic recovery and the further adjustment of the indebtedness of, notably, parts of the corporate sector, this will allow Spanish banks to provide rising volumes of lending to the private economy in the medium term. Importantly, the restructuring plans approved by the Commission intend to put the banks in the condition to maintain and increase lending to the real economy, in particular to SMEs. The Memorandum of Understanding covering the financial sector programme does not provide for any of the mentioned minimum service obligations raised in the question.

([1]) http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2012/12/28/pdfs/BOE-A-2012-15651.pdf

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013209/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(21 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Fondos europeos contra la pobreza infantil

Hoy, día 20 de noviembre, es el Día Universal de la Infancia. En la Convención sobre los Derechos del Niño —que los Estados participantes deben cumplir— se afirma el derecho de los niños y niñas a ser objeto de un cuidado y una atención especiales por las instituciones. Sin embargo, la pobreza infantil en España afecta actualmente ya a un 30 % de la población menor de 16 años, habiéndose registrado un aumento de 3,1 puntos de 2007 a 2011, que es el triple del incremento registrado en la EU.

Tal y como indican las recomendaciones específicas hechas a España por el Consejo Europeo para su programa nacional de reforma 2013 (10656/1/13 REV 1), España está por debajo de la media comunitaria en los principales indicadores de medición de la pobreza y la exclusión social, estando los niños y niñas particularmente expuestos, sin que se hayan registrado mejoras importantes en el desarrollo de nuevas medidas políticas. En dichas recomendaciones, se le indica a España que adopte y aplique las medidas necesarias para reducir el número de personas en riesgo de pobreza y/o exclusión social en el periodo 2013-2014.

Por otro lado, en el marco de la Estrategia Europa 2020 para un crecimiento inteligente, sostenible e integrador, una de las siete iniciativas emblemáticas es la Plataforma Europea contra la Pobreza y Exclusión Social.

El Fondo Social Europeo (FSE) pone a disposición de los Estados financiación para la inclusión continua de los grupos más desfavorecidos, y la Comisión propuso que el 20 % del FSE se destinara a la lucha contra la pobreza y la exclusión social. Además, los niños y niñas que viven en situación de pobreza deben ser incluidos entre los grupos «más desfavorecidos».

1. ¿Qué opinión tiene la Comisión sobre el aumento de la pobreza infantil en España y sobre la erradicación de este grave problema?

2. ¿Considera que las recomendaciones emitidas son suficientes para erradicar la pobreza infantil? ¿ Qué recomendaciones específicas pretende realizar la Comisión para asegurar que los fondos europeos se destinan a solucionar la pobreza infantil?

3. ¿Podría flexibilizar las condiciones de desembolso de los fondos europeos para que se adopte un plan de choque contra la pobreza infantil en países como España?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(16 de enero de 2014)

1. La Comisión Europea está muy preocupada por el fuerte aumento de la pobreza infantil en España y considera que la lucha contra la pobreza infantil es de máxima importancia política.

2. Seguir las recomendaciones específicas hechas al país en el ámbito de la pobreza infantil es una condición necesaria, pero no suficiente, para reducir la pobreza infantil. Además, la Comisión, a través de su paquete en materia de inversión social ([1]), insta a los Estados miembros a intensificar su lucha contra la pobreza infantil y la exclusión y a utilizar la financiación tanto nacional como de la UE (FSE, FEDER, etc.) para respaldar políticas en áreas como la atención y la educación de la primera infancia, la conciliación entre vida profesional y privada o el acceso a servicios de calidad en el ámbito sanitario, educativo y de la vivienda. Los Estados miembros, por su parte, se han comprometido a gastar como mínimo el 20 % del presupuesto del FSE del próximo período de programación en medidas para la inclusión social. El nuevo Fondo de Ayuda Europea para los Más Necesitados puede utilizarse para paliar las peores formas de pobreza, facilitando a los más necesitados alimentos, ropa y asistencia material básica.

3. El recientemente adoptado Reglamento sobre disposiciones comunes relativas a los Fondos Estructurales y los Fondos de Inversión ([2]) establece una prefinanciación inicial del 1 % de la totalidad de la dotación para 2014-2020, a desembolsar en un período de tres años (2014-2016). Para los Estados miembros que han recibido ayuda financiera desde 2010, la cifra correspondiente es del 1,5 %. En el caso del Fondo de Ayuda Europea para los Más Necesitados, el porcentaje de prefinanciación es incluso superior: el 11 % de la contribución total del Fondo a los programas operativos en cuestión. Además, la Comisión ha estado trabajando con los Estados miembros para simplificar la aplicación de los Fondos Estructurales, permitiendo así mejorar la distribución del gasto y poner más énfasis en los resultados.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1044&langId=es
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=33&langId=en

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013209/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: European funding to combat child poverty

Today, 20 November, is Universal Children's Day. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which with the participating States must comply, proclaims that children have the right to special care and attention from institutions. However, child poverty in Spain already currently affects 30% of the population under the age of 16 years, having increased by 3.1% between 2007 and 2011, which is three times the increase recorded for the EU.

As indicated in the specific recommendations made to Spain by the Council concerning its 2013 national reform programme (10656/1/13 REV 1), the key poverty and social exclusion indicators for Spain are below the EU average, with children being particularly exposed and without significant improvements noted in the development of new policy measures. In these recommendations, Spain is advised to adopt and implement the necessary measures to reduce the numbers of people at risk of poverty and/or social exclusion in the period 2013-2014.

Furthermore, one of the seven flagship initiatives of the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, is the European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion.

The European Social Fund (ESF) provides Member States with funding to ensure the ongoing integration of the most disadvantaged groups, and the Commission has proposed that 20% of the ESF should be allocated to combating poverty and social exclusion. In addition, children living in poverty must be included among the 'most disadvantaged' groups.

1. What is the Commission's opinion of the increase in child poverty in Spain and the eradication of this serious problem?

2. Does it regard the recommendations made as sufficient to eradicate child poverty? What specific recommendations does the Commission intend to make to ensure that European funding is allocated to solving child poverty?

3. Could the conditions for the disbursement of European funding be relaxed in order to allow an emergency plan to be adopted to combat child poverty in countries such as Spain?

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

1. The European Commission is deeply concerned by the sharp increase in child poverty in Spain and it considers the fight against child poverty of the utmost political importance.

2. The fulfilment of the Country Specific Recommendations in the area of child poverty are a necessary but not a sufficient condition to reduce child poverty. In addition through its Social Investment Package ([1]), the Commission is urging the Member States to step up their fight against child poverty and exclusion, and to use both national and EU funding, such as ESF and ERDF, to support policies like early childhood education and care, reconciliation of work and private life and access to high quality health, education and housing services. The Member States have also committed themselves to spend at least 20% of the ESF budget of the next programming period on social inclusion measures. A new Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD) can be used to alleviate the worst forms of poverty by providing the neediest with food, clothing and basic material assistance.

3. The newly adopted Common Provision Regulation ([2]) for European Structural and Investment Funds foresees an initial pre-financing of 1% of the entire 2014-2020 envelope, to be disbursed over three years (2014 — 2016). For Member States having received financial assistance since 2010 the corresponding figure is 1.5% . The FEAD has an even higher pre-financing rate of 11% of the Fund's overall contribution to the operational programmes concerned. In addition, the Commission has been working together with Member States to simplify Structural Funds implementation thus allowing for a better targeting of expenditure and a greater emphasis on results.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1044&langId=en
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=33&langId=en

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013210/13
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(21 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Violación de los derechos humanos: cuchillas en la valla de la frontera de Melilla

Recientemente el Gobierno de España ha aprobado el restablecimiento de concertinas (alambre de cuchillas) en las vallas de la frontera de Melilla con el Reino de Marruecos con el objetivo de impedir la entrada irregular de personas en el territorio de la Unión Europea. Este método había sido introducido en 2005 en las ciudades autónomas de Ceuta y Melilla y fue retirado parcialmente (solo en Melilla) en 2007, ante las denuncias de organizaciones de defensa de los derechos humanos. La decisión de introducir de nuevo las cuchillas es criticada por los propios agentes encargados del control de fronteras, que denuncian el poco efecto disuasorio del método y los graves daños causados —muchas veces mortales— a las personas que tratan de saltar la valla.

Si bien el Gobierno de España es competente para ejercer el control de las fronteras exteriores de la Unión Europea en su territorio, en ningún caso puede justificarse el uso de métodos lesivos y crueles que atentan gravemente contra la salud física y la vida de las personas.

De conformidad con el Tratado de la UE, las ciudades de Ceuta y Melilla son fronteras de la UE. Por ello, pregunto a la Comisión:

1. ¿Tiene conocimiento la Comisión del restablecimiento de las concertinas en la valla de la frontera común de la UE con Marruecos?

2. ¿Qué opinión le merece a la Comisión el uso de este método?

3. ¿Cursará la Comisión una petición para pedir explicaciones al Gobierno de España solicitando la abolición de dicha práctica?

Respuesta de la Sra. Malmström en nombre de la Comisión
(17 de enero de 2014)

La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a su respuesta conjunta a las preguntas escritas E-012537/2013, E-012538/2013 y E-012929/2013 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013210/13
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Breach of human rights: Razor wire on the Melilla border fence

The Government of Spain recently approved the reintroduction of concertina wire (razor wire) on the fences along the border between Melilla and the Kingdom of Morocco, in order to prevent unauthorised entry into the territory of the European Union. This method was introduced in 2005 in the autonomous cities of Ceuta and Melilla and was partially withdrawn (only in Melilla) in 2007, in in response to complaints from human rights organisations. The decision to reintroduce the razor wire has been criticised by the very officers in charge of controlling the border, who denounce the limited effect of the method as a deterrent and the serious and often deadly harm caused to those who attempt to jump the fence.

Although the Spanish Government has the authority to control the external borders of the EU within its territory, the use of harmful and cruel methods that seriously threaten the physical health and life of individuals can never be justified.

According to the EU Treaty, the cities of Ceuta and Melilla are EU borders. Therefore, I would like to ask the Commission:

1. Whether it is aware that concertina wire is being reintroduced on the fences of the common border between the EU and Morocco?

2. What its opinion is regarding the use of this method?

3. Whether it will issue a request for an explanation from the Spanish Government and for the abolition of this practice?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its joint answer to written questions E-012537/2013, E-012538/2013, and E-012929/2013 [1].

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

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013211/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(21 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Ejecución territorial del presupuesto

En su respuesta E-011467/2013 la Comisión afirma que «no dispone de información sobre el grado de ejecución territorial de los presupuestos de 2013 en España».

Cabe tener en cuenta que esta información es relevante para poder evaluar la efectividad real de las inversiones que el Gobierno español incluye en su presupuesto así como el cálculo sobre el potencial de crecimiento económico del Estado, básico para las proyecciones futuras sobre las finanzas públicas.

A la luz de lo anterior, ¿piensa pedir la Comisión al Gobierno español que le informe sobre el grado de ejecución territorial de los presupuestos del Estado?

¿No cree la Comisión que conocer el grado de ejecución territorial en los presupuestos del Estado le puede permitir afinar mejor sus recomendaciones futuras?

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

Por ahora, la Comisión no tiene previsto pedir al Gobierno español que le facilite información sobre el grado de ejecución territorial de los presupuestos del Estado, además de la que ya está públicamente disponible y de la que las instituciones oficiales españolas comunican con regularidad.

Tal como señalaba en su respuesta E-011467/2013 ([1]), a efectos de sus previsiones en materia económica y de finanzas públicas, la supervisión presupuestaria y la evaluación del cumplimiento de las normas contenidas en el Pacto de Estabilidad y Crecimiento, la Comisión utiliza los datos relativos a las administraciones públicas (las cuales incluyen todos los subcomponentes: administraciones central, autonómicas y locales y seguridad social) que se proporcionan oficialmente a Eurostat y que esta se encarga de verificar. Además, la Comisión recurre a la información comunicada por los Estados miembros en sus proyectos de planes presupuestarios y programas de estabilidad. Esta información cumple una serie de requisitos mínimos en materia de contenido y formato establecidos por el Código de Conducta relativo al Pacto de Estabilidad y Crecimiento y al paquete legislativo sobre supervisión presupuestaria (documentación que está disponible en el sitio web de la Comisión: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/economic_governance/sgp/legal_texts/index_en.htm), y está normalizada para todos los Estados miembros.

Sin embargo, y como es obvio, la Comisión también tiene en cuenta cualquier información adicional que le notifiquen los Estados miembros o que obtenga de otras fuentes a la hora de formular sus dictámenes y recomendaciones.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013211/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Territorial implementation of the budget

In its answer E-011467/2013, the Commission states that it 'does not have information on the extent of territorial implementation of the 2013 budgets in Spain.'

This information is needed to evaluate the actual effectiveness of the investments the Spanish Government is including in its budget as well as to calculate the potential for economic growth in Spain, which is essential for future public finance projections.

In light of the above, is the Commission intending to ask the Spanish Government to provide it with information on the extent of territorial implementation of the State budgets?

Is the Commission not of the opinion that knowing the extent of territorial implementation of the State budgets might enable it to better refine its future recommendations?

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

At present, the Commission does not intend to ask the Spanish Government to provide it with information on the extent of territorial implementation of the State budgets in addition to what is already publically available and regularly reported by the official institutions in Spain.

As stated in its answer E-011467/2013 ([1]), for the purposes of its economic and public finance projections, budgetary surveillance and assessment of compliance with the rules of the Stability and Growth Pact (SGP), the Commission uses data for general government (i.e. including all subcomponents: central, regional, local and social security administration) officially provided to and verified by Eurostat. In addition, the Commission uses information reported by the Member States in their Draft Budgetary Plans and Stability Programmes. This information follows minimum reporting requirements on content and format stipulated by the 'Code of Conduct' for the SGP and for the Two-Pack (both documents are available on the Commission's website: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/economic_governance/sgp/legal_texts/index_en.htm), and is standardised for all Member States.

That said, the Commission is obviously also taking into account any additional information reported by Member States or obtained from other sources in formulating its opinions and recommendations.

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

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-013213/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(21 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Αλίευση στη θαλάσσια περιοχή της Ανατολικής Μεσογείου με τη χρήση γρι γρι

Στην Κύπρο συζητείται δημόσια κατά πόσον πρέπει να επιτρέπεται η αλιευτική μέθοδος με τη χρήση γρι γρι, στη θαλάσσια περιοχή της Ανατολικής Μεσογείου. Εμπειρογνώμονες σε θέματα αλιείας αλλά και οι πλείστοι επαγγελματίες ψαράδες αντιτίθενται στη χρήση της μεθόδου αυτής, με κύριο επιχείρημα ότι κάτι τέτοιο θα αυξήσει την αλιευτική θνησιμότητα και θα αποβεί καταστροφικό για τα αλιευτικά αποθέματα της περιοχής, ιδιαίτερα για είδη ψαριών όπως το μπαρμπούνι, η μαρίδα, η στρίλια και η γόπα που είναι δημοφιλή στην αγορά.

Καλείται η Επιτροπή να απαντήσει στα πιο κάτω ερωτήματα:

1. Θεωρεί ότι όντως υπάρχει κίνδυνος υπεραλίευσης και καταστροφής των αλιευτικών αποθεμάτων της περιοχής αν επεκταθεί περαιτέρω η μέθοδος αλιείας με τη χρήση γρι γρι;

2. Τι χρειάζεται να γίνει για προστασία και λογική εκμετάλλευση των πιο πάνω ειδών;

3. Με ποια κριτήρια θα πρέπει να παραχωρούνται από τα κράτη μέλη άδειες αλιείας με τη συγκεκριμένη μέθοδο;

4. Μέχρι πόσες άδειες αλιείας μπορούν να παραχωρηθούν στη Κύπρο, λαμβανομένης υπόψη της διαθεσιμότητας και της ανάγκης προστασία των ειδών που κινδυνεύουν;

Απάντηση της κ. Δαμανάκη εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(16 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Ο κανονισμός για τη Μεσόγειο ([1]) δεν απαγορεύει τη χρήση διχτυών γρι-γρι στη Μεσόγειο. Ωστόσο, απαιτεί από τα κράτη μέλη να θεσπίζουν σχέδια διαχείρισης για ορισμένους τύπους αλιευτικών εργαλείων, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των διχτυών γρι-γρι. Στόχος των εν λόγω σχεδίων είναι να αποφευχθεί η υπεραλίευση και να διατηρούνται τα αποθέματα εντός ασφαλών βιολογικών ορίων. Τα σχέδια οφείλουν, μεταξύ άλλων, να καθορίζουν συγκεκριμένους βιολογικούς στόχους, να εφαρμόζουν κατάλληλα μέτρα διαχείρισης, κυρίως όσον αφορά την αλιευτική προσπάθεια και τις τεχνικές προδιαγραφές, και να διενεργούν ελέγχους και επιθεωρήσεις για τη διασφάλιση της εφαρμογής τους.

Μέχρι σήμερα η Κύπρος έχει εγκρίνει ένα σχέδιο διαχείρισης για τις μηχανότρατες. Η Επιτροπή δεν έχει πληροφορηθεί ότι στην Κύπρο υπάρχει δραστηριότητα γρι-γρι. Εάν η Κύπρος αποφασίσει να έχει δραστηριότητα γρι-γρι, οι κυπριακές αρχές θα πρέπει να δημιουργήσουν ένα σχέδιο διαχείρισης για τον εν λόγω τύπο αλιείας.

Η ΕΕ δεν ορίζει μέγιστο αριθμός αδειών για έναν τύπο αλιείας. Το σχέδιο διαχείρισης θα πρέπει να καθορίζει το πλαίσιο της αλιευτικής προσπάθειας για τον καθορισμό του αριθμού των αδειών αλιείας που θα εκδοθούν.

([1]) Κανονισμός (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1967/2006 του Συμβουλίου σχετικά με μέτρα διαχείρισης για τη βιώσιμη εκμετάλλευση των αλιευτικών πόρων στη Μεσόγειο Θάλασσα.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013213/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Fishing with purse seine nets in the Eastern Mediterranean marine region

A public debate is under way in Cyprus regarding the extent to which fishing with purse seine nets should be allowed in the Eastern Mediterranean marine region. Experts in fishery matters, as well as numerous professional fishermen, are opposed to the use of this method, mainly on the grounds that it will increase fish mortality and will prove disastrous for fishery resources in the region, especially for fish species such as mullet, whitebait, snapper and bogue, which are in demand on the market.

1. Does the Commission believe that there is indeed a risk of over-fishing and destruction of the fishery resources of the region if purse seine netting is further extended?

2. What needs to be done to ensure the protection and rational exploitation of the above species?

3. What criteria should Member States apply when granting fishing licences in respect of this specific method?

4. What is the maximum number of licences that can be granted in Cyprus, taking into account the availability and protection needs of threatened species?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(16 January 2014)

The Mediterranean Regulation ([1]) does not prohibit the use of purse seine nets in the Mediterranean. It does however require that Member States establish management plans for certain types of fishing gears, including purse seine nets. The objective of such plans is to avoid overfishing and to maintain the stocks within safe biological limits. The plans are required to, amongst others, set specific biological targets, apply appropriate management measures, mainly in terms of fishing effort and technical specifications, and carry out control and inspection to ensure enforcement.

So far Cyprus has adopted a management plan for trawlers. The Commission has not been informed that Cyprus has any purse seine activity. If Cyprus decides have a purse seine activity, the Cypriot authorities will have to establish a management plan for this fishery.

The EU does not define a maximum number of licences for a fishery. The management plan would need to set the fishing effort framework for defining how many fishing licences should be issued.

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 1967/2006 concerning management measures for the sustainable exploitation of fishery resources in the Mediterranean Sea.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-013214/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Marietta Giannakou (PPE)
(21 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Αύξηση ρεκόρ της καλλιέργειας οπίου στο Αφγανιστάν

Σύμφωνα με την ετήσια έκθεση της Υπηρεσίας του ΟΗΕ κατά των ναρκωτικών και της εγκληματικότητας (UNODC) που δόθηκε πρόσφατα στη δημοσιότητα, οι εκτάσεις με καλλιέργειες οπίου στο Αφγανιστάν αυξήθηκαν σε επίπεδα ρεκόρ το 2013.

Σύμφωνα με τα πορίσματα της εν λόγω έκθεσης, η έκταση των καλλιεργημένων περιοχών αυξήθηκε κατά 36%, ήτοι από 1 540 000 στρέμματα το 2012 σε 2 090 000 στρέμματα το 2013, ενώ η παραγωγή οπίου από το οποίο παράγεται η ηρωίνη, ανήλθε τελικά σε 5 500 τόνους το 2013 (+49% σε σχέση με το 2012).

Σύμφωνα με την UNODC, οι καλλιεργητές ενδεχομένως αύξησαν την παραγωγή για να εξασφαλίσουν πόρους απέναντι σε ένα αβέβαιο μέλλον που μπορεί να ακολουθήσει την αποχώρηση των διεθνών δυνάμεων το 2014, ενώ επισημαίνει ότι το 90% των καλλιεργειών είναι συγκεντρωμένο σε εννέα επαρχίες, οι οποίες θεωρούνται προπύργια των Ταλιμπάν.

Δεδομένου ότι η ΕΕ αποτελεί έναν από τους σημαντικότερους χορηγούς επίσημης αναπτυξιακής βοήθειας (ΕΕΒ) και ανθρωπιστικής βοήθειας στο Αφγανιστάν, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Συμφωνεί με τα ευρήματα της έκθεση της UNODC; Ποια είναι η δική της αξιολόγηση για τις υπόλοιπες επαρχίες της χώρας, οι οποίες ελέγχονται από την αφγανική κυβέρνηση;

2. Πώς αξιολογεί τα χρηματοδοτούμενα από την Επιτροπή προγράμματα για την καταπολέμηση της παράνομης παραγωγής και διακίνησης ναρκωτικών στο Αφγανιστάν;

3. Εν όψει της αποχώρησης της Διεθνούς Δύναμης του ΝΑΤΟ (ISAF) από το Αφγανιστάν, σκοπεύει να αναλάβει πρόσθετες δράσεις για την καταπολέμηση της καλλιέργειας οπίου στο Αφγανιστάν, και κυρίως για την καταστολή των διαύλων προμήθειάς του, οι οποίες χρηματοδοτούν σε μεγάλο βαθμό την αιματηρή πολεμική εκστρατεία των Ταλιμπάν κατά των αφγανικών κυβερνητικών δυνάμεων;

4. Σκοπεύει να επεκτείνει τα προγράμματα της στις νότιες επαρχίες της χώρας;

Απάντηση του κ. Piebalgs εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(29 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

1) Αδιαμφισβήτητα, η καλλιέργεια οπίου και η ανασφάλεια είναι άρρηκτα συνδεδεμένες. Μελέτες χρηματοδοτούμενες από την ΕΕ επιβεβαιώνουν ότι ο κατακερματισμός της εξουσίας και η έλλειψη ελέγχου σε θύλακες βίας αποτελούν τα κύρια εμπόδια στη συρρίκνωση της παραγωγής. Οι απαγορεύσεις του οπίου αποδείχθηκαν αναποτελεσματικές στις περιπτώσεις περιορισμένων εναλλακτικών πηγών εισοδήματος και ευκαιριών της αγοράς. Σύμφωνα με έρευνα του Γραφείου των Ηνωμένων Εθνών για τον Έλεγχο των Ναρκωτικών και την Πρόληψη του Εγκλήματος (UNODC), πέρα από την ασφάλεια, οι υψηλές τιμές υπήρξαν καθοριστικός παράγοντας στην αύξηση της παραγωγής για το 2013. Συνεπώς, σημειώθηκε αύξηση των καλλιεργειών σε περιοχές στις οποίες οι εξεγέρσεις δεν υποχωρούν (Helmand, Kandahar, Uruzgan ad Farah), καθώς επίσης και επανεμφάνισή τους σε επαρχίες στις οποίες οι καλλιέργειες παπαρούνας είχαν μέχρι πρότινος εξαλειφθεί (Faryah και Balkh). Η εν λόγω αύξηση της παραγωγής οφείλεται στη σημερινή οικονομική κρίση η οποία συνδέεται με την αστάθεια που αναμένεται κατά το τρέχον έτος εκλογών.

2) Από το 2009, η ΕΕ κατάργησε σταδιακά την άμεση χρηματοδότηση ορισμένων παρεμβάσεων για την καταπολέμηση των ναρκωτικών προς υιοθέτηση μιας πιο ολοκληρωμένης προσέγγισης, η οποία στηρίζει τις νόμιμες καλλιέργειες και τα εναλλακτικά βιοποριστικά μέσα, την έρευνα, την ενίσχυση του κράτους δικαίου και την παροχή ιατρικής βοήθειας στους τοξικομανείς. Ωστόσο, τα οφέλη από αυτή τη νέα προσέγγιση θα αρχίσουν να διαφαίνονται μόνο μακροπρόθεσμα, εξαιτίας της υψηλής ανασφάλειας και της διαφθοράς στο Αφγανιστάν.

3) Η εκρίζωση της καλλιέργειας παπαρούνας δεν έχει επιφέρει έως τώρα ικανοποιητικά αποτελέσματα, καθώς η παραγωγή απλώς μεταφέρθηκε σε νέες περιοχές. Η ΕΕ θα συνεχίσει να στηρίζει μια ολιστική προσέγγιση, προσπάθειες σε περιφερειακό επίπεδο, καθώς επίσης και το περιφερειακό πρόγραμμα του UNODC (5 εκατ. ευρώ). Το πρόγραμμα αυτό προβλέπει συνεργασία σε νομικά θέματα, θέματα επιβολής του νόμου σε περιφερειακό επίπεδο, πρόληψης και θεραπείας της τοξικομανίας, και ανάλυσης δεδομένων.

4) Η ΕΕ δεν χορηγεί κονδύλια με γεωγραφικά κριτήρια. Τα εθνικά προγράμματα που στηρίζει λειτουργούν ήδη στο Νότο στο βαθμό του δυνατού, εξαιτίας περιορισμών ασφάλειας.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013214/13
to the Commission
Marietta Giannakou (PPE)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Record rise in opium cultivation in Afghanistan

According to the recently released annual report of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the area of land given over to opium cultivation in Afghanistan hit record levels in 2013.

According to the report, the area given over to cultivation increased by 36%, from 1 540 000 acres in 2012 to 2 090 000 acres in 2013, whilst the production of opium — one of the ingredients of heroin — rose in the end to 5 500 tonnes in 2013 (up 49% on 2012).

According to the UNODC, growers increased production possibly in order to shore up their assets as insurance against an uncertain future that may follow the withdrawal of international forces in 2014, pointing out that 90% of cultivation is concentrated in nine provinces regarded as Taliban strongholds.

Given that the EU is one of the most important providers of official development aid and humanitarian aid in Afghanistan, will the Commission say:

1. Does it agree with the findings of the UNODC report? What is its own assessment of the other provinces of the country which are under Afghan Government control?

2. What is its assessment of the Commission-funded programmes for combating the illicit trafficking and production of drugs in Afghanistan?

3. In view of the withdrawal of the NATO International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) from Afghanistan, does it intend to take additional action to combat opium cultivation in Afghanistan, and in particular to suppress the channels of supply that are to a large extent funding the Taliban's bloody insurgency against Afghan Government forces?

4. Does it intend to extend its programmes to the southern provinces of the country?

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

1. The link between opium cultivation and insecurity is undeniable. EU-funded studies confirmed power fragmentation and lack of control over pockets of violence as main obstacles to curbing production. Opium bans were unsuccessful where alternative resource income and market opportunities are limited. Besides security, high prices have been the strongest determinant of the 2013 increase in production according to a United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime survey. Cultivation thus increased in areas of resilient insurgency (Helmand, Kandahar, Uruzgan ad Farah), but also re-started in formerly poppy-free provinces (Faryah and Balkh). The current economic crunch, associated to expectations of instability in this electoral year, explains such increase in production.

2. Since 2009, the EU phased out direct funding to specific counter-narcotics interventions to adopt a more comprehensive approach, which includes support to licit agriculture and alternative livelihoods, research, strengthening of the rule of law and health assistance to drug-dependent population. Due to high insecurity and corruption in Afghanistan, gains of this new approach will only be visible in the long term.

3. Poppy eradication has not achieved satisfactory results, as production simply shifted to new areas. The EU will continue to support a holistic approach as well as efforts at regional level; The EU will support UNODC's regional programme (EUR 5 million). This includes cooperation for regional law enforcement, legal matters, prevention and treatment of drug dependence and data analysis.

4. The EU does not geographically earmark funds; the nation-wide programmes it supports are already active in the South, to the extent possible due to security constrains.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-013215/13
an die Kommission
Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE) und David Martin (S&D)
(21. November 2013)

Betrifft: Die transatlantische Handels- und Investitionspartnerschaft und die Beilegung von Streitigkeiten zwischen Investor und Staat

Am 3. Oktober 2013 hat die Kommission zwei Informationsblätter über die Beilegung von Streitigkeiten zwischen Investor und Staat (Investor-State Dispute Settlement, ISDS) herausgegeben. Die Aufnahme einer ISDS-Regelung in das Transatlantische Handels- und Investitionsabkommen wird in einem der Informationsblätter ([1]) unter anderem wie folgt begründet:

Die Tatsache, dass es sich bei einem Land um einen Industriestaat mit einem starken Rechtssystem handelt, sei nicht immer eine Gewähr dafür, dass ausländische Investoren angemessen geschützt werden. So könne es sein, dass der Investor vor den Gerichten des Gastlandes nicht gegen eben dieses Land klagen wolle, weil er etwa befürchtet, dass die Gerichte voreingenommen oder nicht unabhängig sind. Außerdem erhielten die Investoren in einigen Gastländern möglicherweise keinen Zugang zu den örtlichen Gerichten. Es lägen Beispiele von Fällen vor, in denen Staaten ausländische Investoren enteignet, nicht entschädigt und ihnen den Zugang zu den örtlichen Gerichten verwehrt hätten. In solchen Fällen gebe es ohne eine ISDS-Regelung im Investitionsabkommen keine Stelle, bei der die Investoren Klage einreichen könnten.

1. Welche Mitgliedstaaten haben nach Ansicht der Kommission ein Rechtssystem, das ausländischen Investoren keinen angemessenen Schutz gewährleistet, und welche Bestimmungen liegen einer solchen Situation im Einzelnen zugrunde?

2. Welches sind die Beispiele von Fällen, auf die sich die Kommission beruft und in denen ausländischen Investoren in den USA der Zugang zu den örtlichen Gerichten verwehrt wurde, sie enteignet wurden und keinen Schadenersatz erhielten? Beziehen sich diese Beispiele auf irgendeinen Mitgliedstaat?

Antwort von Herrn De Gucht im Namen der Kommission
(27. Januar 2014)

Das von der Kommission am 3. Oktober 2013 herausgegebene Informationsblatt handelte nicht von den Verhandlungen über eine transatlantische Handels- und Investitionspartnerschaft, sondern bezog sich auf sämtliche derzeit zwischen der EU und Drittstaaten laufenden Verhandlungen über Verfahren zur Beilegung von Investor-Staat-Streitigkeiten (ISDS).

Es sei erwähnt, dass einzelne Mitgliedstaaten Vertragspartei von 1400 solcher Abkommen sind, bei denen es um Investitionsschutz und ISDS geht. Dadurch haben sich die Mitgliedstaaten Regelungen des Investitionsschutzes und zur Beilegung von Investor-Staat-Streitigkeiten unterworfen.

In den USA sahen sich Anleger gelegentlich zu Beschwerden veranlasst. Die Kommission kann zwei bekannte Beispiele von Rechtsverweigerung nennen, die die entsprechende Schiedsinstanz letztlich aufgrund von Zuständigkeitsregeln abschlägig beschied: Dabei handelt es sich um den Fall *Loewen v United States*, bei dem ein Investor in eine Vertragsstreitigkeit verwickelt war, deren Streitwert sich auf 5 Mio. USD belief; er wurde zu einem Schadenersatz von 500 Mio. USD verurteilt, bevor er Berufung einlegen konnte. Im zweiten Fall, *Mondev v United States*, konnte ein Anleger wegen einer Immunitätsklausel die Boston Redevelopment Authority nicht verklagen. Ein Beispiel für eine entschädigungslose Enteignung ist der sogenannte Havana Club-Fall: Der französische Investor Pernod Ricard wird seit mehr als zehn Jahren daran gehindert, eines seiner Warenzeichen zu nutzen. Die EU hat dies im Rahmen eines WTO-Streitbeilegungsverfahrens auch erfolgreich angefochten; die Vereinigten Staaten müssen die WTO-Entscheidung allerdings noch erfüllen. Eine der ersten WTO-Streitigkeiten, in denen die EU gegen die USA vorging, war der Helms-Burton-Fall; dabei ging es um Beschränkungen, die die Vereinigten Staaten gegen Anleger aus der EU verhängten, weil diese in Kuba investiert hatten. Es gibt noch weitere Beispiele für protektionistische Maßnahmen der US-Behörden, die sich auf ausländische Anleger auswirken.

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[1] http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/october/tradoc_151791.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013215/13
to the Commission
Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE) and David Martin (S&D)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership and investor-state dispute settlements

On 3 October 2013, the Commission released two factsheets on investor-state dispute settlements (ISDS). As one of the justifications for including an ISDS in the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, one of the factsheets ([1]) mentions:

'The fact that a country is a developed country and has a strong legal system does not always guarantee that foreign investors will be adequately protected […] the investor may not want to bring an action against the host country in that country's courts because it might think they are biased or lack independence […] investors might not be able to access the local courts in the host country. There are examples of cases where countries have expropriated foreign investors, not paid compensation and denied them access to local courts. In such situations, investors have nowhere to bring a claim, unless there is an ISDS provision in the investment agreement.'

1. Which Member States does the Commission think have a legal system that does not guarantee adequate protection for foreign investors, and which provisions in particular are at the origin of such a situation?

2. What are the examples of cases the Commission refers to where foreign investors have been denied access to local courts, expropriated, and not paid compensation in the USA? Do these examples involve any Member States?

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

The factsheet released by the Commission on 3rd October 2013 was not directed to the negotiations for a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, but to all investment protection and investor-state dispute settlements (ISDS) negotiatons currently ongoing between the EU and third countries.

As regards Member States, it should be recalled that they are party to 1400 such agreements, providing for investment protection and ISDS. Thus Member States have accepted to make themselves subject to investment protection and investor state dispute settlement.

In the US there have been occasions where investors found reasons to complain. The Commission can cite two well known examples of denial of justice, which were eventually defeated in investment arbitration for jurisdictional grounds, *Loewen v United States* (an investor involved in a contractual dispute worth USD 5m was ordered to pay damages of USD 500m before he could appeal) and *Mondev v United* States (an investor could not sue the Boston Redevelopment Authority because of an immunity clause). An example of expropriation without compensation is the Havana Club case: Pernod Ricard, a French investor, has been prevented from using one of its trademarks for over 10 years. The EU has also successfully challenged this in a WTO dispute settlement case; however, the US has yet to bring itself into compliance with the WTO. One of the first WTO cases brought by the EU against the US (the Helms-Burton) case, concerned restrictions placed by the US on investors from the EU, on account of investments they had made in Cuba. There are a number of other examples of protectionist actions by US authorities which may impact foreign investors.

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/october/tradoc_151791.pdf

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-013216/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Kriton Arsenis (S&D)
(21 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Παραβίαση του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 338/97 του Συμβουλίου

Το Σεπτέμβριο του 2013, επεστράφησαν στη Λιθουανία επτά δελφίνια, τα οποία είχαν διαμείνει στην Ελλάδα, ενόσω ανακαινιζόταν ένα δελφινάριο στη Λιθουανία. Βιντεοσκοπημένο υλικό των τοπικών μέσων της Λιθουανίας τα παρουσιάζει να μεταφέρονται με αεροπλάνο σε κιβώτια γεμάτα νερό (δύο ανά κιβώτιο) [1], παρότι κάτι τέτοιο συνιστά παραβίαση του διεθνούς δικαίου περί μεταφοράς δελφινιών, των κανονισμών της Διεθνούς Ένωσης Αεροπορικών Μεταφορών (IATA) περί μεταφοράς ζώντων ζώων [2], καθώς και του κανονισμού του Συμβουλίου (ΕΚ) αριθ 338/97, βάσει του οποίου εφαρμόζεται στην ΕΕ η σύμβαση για το διεθνές εμπόριο απειλουμένων ειδών (CITES). Τα μέρη της σύμβασης CITES έχουν συμφωνήσει ότι τα εμπορικά έγγραφα CITES ισχύουν μόνο για ζώντα ζώα που μεταφέρονται αεροπορικώς, εφόσον μεταφέρονται σύμφωνα με τις ρυθμίσεις περί ζώντων ζώων της IATA. Όσον αφορά τα δελφίνια, οι ρυθμίσεις αυτές καθιστούν υποχρεωτική τη μεταφορά σε υδατοστεγή κιβώτια, μεγέθους που επιτρέπει σε ένα ζώο να αιωρείται σε ένα φορείο από καμβά ή άλλο κατάλληλο μαλακό υλικό (από αφρώδες ελαστικό) που επιτρέπει τη στήριξη του δελφινιού πάνω σε αυτό. Το έτος 1999, η Κυβέρνηση της Αργεντινής κατέσχεσε επισήμως δύο ρινοδέλφινα του Ευξείνου Πόντου τα οποία είχαν μεταφερθεί μαζί σε ένα κιβώτιο γεμάτο νερό μέσω μίας πτήσης από τη Ρωσία προς την Αργεντινή. Δύο ακόμη δελφίνια απεβίωσαν κατά τη διάρκεια αυτής της πτήσης, με αποτέλεσμα η μεταφορέας Lufthansa, να σταματήσει τις μεταφορές τέτοιου είδους.

Ενόψει των ανωτέρω, τι είδους δράση θα συνιστούσε η Επιτροπή να αναλάβουν η Λιθουανία και η Ελλάδα, ως απάντηση στην εν λόγω μεταφορά και στις σχετιζόμενες προς αυτή παρατυπίες;

Απάντηση του κ. Potočnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(23 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Η Επιτροπή δεν γνωρίζει την ειδική δράση που αναφέρει το αξιότιμο μέλος, αλλά έχει ζητήσει περαιτέρω πληροφορίες προς τις αρμόδιες αρχές της Ελλάδας και της Λιθουανίας.

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[1] available at: http://tv.lrytas.lt/?id=13793545601378908477
[2] http://www.iata.org/publications/Pages/live-animals.aspx

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013216/13
to the Commission
Kriton Arsenis (S&D)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Violation of Council Regulation (EC) No 338/97

Seven dolphins held in Greece while a dolphinarium in Lithuania underwent refurbishment were returned to Lithuania in September 2013. Video footage captured by local media in Lithuania showed them being carried by aeroplane in boxes (two in a box) filled with water ([1]), despite this being in contravention of international law concerning dolphin transportation, the Live Animal Regulations of the International Air Transport Association (IATA) ([2]), as well as Council Regulation (EC) No 338/97 through which CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species) is implemented in the EU. The CITES Parties have agreed that CITES trade documents are only valid for live animals transported by air if they are carried according to IATA's Live Animal Regulations which, for dolphins, require transportation in waterproof boxes of a size which permits one animal to be suspended in a stretcher of canvas or other suitable material supported on a foam rubber pad. In 1999, the Government of Argentina officially confiscated two Black Sea bottlenose dolphins that had been transported together in a water-filled box on a flight between Russia and Argentina. Two further dolphins died during the flight, leading the carrier, Lufthansa, to end further such transfers.

In view of the above, what action would the Commission recommend that Lithuania and Greece take in response to this transfer and the irregularities involved?

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

The Commission is not aware of the specific operation mentioned by the Honourable Member but has requested further information to the competent authorities of Greece and Lithuania.

([1]) available at: http://tv.lrytas.lt/?id=13793545601378908477
([2]) http://www.iata.org/publications/Pages/live-animals.aspx

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-013218/13
à la Commission
Gilles Pargneaux (S&D)
(21 novembre 2013)

Objet: Risque sanitaire de l'élevage des saumons norvégiens

Des saumons norvégiens d'élevage sont nourris avec des croquettes de poisson sauvage fabriquées au Danemark et contenant de l'éthoxyquine, pesticide et antioxydant élaboré dans les années 1950 par la firme Monsanto.

Ce produit, que l'on retrouve dans les saumons consommés, traverserait la barrière hémato-encéphalique du cerveau et serait à long terme extrêmement dangereux pour la santé.

La Commission est-elle informée de ce risque sanitaire et, si tel est le cas, quelles mesures compte-t-elle prendre afin de remédier le plus rapidement possible à ce grave problème?

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

L'Honorable Parlementaire est invité à se reporter à la réponse que la Commission a donnée à la question écrite P-012742/2013 de Mme Corinne Lepage (ALDE) ([1]).

De plus, la Commission souhaiterait indiquer que l'éthoxyquine n'est actuellement pas approuvée comme pesticide au sein de l'Union européenne dans le cadre du règlement (CE) n° 1107/2009 ([2]).

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

([2]) Règlement (CE) n° 1107/2009 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 21 octobre 2009 concernant la mise sur le marché des produits phytopharmaceutiques et abrogeant les directives 79/117/CEE et 91/414/CEE du Conseil (JO L 309 du 24.11.2009, p. 1).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013218/13
to the Commission
Gilles Pargneaux (S&D)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Health risk from farmed Norwegian salmon

Farmed Norwegian salmon are fed on wild fish pellets manufactured in Denmark which contain ethoxyquin, a pesticide and antioxidant created in the 1950s by the Monsanto company.

Apparently, this product, which is found in salmon that are eaten, crosses the blood-brain barrier and is in the long term extremely dangerous for human health.

Is the Commission aware of this health risk and, if so, what steps will it take to remedy this serious problem as quickly as possible?

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

The Honourable Member is asked to refer to the Commission's answer to Written Question P-012742/2013 which was submitted by Ms Corinne Lepage (ALDE) ([1]).

In addition, the Commission would like to mention that ethoxyquin is currently not approved as a pesticide in the European Union in the context of Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 ([2]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 concerning the placing of plant protection products on the market and repealing Council Directives 79/117/EEC and 91/414/EEC (Official Journal of the E.U. L 309, 24.11.2009, p. 1).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013219/13
alla Commissione
Amalia Sartori (PPE)
(21 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Impatti competitivi della legislazione europea sul settore dell'alluminio

Nella comunicazione sulla politica industriale del 2012 (COM(2012) 0582), la Commissione ha annunciato il lancio di uno studio dei costi cumulativi della legislazione europea sul settore dell'alluminio, riconoscendo il ruolo fondamentale di questo settore per la catena del valore industriale dell'Unione europea e le significative pressioni competitive a cui il settore è esposto a livello internazionale.

Lo studio finale pubblicato il 6 novembre 2013 rivela che tali costi sono effettivamente molto elevati (11 % dei costi totali di produzione) e sono ampiamente imputabili alla politica energetica e climatica dell'UE. Poiché l'alluminio è una materia prima il cui prezzo è determinato su mercati globali e non può quindi trasferire questi costi aggiuntivi, la situazione ha un chiaro impatto sulla competitività del settore. Tutto ciò ha ripercussioni sull'intera catena del valore industriale, con conseguenze sulla sopravvivenza di molte imprese dell'indotto, specie PMI.

1. Quali misure proporrà la Commissione per contrastare gli impatti sulla competitività a carico dei settori più esposti che non possono trasferire i costi a valle, specialmente nel contesto della proposta relativa alle politiche climatiche ed energetiche per il 2030?

2. In che modo la Commissione intende dare un riconoscimento legale al caso speciale delle industrie ad alto consumo di elettricità per assicurare che possano accedere a prezzi energetici competitivi e siano così in grado di reinvestire in Europa?

3. Nel contesto della revisione del mercato ETS, la Commissione intende istituire uno schema a livello europeo di compensazione dei costi indiretti dell'ETS sul prezzo energetico e fornire una piena compensazione in tutti gli Stati membri?

4. Intende la Commissione presentare queste proposte in vista del Consiglio europeo previsto per febbraio 2014 e dedicato alla crescita industriale?

Risposta di Connie Hedegaard a nome della Commissione
(27 gennaio 2014)

La Commissione ha appena presentato una comunicazione sul quadro 2030 per il clima e per l'energia, corredata di una valutazione d'impatto che ne analizza i costi e i benefici per l'industria, compresi i settori ad alta intensità energetica. L'UE e gli Stati membri dispongono di molti strumenti per migliorare la competitività, fra cui in particolare l'integrazione del mercato interno dell'energia, l'ulteriore diversificazione delle fonti di approvvigionamento energetico, il sostegno alla R&S e altre azioni a favore dell'efficienza energetica.

Il sistema UE per lo scambio di quote di emissioni (EU ETS) ([1]) prevede l'assegnazione gratuita di quote per tutelare le industrie dal rischio potenziale di rilocalizzazione delle emissioni ([2]). I settori ad alta intensità energetica come l'alluminio, considerati a rischio significativo di rilocalizzazione, ricevono una quantità maggiore di assegnazioni gratuite. Inoltre, gli Stati membri possono erogare aiuti di Stato a determinati settori, previa approvazione della Commissione ([3]), per alleviare l'impatto dei costi indiretti dell'EU ETS. Poiché la direttiva EU ETS prevede regimi nazionali di compensazione, attualmente la Commissione non intende istituire un regime unionale. La Commissione si è impegnata a fare chiarezza sui contratti di energia di lunga durata in seguito a una lettera inviata dall'industria al Vicepresidente Almunia.

Per quanto riguarda la valutazione dei costi nel settore dell'alluminio, lo studio ([4]) ha stimato i costi storici di produzione nell'UE, senza analizzare i benefici del mercato unico o i costi della regolamentazione in vigore in altre regioni del mondo. I prezzi dell'energia sono più alti in alcune zone dell'UE anche a prescindere dagli effetti di norme potenzialmente svantaggiose per i produttori europei. Ciò nonostante, il 45 % circa delle importazioni primarie di alluminio nell'UE proviene da paesi dello Spazio economico europeo, che sono soggetti all'EU ETS, seppure con altri mix di produzione e altri costi indiretti.

([1]) Direttiva 2003/87/CE, modificata da: direttiva 2004/101/CE; regolamento (CE) n. 219/2009; direttiva 2009/29/CE.
([2]) Decisione della Commissione 2010/2/UE e successive modifiche.
([3]) Comunicazione della Commissione 2012/C 158/04.
([4]) Lo studio è disponibile su http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/_getdocument.cfm?doc_id=8222

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013219/13
to the Commission
Amalia Sartori (PPE)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Competitive impact of European legislation on the aluminium sector

In its 2012 communication on industrial policy (COM(2012)0582), the Commission announced the launch of a review of the cumulative costs of European legislation on the aluminium sector, recognising the sector's fundamental role for the EU's industrial value chain and the significant competitive pressures to which the sector is exposed internationally.

The final review, published on 6 November 2013, shows that these costs are, in fact, very high (11% of total production costs) and that the EU's energy and climate policies are in the main responsible for them. Since aluminium is a raw material whose price is determined on global markets, and is therefore unable to pass on these additional costs, the situation has a clear impact on the sector's competitiveness. All this has an effect on the industrial value chain as a whole, with consequences for the survival of many firms in the sector, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises.

1. What measures will the Commission put forward to combat the impacts on competitiveness weighing upon the most exposed sectors, which cannot transfer the costs downstream, particularly in the context of the proposal on climate and energy policies for 2030?

2. How does the Commission intend to give legal recognition to the special case of industries with high electricity consumption, to ensure that they can have access to competitive energy prices and are therefore able to reinvest in Europe?

3. In the context of the emissions trading scheme (ETS) market review, does the Commission intend to set up a Europe-wide scheme to compensate the indirect costs of the ETS to energy prices and to supply full compensation in all Member States?

4. Does the Commission intend to submit these proposals with a view to the European Council planned for February 2014, on the subject of industrial growth?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(27 January 2014)

The Commission has just submitted a communication on the 2030 framework for climate and energy policies, accompanied by an impact assessment analysing the costs and benefits for industry, including energy intensive sectors. The EU and Member States have at disposal various instruments to enhance competitiveness, notably by promoting the integrated Internal Energy Market, continued diversification of energy supplies, support to R&D and more efforts on energy efficiency.

The EU Emission Trading System (EU ETS) ([1]) permits free allocation of emission allowances to protect industries against potential risk of carbon leakage ([2]). Energy intensive sectors such as aluminium, deemed exposed to significant risk, benefit from higher share of free allocations. Member States can also provide state aid to certain sectors subject to Commission approval ([3]) to help offsetting the indirect cost of the EU ETS. As national compensation for indirect costs is foreseen in the EU ETS Directive, currently the Commission does not intend to set an EU-wide scheme. The Commission is committed to provide clarity about long term energy contracts following a letter by the industry to Vice-President Almunia.

Regarding the aluminium sector cost assessment, the study ([4]) estimated the historical costs of producing in the EU and did not analyse the benefits of the EU Single Market, nor the regulatory costs existing in other parts of the world. Energy prices are higher in parts of the EU also without the effect of regulation possibly leading to some disadvantage for EU producers. Nevertheless, around 45% of primary aluminium imports to the EU are from the European Economic Area countries that are subject to the EU ETS, albeit having different production mix and indirect costs.

([1]) Directive 2003/87/EC. Amending acts are as follows: Directive 2004/101/EC; Regulation No 219/2009; Directive 2009/29/EC.
([2]) Commission Decision 2010/2/EU and subsequent amendments.
([3]) Communication from the Commission, 2012/C 158/04.
([4]) The study is available at http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/_getdocument.cfm?doc_id=8222

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-013221/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(21 de novembro de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Armas químicas e sanções impostas à Síria

A maioria das instalações passíveis de produzirem armas químicas na Síria foi já visitada pela missão das Nações Unidas, a qual também recebeu o inventário do arsenal e a localização dos depósitos. De acordo com as informações prestadas ao secretário-geral da ONU pelos 22 inspetores da Organização para a Proibição das Armas Químicas (OPAQ) e os 50 elementos das Nações Unidas presentes no território, o processo decorre dentro dos prazos previstos e com a colaboração «consistente e construtiva» das autoridades de Damasco, que estão a cumprir escrupulosamente os compromissos assumidos. De um total de 23 locais onde a Síria podia produzir aquele tipo de armamento, 21 foram já inspecionados pela missão da OPAQ e da ONU, que na esmagadora maioria dos casos verificou a destruição da sua capacidade operacional. Na posse dos inspetores, está, também, o inventário do arsenal e a listagem dos locais onde este se encontra depositado. Entretanto, e a par dos bombardeamentos com morteiros, dos ataques contra serviços e infraestruturas públicas e de fornecimento de energia elétrica e água potável, dos atentados à bomba, quase diários, perpetrados em todo o país em zonas urbanas de grande concentração e tráfego de civis, os bandos terroristas parecem empenhados numa derradeira tentativa de se apoderarem de armas químicas.

Assim pergunto à Alta Representante:

Que avaliação faz destes novos desenvolvimentos?

Não considera justificado o fim da posição da UE relativamente ao conflito na Síria, nomeadamente o fim das sanções e do apoio à chamada oposição Síria?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(3 de fevereiro de 2014)

A UE continua extremamente preocupada com a deterioração da situação na Síria e com o envolvimento de elementos não estatais extremistas e estrangeiros nos combates nesse país, que está a inflamar ainda mais o conflito e a ameaçar a estabilidade regional. A UE exortou todas as partes no conflito a pôr fim ao apoio a esses grupos. Quanto à destruição das armas químicas na Síria, a UE está empenhada em apoiar a OPAQ e a ONU na prossecução do plano de destruição que pode abrir o caminho a uma solução pacífica e duradoura para a crise nesse país.

Esta situação torna ainda mais urgente pôr termo a todos os atos de violência e ao sofrimento do povo sírio, bem como encontrar uma solução política que satisfaça as suas aspirações legítimas. Para o efeito, a Alta Representante congratulou-se com o estabelecimento, pelo Secretário-Geral das Nações Unidas, da data de 22 de janeiro de 2014 para a, há muito aguardada, Conferência sobre a Síria, a denominada Conferência Genebra 2. A UE tem estado também a trabalhar para criar as condições conducentes à realização da conferência entre todos os intervenientes principais.A UE espera que ambas as partes designem representantes para essa missão, os quais, num espírito de abertura e responsabilidade pelo seu país, irão envidar esforços no sentido de encontrar uma solução para este trágico conflito e iniciar um novo capítulo na história da Síria em consonância com as aspirações legítimas de todos os sírios de viver num país onde a paz, a segurança e a estabilidade foram restabelecidas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013221/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Chemical weapons and sanctions imposed on Syria

Most of the facilities capable of producing chemical weapons in Syria have already been visited by the United Nations mission, which has also received an inventory of the arsenal and details of the locations of depots. According to information sent to the UN Secretary-General by the 22 inspectors of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the 50 UN representatives present in the territory, the process is taking place within the planned timescales and with the 'consistent and constructive' cooperation of the authorities in Damascus, who are scrupulously complying with their commitments. The OPCW-UN mission has already visited 21 of the 23 sites in Syria which were capable of producing chemical weapons. In the overwhelming majority of cases, the mission confirmed that the operational capacity of these sites has been destroyed. The inspectors also possess an inventory of the arsenal and a list of the sites where weapons are stored. In the meantime, alongside mortar attacks and attacks on services, public infrastructure and electricity and drinking-water supplies, and bombings carried out almost every day in busy urban areas all over the country, terrorist groups seem committed to a last-ditch attempt to seize control of chemical weapons.

What is the Vice-President/High-Representative's view of these new developments?

Does she not believe that the EU would be justified in changing its position on the conflict in Syria by ending sanctions and withdrawing support for the so-called Syrian opposition?

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

The EU continues to be extremely concerned by the deteriorating situation in Syria and with the involvement of extremist and foreign non-state actors in the fighting in Syria, which is further fueling the conflict and posing a threat to regional stability. The EU has called on all relevant parties to halt the support to these groups. Concerning the destruction of the chemical weapons in Syria, the EU is committed to supporting OPCW and the UN in carrying out the destruction plan which can open the way for a peaceful and durable solution to the crisis in that country.

This situation makes it all the more urgent to put an end to all violence and to the suffering of the Syrian people and find a political solution that meets their legitimate aspirations. To this end, the High Representative welcomed the set of the date of 22 January 2014 by the UNSG for the long awaited conference on Syria, the so-called Geneva 2 meeting. The EU has also been working to create conditions conductive to holding the conference among all important stakeholders.It hopes that both sides will designate representatives to the task who in a spirit of openess and responsibility for their country will work towards finding a way out of this tragic conflict, and open a new chapter in Syria's history in line with the legitimate aspirations of all Syrians to live in a country where peace, security and stability have been restored.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-013225/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(21 de novembro de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Agressão da NATO à Líbia

Oitenta oficiais de alta patente foram executados por grupos armados na Líbia desde o início da agressão da NATO ao país.

Avolumam-se os conflitos armados entre as centenas de brigadas que dominam e reclamam pedaços do território e os respetivos recursos.

Trípoli e Benghazi são palco de choques entre contingentes de «senhores da guerra» que ameaçam mergulhar todo o território numa guerra civil declarada. Neste última cidade, ainda na semana passada, as fações que reclamam a independência da região da Cirenaica instalaram mesmo um parlamento próprio.

Assim, pergunta-se à Alta Representante:

1. Que avaliação faz desta situação?

2. Não considera que a agressão da NATO muito contribuiu para a situação caótica que se vive na Líbia?

3. Depois da participação de vários países da UE na agressão à Líbia, que outras ações tem a UE vindo a desenvolver?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(17 de janeiro de 2014)

A União Europeia está preocupada com a deterioração significativa da situação política e de segurança na Líbia e tem salientado continuamente a necessidade de todos os intervenientes líbios trabalharem em conjunto para atingirem uma transição política pacífica e democrática.

Aguarda com expectativa as próximas eleições para a Assembleia Constituinte e o lançamento do processo de elaboração de uma nova Constituição democrática na Líbia. A UE apelou à organização de um processo eleitoral inclusivo e credível, no qual todos os líbios, incluindo as minorias e as mulheres, trabalhem coletivamente para a realização das aspirações democráticas da revolução.

A UE apoia o processo de transição em curso na Líbia com um pacote global de 106 milhões de EUR, que cobre: apoio ao processo de transição democrática, melhoria da qualidade do capital humano, melhoria da sustentabilidade do desenvolvimento económico e social e resolução, em conjunto, dos problemas colocados pela gestão das migrações. Faz parte deste pacote de ajuda a promoção do Estado de direito (por exemplo, o programa de 10 milhões de EUR que visa a reforma da polícia e do setor da justiça), bem como o apoio ao processo de transição em curso (por exemplo, o programa de 3,1 milhões de EUR que visa reforçar as capacidades das organizações da sociedade civil emergentes, para que possam prestar serviços e contribuir para promover a boa governação na Líbia).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013225/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — NATO attacks on Libya

Eighty high-ranking officers have been executed by armed groups in Libya since NATO first launched attacks against the country.

Increasing numbers of armed conflicts are taking place between the hundreds of brigades that are occupying and laying claim to pieces of the country and their respective resources.

Tripoli and Benghazi are the scenes of clashes between troops led by 'warlords' who threaten to plunge the entire area into open civil war. In the latter city, factions demanding independence for the region of Cyrenaica established their own parliament only last week.

1. What is the Vice-President/High Representative's view of this situation?

2. Does she believe that the NATO attacks have greatly aggravated the chaotic situation in Libya?

3. Following the participation by several EU Member States in the attacks on Libya, what other actions has the EU undertaken?

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

The EU is concerned by the significant deterioration of both the political and security situation in Libya. The EU is continuously underlying the need for all Libyan actors to work jointly to achieve a peaceful and democratic political transition.

The EU looks forward to the upcoming elections for the Constitutional Drafting Assembly and to the start of the drafting process of a new and democratic Libyan constitution. The EU has called for an inclusive and credible electoral process where all Libyans, including minorities and women, work collectively for the fulfilment of the revolution's democratic aspirations.

The EU supports Libyan transition with an overall package of EUR 106 million; it covers: supporting the democratic transition process, improving the quality of human capital, increasing the sustainability of economic and social development and addressing jointly the challenges of managing migration. Promoting the rule of law (e.g. EUR 10 million program on reform of the police and justice sector) as well as supporting the ongoing transitional process (e.g. EUR 3.1 million program to strengthen the capacity of emerging civil society organisations to deliver services and contribute to promoting good governance in Libya) is an integral part of this support package.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-013226/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(21 de novembro de 2013)

Assunto: Babbel.com: língua portuguesa

O sítio na Internet babbel.com anuncia possuir «um sistema integrado de aprendizagem [de línguas] que combina métodos pedagógicos com o mais moderno da tecnologia da Internet» e é, segundo o próprio, financiado pelo Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento Regional.

Para assinalar as línguas acerca das quais oferece serviços, a empresa Lesson Nine GmbH/babbel.com — sedeada na Bergmannstr. 5, 10961 Berlim — identifica-as com bandeiras nacionais. Ao contrário das demais línguas, que surgem assinaladas com bandeiras de países europeus, a língua portuguesa é identificada com a imagem da bandeira brasileira.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento deste facto?

2. Não considera desadequada esta dualidade de critérios?

3. Não crê que, beneficiando a empresa em questão de fundos europeus e sendo Portugal, não apenas um Estado-Membro da União Europeia, mas o país de origem do idioma, que a língua portuguesa deveria ser objeto de identificação idêntica às restantes línguas no referido sítio da internet?

4. Contactou a empresa Lesson Nine GmbH/babbel.com a propósito desta questão? Estará disponível para o fazer?

Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão
(20 de janeiro de 2014)

Até à receção desta pergunta, a Comissão não tinha conhecimento de que o logótipo para a língua portuguesa tinha sido identificado incorretamente neste projeto. A Comissão considera que o logótipo apresentado é um erro do beneficiário e chamou a atenção da autoridade de gestão do programa para a questão.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013226/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Babbel.com: Portuguese language

The babbel.com website claims to offer a 'comprehensive learning system [that] combines effective education methods with state-of-the-art technology'. The website also states that it is funded by the European Regional Development Fund.

The company Lesson Nine GmbH/babbel.com, whose headquarters are at Bergmannstr. 5, 10961 Berlin, uses national flags to identify the languages in which it offers instruction. The Portuguese language is identified by an image of the Brazilian flag while all of the other languages are identified by European flags.

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation?

2. Does it not believe that such double standards are inappropriate?

3. Given that the company in question receives European funds and that Portugal is not only a Member State of the EU but also the country from which the Portuguese language originated, does the Commission not believe that Portuguese should be identified in the same way as the other languages on this website?

4. Has it contacted Lesson Nine GmbH/babbel.com about his matter? Is it prepared to do so?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(20 January 2014)

Until the reception of this question, the Commission had not been aware that the logo for the Portuguese language had been displayed incorrectly for this project. The Commission considers the displayed logo to be an oversight of the beneficiary and has drawn the attention of the programme managing authority to the matter.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-013227/13
aan de Commissie
Judith Sargentini (Verts/ALE)
(21 november 2013)

Betreft: European Cloud Initiative

De Commissie laat zich bij de uitwerking van de cloudcomputingstrategie adviseren door het door haar opgerichte en gefinancierde European Cloud Partnership (ECP).

1. Kan de Commissie toelichten welke criteria zijn gebruikt bij de samenstelling van de Steering Board van de ECP?

2. Kan de Commissie toelichten welke invloed de ECP uitoefent op haar beleid inzake cloudcomputing? Welke concrete adviezen zijn tot dusver uitgebracht?

3. Deelt de Commissie mijn mening dat de Europese cloudstrategie er onder meer op gericht zou moeten zijn om burgers, ondernemingen en overheden meer zeggingschap te geven over het beheer van de kritische infrastructuur die de cloud is geworden en om de afhankelijkheid van niet-Europese aanbieders op cruciale punten te beperken?

4. Deelt de Commissie mijn mening dat het vertrouwen in de cloud essentieel is voor het succes van de cloud op lange termijn en dat dat vertrouwen alleen kan ontstaan als Europese burgers, bedrijven en organisaties kunnen kiezen voor diensten die volledig onder de Europese wetgeving vallen, en niet vatbaar zijn voor surveillance door buitenlandse inlichtingendiensten?

5. Hoe verklaart de Commissie in het licht van bovenstaande overwegingen de totale afwezigheid van vertegenwoordigers van Europese aanbieders van cloudcomputingdiensten en van burgerrechtenorganisaties onder de leden van de Steering Board van de ECP? Is het de bedoeling dat in de nabije toekomst vertegenwoordigers van Europese aanbieders van cloudcomputing en burgerrechtenorganisaties worden toegevoegd aan de Steering Board?

6. Verwacht de Commissie dat de dominante aanwezigheid van vertegenwoordigers van niet-Europese aanbieders van cloudcomputingdiensten positief bijdraagt aan de ontwikkeling van een onafhankelijke Europese cloudcomputingstrategie?

7. Is de Commissie bekend met de uitspraken van de heer Vogels, CTO van Amazon en lid van de Steering Board van de ECP in een interview met de website NuTech ([1]), waarin deze stelde dat de ontwikkeling van een eigen Europese cloud infrastructuur geen toegevoegde waarde heeft? Hoe beoordeelt zij deze uitspraken, mede in het licht van zijn lidmaatschap van de Steering Board van de ECP?

Antwoord van mevrouw Kroes namens de Commissie
(16 januari 2014)

De Steering Board (SB) van de ECP is een adviesgroep en verstrekt als zodanig uitsluitend aanbevelingen. De SB is bewust klein gehouden en bestaat uit leden uit de IT- en telecomsector en hoofden informatiseringsontwikkeling, afkomstig uit de lidstaten en geassocieerde landen. Naar verwachting worden er tegen de zomer van 2014 specifieke aanbevelingen gedaan. Verder werkt de ECP aan een initiatief om de specificaties van overheidsopdrachten op het gebied van cloud computing gezamenlijk te definiëren. Daarvoor is een oproep tot het indienen van voorstellen voor de overheidssector ([2]) gedaan.

De cloudstrategie van de EU ([3]) is erop gericht regeringen en het bedrijfsleven te helpen de uitgaven te verlagen, productiever te worden, veilige en betrouwbare clouddiensten aan te kopen, lock-in te vermijden en burgers te helpen de cloud optimaal te benutten. Vertrouwen in cloud computing is van essentieel belang. Diensten dienen onderworpen te zijn aan Europese wetgeving. De legitimiteit van toegang door de overheid tot gegevens overeenkomstig Europese wetgeving en internationale overeenkomsten is belangrijk; over dit onderwerp worden dan ook discussies gevoerd. Voor het beleid ten aanzien van buitenlandse inlichtingendiensten is de EU niet bevoegd.

Van de 20 leden van de SB van de ECP heeft er slechts één zijn hoofdkwartier niet in Europa ([4]). Aangezien het mandaat van de groep na de zomer van 2014 afloopt, zijn er momenteel geen plannen om de samenstelling ervan te veranderen.

([1]) http://nutech.nl/internet/3588979/amazon-cto-werner-vogels-cloud-innovatie-en-startups.html
([2]) http://www.cloudforeurope.eu/.
([3]) Mededeling van de Commissie — „Het aanboren van het potentieel van cloud computing in Europa", COM(2012) 0529.
([4]) https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/news/steering-board-members.

Voorafgaand aan de goedkeuring van de Europese cloudstrategie heeft er een uitgebreide openbare raadpleging plaatsgevonden. Bij het werk op het gebied van de tenuitvoerlegging zijn privacybeschermings- en consumentenbelangenorganisaties betrokken. Bij het werk op het gebied van de gedragscode zijn de European Privacy Association (Europese privacybond), CNIL (Commission Nationale Informatique et Libertés, Franse nationale commissie voor informatica en vrijheden) en de Groep artikel 29 betrokken. Bij de deskundigengroep voor cloudcomputingcontracten zijn het BEUC (Europees Bureau van Consumentenverenigingen), academici en privacydeskundigen betrokken.

De Commissie heeft kennis van de uitspraken van de heer Vogels. De Commissie analyseert alle relevante informatie van elke partij op onbevooroordeelde wijze.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013227/13
to the Commission
Judith Sargentini (Verts/ALE)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: European Cloud Initiative

In developing the cloud computing strategy, the Commission is advised by the European Cloud Partnership (ECP), which it established and funds.

1. Can the Commission explain what criteria were used in setting up the ECP Steering Board?

2. Can the Commission explain the influence the ECP exerts on its policy on cloud computing? What specific recommendations have been given so far?

3. Does the Commission agree with me that the European Cloud Strategy should have been established in order to give citizens, businesses and governments a greater say in, among other areas, the management of the critical infrastructure that cloud computing provides and to reduce the dependence of non-European providers on key issues?

4. Does the Commission share my view that confidence in cloud computing is essential for its long-term success and that such confidence can only be created if European citizens, companies and organisations have a choice of services that are fully covered by European legislation and are not susceptible to surveillance by foreign intelligence services?

5. In light of the above considerations, how does the Commission explain the total absence of representation of European cloud computing service providers and civil rights organisations among the members of the ECP Steering Board? Does the Commission intend to appoint representatives of European cloud computing providers and civil rights organisations to the Steering Board in the near future?

6. Does the Commission expect that the dominant presence of representatives of non-European providers of cloud computing services will contribute positively to the development of an independent European cloud computing strategy?

7. Is the Commission aware of the statements made by Mr Vogels, Amazon CTO and member of the ECP Steering Board in an interview with the NuTech website ([1]), in which he argued that the development of a European private cloud infrastructure has no added value? How does the Commission evaluate these statements, also in light of Mr Vogels's membership of the ECP Steering Board?

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

As an advisory group the ECP Steering Board (SB) provides recommendations only. It is intentionally of limited size, reflecting the IT and telecom industry and Chief Information Officers from MS and associated countries. Specific recommendations are expected by summer 2014. The other part of the ECP is an initiative to jointly define public sector cloud procurement requirements, initiated through a call for proposals for the public sector ([2]).

The EU cloud strategy ([3]) aims at helping governments and businesses to achieve savings, become more productive, procure secure and trustworthy cloud services, avoid lock-in and help citizens to make best use of cloud. Trust in cloud computing is essential. Services need to be subject to European legislation. The legitimacy of government access to data according to European legislation and international agreements is important and under discussion. Policy on foreign intelligence services does not fall within the EU competences.

Of the 20 members of the ECP SB only one organisation is not headquartered in Europe ([4]). There is no intention to change the composition of this group at this stage, since this group's mandate will come to an end after summer 2014.

Prior to adopting the European cloud strategy, a wide and open consultation was done. The implementation work involves privacy protection and consumer interest organisations. The code of conduct work includes the European Privacy Association, CNIL and the article 29 Working Party. The Expert Group on Cloud Computing Contracts involves BEUC, academics and privacy experts.

([1]) http://nutech.nl/Internet/3588979/amazon-cto-werner-vogels-cloud-innovatie-en-startups.html
([2]) http://www.cloudforeurope.eu/
([3]) Communication from the Commission 'Unleashing the potential of Cloud Computing in Europe', COM(2012) 0529.
([4]) https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/news/steering-board-members

The Commission is aware of Mr Vogels' statement. The Commission analyses all relevant information from any party without prejudice.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-013228/13
an die Kommission
Monika Hohlmeier (PPE)
(21. November 2013)

Betrifft: EU-ESTA

Im Februar hat die Kommission ein Paket von Vorschlägen zum besseren Grenzmanagement in der EU, das sogenannte Smart Borders Package, vorgelegt. Nach eingehender Prüfung des Vorschlages ist das Parlament der Überzeugung, dass der Vorschlag aus verschiedenen Gründen noch nicht ausgereift ist und weitere Erkenntnisse zur Entwicklung des Systems notwendig sind. Unter anderem betreffen diese die technische Realisierung sowie die Gewissheit über die Gesamtkosten des Einreise-/Ausreiseregisters sowie des Registrierungsprogramms für Vielreisende. Während das Parlament von dem Nutzen der Vorschläge, nämlich einer umfassenden Kenntnis über Ein- und Ausreisebewegungen sowie effizienteres Grenzmanagement samt verbesserter Strafverfolgung, überzeugt ist, nimmt es die aktuelle Verzögerung des Smart Border Paketes durch eine weitere Studie zur Kenntnis. Aus den USA ist uns das Web-basierte und durch Gebühren selbstfinanzierte ESTA-Programm bekannt, das statistische Erkenntnisse zu Ein- und Ausreisedaten bereitstellt. Ein solches System für Europa bietet die Möglichkeit, bereits heute einige der Vorteile von Smart Borders zu erreichen, ohne finanzielle und technische Risiken einzugehen.

Welche Kenntnisse hat die Kommission über die Machbarkeit eines Europäischen ESTA-Systems?

Ist die Kommission der Auffassung, dass ein Europäisches ESTA-System eine kostenneutrale Komplementärmaßnahme zum Smart Borders Paket darstellt?

Ist die Kommission der Meinung, dass ein solches System schnell und unbürokratisch eingeführt werden könnte, um angesichts der Verzögerung von Smart Borders bereits vorher wertvolle Informationen zu liefern?

Plant die Kommission dem Parlament und Rat einen Vorschlag zu einem ESTA-System für die EU vorzulegen? Wenn ja, soll der Vorschlag noch während der aktuellen Legislaturperiode vorgelegt werden?

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

Die Kommission hat die Durchführbarkeit eines ESTA-Systems für die EU geprüft und dabei eine Studie ([1]) zu diesem Thema in Auftrag gegeben, die gleichzeitig mit der Mitteilung über intelligente Grenzen ([2]) veröffentlicht wurde. Die Mitteilung enthält die Einschätzung der Kommission, der zufolge die Einrichtung eines EU-ESTA-Systems in diesem Stadium nicht verfolgt werden sollte, da der potenzielle Beitrag zur Verbesserung der Sicherheit der Mitgliedstaaten sowie die finanziellen Kosten und die Auswirkungen auf die internationalen Beziehungen die Erhebung personenbezogener Daten in einem derartigen Ausmaß nicht rechtfertigen würden.

Laut der Studie wäre die Einführung eines EU-ESTA-Systems nicht kostenneutral: Die Entwicklungskosten wurden auf 30 bis 50 Mio. EUR und die Betriebskosten auf 6 bis 10 Mio. EUR pro Jahr veranschlagt. Die Kosten für die Errichtung und den Betrieb des Systems gingen für die zentralen Komponenten zu Lasten des EU-Haushalts, während die Mitgliedstaaten die Kosten für die nationalen Komponenten zu tragen hätten. Die Kosten könnten auf die Antragsteller übertragen werden, allerdings nur teilweise, da eine ESTA-Gebühr relativ niedrig sein müsste, um sich nicht negativ auf die Einreise in die EU auszuwirken.

Ein EU-ESTA-System lässt sich nicht kurzfristig einführen. Zunächst müssten Rechtsinstrumente für die Entwicklung und Nutzung eines EU-ESTA-Systems ausgearbeitet und anschließend vom Europäischen Parlament und vom Rat verabschiedet werden, was voraussichtlich drei Jahre dauern würde. Laut der Studie würde die anschließende Einrichtung der technischen Infrastruktur des EU-ESTA-Systems wahrscheinlich mindestens zwei weitere Jahre in Anspruch nehmen.

Die Kommission beabsichtigt, zu einem späteren Zeitpunkt auf dieses Thema zurückkommen. Sie plant aber nicht, vor Ende der laufenden Wahlperiode einen Vorschlag für die Einführung eines derartigen Systems vorzulegen.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/e-library/docs/pdf/esta_main_en.pdf
([2]) KOM(2011)680 vom 25.10.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-013228/13
to the Commission
Monika Hohlmeier (PPE)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: EU-ESTA

In February, the Commission submitted a package of proposals for better management of the EU's borders, the 'Smart Borders Package'. After a thorough examination of the proposal, Parliament has concluded that, from various points of view, the proposal is not yet ready for adoption and that further information is needed in order to develop the system. This applies, inter alia, to its technical realisation and the need to be certain of the total costs of the entry/exit register and the registration programme for frequent travellers. While Parliament is convinced that the proposals would have a beneficial impact by providing comprehensive information about arrivals and departures, making border management more efficient and improving prosecutions, it notes the current delays to the Smart Borders Package due to a further study. From the USA, we are aware of the web-based ESTA Program, which is self-financing by means of charges and which produces statistics from entry and exit data. Such a system for Europe would make it possible without further ado to attain some of the benefits of Smart Borders without incurring any financial or technical risks.

What information does the Commission have about the feasibility of a European ESTA system?

Does the Commission consider that a European ESTA system would be a cost-neutral complementary measure to the Smart Borders Package?

Does the Commission consider that such a system could be introduced quickly and without bureaucracy in order to supply valuable information during the interval which has arisen due to the delay to Smart Borders?

Does the Commission intend to submit a proposal on an ESTA system for the EU to Parliament and the Council? If so, will the proposal be submitted before the end of the current parliamentary term?

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

The Commission has examined the feasibility of an EU ESTA, including by commissioning a study ([1]) on the subject, made available at the same time as the communication on 'Smart Borders' ([2]). The communication included the Commission's assessment that the establishment of an EU ESTA should not be pursued at this stage, as the potential contribution to enhancing the security of the Member States would not justify the collection of personal data at such a scale, the financial cost as well as the impact on international relations.

According to the study the introduction of an EU ESTA would not be cost-neutral: development costs were estimated between EUR 30 million and EUR 50 million and operating costs between EUR 6 million and EUR 10 million per year. The establishment and running of the system would have to be borne by the EU budget for the central components, and by Member States for the national ones. Costs could be passed on to applicants, but only in part, as an ESTA fee would have to be relatively low in order not to deter travel to the EU.

An EU ESTA cannot be introduced in the short-term. Legal instruments for the development and the use of an EU-ESTA would first need to be drafted and then adopted by Parliament and Council, which might be expected to take three years. According to the study, the establishment of the EU ESTA technical infrastructure would then probably take at least two more years.

The Commission intends to return to this issue at a later stage, but does not plan to present a proposal for the introduction of such a system before the end of the current parliamentary term.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/e-library/docs/pdf/esta_main_en.pdf
([2]) COM(2011) 680, 25.10.2011.

(Latviešu valodas versija)

Jautājums, uz kuru jāatbild rakstiski, P-013229/13
Komisijai
Alexander Mirsky (S&D)
(2013. gada 21. novembris)

Temats: Aizskaroši izteicieni

Latvijas aizsardzības ministrs Artis Pabriks 2013. gada 19. novembrī ierosināja pārdēvēt pieminekli, kas veltīts antifašistiskās koalīcijas cīnītājiem. Pabriks uzskata, ka tas ir jādēvē par "padomekli", proti, atgādinājumu par padomju sistēmu, lai gan patiesībā šis piemineklis ir veltīts Rīgas atbrīvošanai no nacisma.

Vai Komisija, ņemot vērā to, ka Latvijā ir novērojama vispārēja tendence glorificēt nacismu, nodrošinās, ka Latvija pareizi īsteno Pamatlēmumu 2008/913/TI par krimināltiesību izmantošanu cīņā pret noteiktiem rasisma un ksenofobijas veidiem un izpausmēm?

Atbildi Komisijas vārdā sniedza Viviāna Redinga
(2014. gada 5. februāris)

Komisijas ziņojums par to, kā īstenots Padomes 2008. gada 28. novembra Pamatlēmums 2008/913/TI par krimināltiesību izmantošanu cīņā pret noteiktiem rasisma un ksenofobijas veidiem un izpausmēm, tika pieņemts 2014. gada 27. janvārī.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-013229/13
to the Commission
Alexander Mirsky (S&D)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Offensive statements

On 19 November 2013 the Latvian Minister of Defence, Artis Pabriks, proposed renaming the monument to the soldiers of the anti-Hitler coalition. The new name would be 'Sovyatnik', which, translated into English, means 'monument to the Soviet system' — whereas in reality the monument is dedicated to the liberation of Riga from Nazism.

Given that there is a general tendency towards glorification of Nazism in Latvia, will the Commission ensure that Latvia has correctly implemented Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia?

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

The Commission report on the implementation of 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 was adopted on 27 January 2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013230/13
to the Commission
Jean Lambert (Verts/ALE)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Establishing an EU-wide database of unidentified bodies

The UK Missing Persons Bureau is the national point of contact for all missing person and unidentified body cases in the United Kingdom. Its database holds records of all unidentified bodies and body parts found in the UK. This enables the cross-matching of reported missing persons with unidentified bodies and remains.

The head of the UK Missing Persons Bureau has recently called for a Europe-wide database of unidentified bodies and body parts to be set up. Such a database would help police forces across Europe resolve missing person cases.

1. Could the Commission consider establishing such a database, perhaps in the first instance by carrying out a feasibility study?

2. In the meantime, could the Commission consider the coordination at EU level of all existing national databases in the Member States?

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

The Commission refers to its replies to parliamentary questions E-008273/2011 and E-005233/2013 [1].

The Commission endeavours to have an effective implementation of Council Decision 2008/616/JHA and Council Decision 2008/615/JHA of 23 June 2008 on the stepping up of cross-border cooperation, particularly in combating terrorism and cross-border crime. On the basis of these decisions Member States are required to open and keep national DNA analysis files for the investigation of criminal offences. For the investigation of criminal offences, Member States shall allow other Member States' national contact points access to the reference data in their DNA analysis files, with the power to conduct automated searches by comparing DNA profiles.

In its communication on 'Strengthening law enforcement cooperation in the EU: the European Information Exchange Model (EIXM)' of 7 December 2012, the Commission concluded that no new EU-level law enforcement databases or information exchange instruments are needed at this stage and that existing EU instruments could and should be better implemented. This was confirmed by the EU Council Conclusions following the Commission Communication on the European Information Exchange Model (EIXM) of 6 and 7 June 2013.

To conclude the Commission refers to the existence of the Interpol black notices which aim at requesting information from Interpol members to identify dead bodies.

Consequently, the Commission currently does not consider establishing a database of unidentified bodies and body parts or to undertake a feasibility study.

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

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-013231/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)
(21 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Υεμένη: ένας μακροχρόνιος αγώνας κατά των πρόωρων γάμων

Παρά τη μείωση του ποσοστού των πρόωρων γάμων παγκοσμίως, η κατάσταση στην Υεμένη εγείρει σοβαρές ανησυχίες. Οι εξαναγκαστικοί γάμοι κοριτσιών ηλικίας κάτω των 18 ετών αποτελούν μία από τις σοβαρότερες παραβιάσεις των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων στην Υεμένη, ιδίως με βάση τα στοιχεία που δίνουν οι ΜΚΟ, κατά τα οποία υπολογίζεται ότι το 14% των κοριτσιών εξαναγκάζονται σε πρόωρο γάμο στην ηλικία των 15 ετών και το 52% των κοριτσιών εξαναγκάζονται σε πρόωρο γάμο πριν ακόμη φθάσουν τα 18.

Ακόμη χειρότερα κρούσματα: Τον Σεπτέμβριο του 2010 δωδεκάχρονη Υεμένια, θύμα πρόωρου γάμου, πέθανε μετά από τρεις ημέρες τοκετού και τον Σεπτέμβριο του 2013 οκτάχρονο κορίτσι πέθανε στην Υεμένη από εσωτερική αιμορραγία κατά την πρώτη νύχτα του εξαναγκαστικού γάμου του με άνδρα 40 ετών.

Η φτώχεια είναι σαφώς η αιτία αυτού του φαινομένου, καθώς η Υεμένη είναι η φτωχότερη χώρα της Αραβικής Χερσονήσου. Περίπου το 47% των κατοίκων της ζουν με λιγότερα από δύο ευρώ την ημέρα. Επιπλέον, σύμφωνα με έρευνα που δημοσίευσε το ίδρυμα Thomson Reuters, μεγάλο μέρος του γυναικείου πληθυσμού παραμένει ανεκπαίδευτο: το 53% των κοριτσιών ολοκληρώνει τη στοιχειώδη εκπαίδευση, σε σύγκριση με ένα 73% των αγοριών.

Το 2009 τέθηκε σε ψηφοφορία νομοσχέδιο που θέσπιζε τα 17 ως νόμιμη ηλικία γάμου αλλά στην τελική του μορφή ο νόμος δεν εγκρίθηκε. Πρόσφατα η Επιτροπή Δικαιωμάτων και Ελευθεριών της Υεμένης ενέκρινε ομόφωνα σύσταση που πρότεινε να οριστεί το 18ο έτος ως νόμιμη ηλικία γάμου.

1. Προτίθεται η Επιτροπή να λάβει νέα μέτρα για να εξαλειφθεί η πρακτική του πρόωρου γάμου; Υπάρχει συνεργασία μεταξύ της Επιτροπής και της κυβέρνησης ή των τοπικών αρχών σχετικά με αυτά τα ζητήματα;

2. Εξετάζει η Επιτροπή τη λήψη συγκεκριμένων μέτρων για να ενισχυθεί η κοινωνία των πολιτών με την ενημέρωση και τησν εκπαίδευση του πληθυσμού σχετικά με τα δικαιώματά του και το σύστημα δικαίου στη χώρα του;

3. Προτίθεται η Επιτροπή να εντείνει τις προσπάθειές της για να προωθήσει τον σεβασμό των δικαιωμάτων των γυναικών σε αυτό τον προβληματικό τομέα;

Απάντηση της Ύπατης Εκπροσώπου / Αντιπροέδρου Ashton εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(12 Φεβρουαρίου 2014)

Η ΕΕ προβληματίζεται έντονα λόγω της κατάστασης που αντιμετωπίζουν γυναίκες και κορίτσια στην Υεμένη και λόγω των έντονων διακρίσεων και της βίας που υφίστανται ιδίως στις αγροτικές περιοχές.

Στις 14 Σεπτεμβρίου, η ΥΕ/ΑΕ δημοσίευσε μία ιδιαίτερα αυστηρή δήλωση ως απάντηση στα δημοσιεύματα σχετικά με τον θάνατο ενός 8χρονου κοριτσιού λόγω τραυματισμού που υπέστη τη νύχτα του γάμου. Τόνισε το γενικότερο θέμα των υποχρεώσεων που υπέχει η Υεμένη ως συμβαλλόμενο μέρος της σύμβασης των Ηνωμένων Εθνών για την προστασία των δικαιωμάτων του παιδιού.

Σε συνέχεια της δήλωσης της ΥΕ/ΑΕ και της εντατικής συνεργασίας της αντιπροσωπείας της ΕΕ στη Saana με τους ενδιαφερόμενους φορείς, το ζήτημα της επαναφοράς κατώτατου ορίου ηλικίας για τη σύναψη γάμου βρέθηκε εκ νέου στο προσκήνιο, ενώ στο πλαίσιο της διάσκεψης εθνικού διαλόγου της Υεμένης, η ομάδα εργασίας για τα δικαιώματα και την ελευθερία πέτυχε γενική συμφωνία για τον καθορισμό του κατώτατου ορίου ηλικίας για τη σύναψη γάμου στα 18 έτη. Οι εργασίες αυτές είναι ενθαρρυντικές και ελπίζουμε ότι ένα από τα αποτελέσματα της διάσκεψης εθνικού διαλόγου θα είναι ο καθορισμός κατώτατου ορίου ηλικίας για τη σύναψη γάμου.

Η ΕΕ στηρίζει τις οργανώσεις της κοινωνίας των πολιτών μέσω διαφόρων προγραμμάτων, συμπεριλαμβανομένου του Ευρωπαϊκού Μέσου για τη δημοκρατία και τα δικαιώματα του ανθρώπου, με σκοπό την ενίσχυση του κράτους δικαίου όσον αφορά την προστασία των ευάλωτων ομάδων. Παρέχει επίσης στήριξη στους φορείς της Υεμένης, προκειμένου να ιδρύσουν δικαστικά όργανα φιλικά προς τα παιδιά και να αναπτύξουν τον τομέα της αναπαραγωγικής και της μητρικής υγείας.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013231/13
to the Commission
Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Yemen: a long-lasting struggle against early marriages

Despite the global reduction in the percentage of early marriages, the situation in Yemen is of great concern. Forced marriages of young girls under the age of 18 constitute one of the most serious human rights violations in Yemen, particularly in light of the figures provided by NGOs, which estimate that 14% of girls are forced into early marriages at the age of 15 and 52% of girls are forced into early marriages whilst under the age of 18.

Even worse, in September 2010, a 12-year-old Yemeni child-bride died after struggling for three days to give birth, and in September 2013, an 8-year-old girl died in Yemen of internal bleeding during her wedding night after being forced to marry a 40-year-old man.

Poverty is clearly the reason behind this phenomenon, as Yemen is the poorest country on the Arabian Peninsula. Some 47% of its inhabitants live on less than two euros per day. In addition, according to a survey published by the Thomson Reuters Foundation, a large proportion of the female population remain uneducated: 53% of girls complete primary school, compared with 73% of boys.

In 2009, a draft law setting 17 as the legal age for marriage was put to the vote, but the final version of the law was not adopted. Recently, Yemen's Rights and Freedoms Committee unanimously adopted a recommendation proposing to set the legal age for marriage at 18 years.

1. Does the Commission intend to take new steps to help eliminate the practice of early marriage? Is there any collaboration between the Commission and the government or local authorities regarding these issues?

2. Does the Commission envisage specific measures to strengthen civil society by informing and educating the population about their rights and the system of law in their country?

3. Does the Commission intend to step up efforts to promote respect for women's rights in this problematic area?

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

The EU is deeply concerned by the situation of women and girls in Yemen who remain largely discriminated against and can be subject to violence in particular in rural areas.

On 14 September HR/VP issued a very firm statement in reaction to the reports of the death of a 8 year old girl from injuries sustained on her wedding night. She addressed the general issue of Yemen's obligations as a signatory to the UN Convention on the protection of the rights of the child.

Further to the HR/VP's statement and the intensive engagement of the EU Delegation in Saana with all stakeholders, the debate on reinstating a minimum age at marriage has been revived, and there was a general agreement of the Yemen National Dialogue Conference's Working Group for Rights and Freedom to set the minimum age at marriage at 18. We are encouraged by these discussions and hopeful that the setting of a minimum age at marriage will be one of the outcomes of the National Dialogue.

Through various programmes, including the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights, the EU supports civil society organisations in order to strenghten the rule of law in relation to the protection of vulnerable groups. Additionnally, support is provided to the Yemeni institutions in order to establish child friendly judicial institutions and to develop the sector of reproductive and maternal health.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013233/13
to the Commission
Fiona Hall (ALDE)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Cost of damage to EU-funded projects in Palestine

The Commission estimated in October 2009 that the cost of damage to EU-funded projects in both the West Bank and Gaza since 2001 amounted to EUR 39.6 million (including damage resulting from Operation Cast Lead).

In light of the fact that, by the end of 2013, EUR 300 million in EU funding will have been given to Palestine, does the Commission have any further information regarding the cost of damage to EU-funded projects in the West Bank and Gaza?

The Commission has also previously stated that the EU Representative Office in East Jerusalem has written to the Israeli authorities on occasions when the property damaged or demolished was financed by the EU, and raised the issue during bilateral discussions with Israel. Has the Commission received any acknowledgement of the destruction of EU-funded projects by the Israeli authorities?

Furthermore, has the Commission received any compensation for damages to date?

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

In the Foreign Affairs Council conclusions of 14 May 2012, the EU called upon Israel to meet its obligations regarding the living conditions of the Palestinian population in Area C of the West Bank, including halting the demolition of Palestinian housing and infrastructure. It also stated that it expects Israel to protect EU investments in support of Palestinian development in Area C for future use.

Since 2010, the equivalent of EUR 84 000 of EU humanitarian assistance-funded structures has been demolished by the Israeli authorities while EUR 1.4 million worth of EU humanitarian assistance-funded structures in Area C have received demolition orders and are currently under imminent threat of demolition. This issue is raised regularly by the EU in its bilateral dialogue with Israel, and is constantly monitored by the EU Representative Office in East Jerusalem and the EU Delegation in Tel Aviv.

On several occasions, the HR/VP raised the point with the Israeli authorities. No compensation has ever been provided.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-013234/13
an die Kommission
Alexander Alvaro (ALDE)
(21. November 2013)

Betrifft: Weltkindertag

Kinder im schulpflichtigen Alter sollten die Schule besuchen. Sie haben ein Recht darauf, in die Schule zu gehen und in einem Umfeld zu lernen, das ihrem Alter und ihren Fähigkeiten angemessen ist. Die Gesellschaft versagt gegenüber den Kindern, die, anstatt zu lernen, zum Betteln oder zum Arbeiten gezwungen werden, manchmal sogar von ihren eigenen Eltern.

Am 20. November ist Weltkindertag.

In ihren Bildungsbenchmarks für Europa erhebt die Kommission Daten über diejenigen, die die Schul- oder Berufsausbildung vorzeitig abbrechen. Die Zahlen sind jedoch nur die eine Seite der Medaille.

Hat die Kommission festgestellt, mit welchen Maßnahmen bewährte Verfahren zwischen den Mitgliedstaaten bewährte Verfahren darüber verbreitet werden können, wie mit diesem Problem umzugehen ist?

Wird bei den Daten der Kommission unterschieden zwischen Schulabbrechern und Kindern, die regelmäßig überhaupt nicht zur Schule gehen, auch wenn sie aufgrund ihres Alters schulpflichtig sind?

Im Februar 2011 hat die Kommission eine „EU-Agenda für die Rechte des Kindes“ mit 11 vorrangigen Maßnahmen zur Verbesserung des Lebens von Kindern veröffentlicht.

Welche Maßnahmen empfiehlt die Kommission, damit Kinder, die aus einem besonders schwierigen Umfeld kommen (Migration, Armut, unbegleitete oder getrennt lebende Minderjährige), am Bildungssystem teilhaben können?

Hat die Kommission festgestellt, mit welchen Maßnahmen bewährte Verfahren darüber verbreitet werden können, wie Eltern oder Vormunde daran gehindert werden können, Kinder zum Betteln zu schicken, damit diese Kinder in die Schule gehen können?

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

Das Recht auf Bildung ist in der EU-Grundrechtecharta verankert. Es ist Aufgabe der Mitgliedstaaten, dafür zu sorgen, dass jedes Kind im schulpflichtigen Alter (auch sozial benachteiligte Kinder) dieses Recht wahrnehmen und unentgeltlich am Pflichtschulunterricht teilnehmen kann.

2013 hat die Kommission die Empfehlung „Investitionen in Kinder — Den Kreislauf der Benachteiligung durchbrechen“ ([1]) als Teil des Pakets über Investitionen im Sozialbereich angenommen. Mit Hilfe dieses Pakets soll auf der Grundlage politischer Leitlinien und einschlägiger Indikatoren ein gemeinsamer Rahmen geschaffen werden, der es der EU und den Mitgliedstaaten ermöglichen soll, sich auf erfolgversprechende soziale Investitionen in Kinder zu konzentrieren. Die Förderung eines effektiven Zugangs zu erschwinglicher, hochwertiger Bildung im frühen Kindesalter sowie Maßnahmen zur Verbesserung der Auswirkungen der Bildungssysteme auf die Chancengleichheit haben in der Empfehlung einen hohen Stellenwert.

Im Wege des EU-Rahmens für nationale Strategien zur Integration der Roma sind die Mitgliedstaaten aufgefordert, Maßnahmen zur Sicherstellung des Zugangs von Roma-Kindern zu qualitativ hochwertiger Bildung (sowie Gesundheitsfürsorge und Wohnraum) zu ergreifen. Ebenso wie im Kommissionsvorschlag wird auch in der Empfehlung des Rates für wirksame Maßnahmen zur Integration der Roma in den Mitgliedstaaten die Bedeutung von Maßnahmen im Bildungsbereich hervorgehoben. Den Mitgliedstaaten wird empfohlen, das Betteln von Kindern insbesondere im Wege der Durchsetzung der Rechtsvorschriften (z. B. gesetzliche Regelungen zur Schulpflicht) zu bekämpfen.

Das neue EU-Programm Erasmus+ trägt der Notwendigkeit Rechnung, den Zugang für benachteiligte und schutzbedürftige Gruppen zu erweitern. Mit Hilfe des Programms werden Akteure aus den unterschiedlichsten Bereichen in der Lage sein, den Zugang benachteiligter Kinder zu Bildung und Ausbildung zu erleichtern und einen [erfolgreichen] Bildungsabschluss zu ermöglichen.

([1]) C(2013)778 endg. http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/files/c_2013_778_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013234/13
to the Commission
Alexander Alvaro (ALDE)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: World Children's Day

Children of school age should attend school. They have a right to attend school and learn in a context appropriate to their age and abilities. Society is failing those children who, instead of learning, are forced, sometimes by their own parents, to work or beg.

20 November is World Children's Day.

In its 'Education Benchmarks for Europe', the Commission collects data on those who leave education and training early. Numbers are but one side of the coin.

Has the Commission identified and taken steps to disseminate best practices among Member States on how to deal with this problem?

Does the Commission's data differentiate between early school leavers and children who regularly do not attend school even if their age means that schooling is compulsory?

In February 2011 the Commission published 'An EU Agenda for the Rights of the Child' with 11 priority actions to be taken to improve children's lives.

What action does the Commission recommend to enable children from particularly difficult environments (migration, poverty, unaccompanied or separated minors) to participate in the education system?

Has the Commission identified and taken steps to disseminate best practices as regards preventing parents or guardians from using children for begging so as to enable these children to attend school?

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

The right to education is enshrined in the EU's Charter of Fundamental Rights. Ensuring that all children of school age (including those from disadvantaged backgrounds) exercise this right and participate in education is a responsibility of the Member States.

In 2013 the Commission adopted the recommendation 'Investing in children — breaking the cycle of disadvantage' ([1]) as part of the Social Investment Package, which proposes a common framework through policy guidance and related indicators to help the EU and Member States focus on successful social investment towards children. Promoting effective access to affordable, quality early childhood education as well as measures to improve education systems' impact on equal opportunities figures prominently in the recommendation.

The European Framework on Roma integration calls on Member States to ensure access of Roma children to quality education (as well as healthcare and housing). Following the Commission's proposal, the Council Recommendation on effective Roma integration measures in the Member States insists upon measures in education and also recommends that the Member States fight begging involving children, in particular through the enforcement of legislation (e.g. legislation on mandatory schooling).

The EU's new Erasmus+ programme recognises the need to widen access for disadvantaged and vulnerable groups and will help a broad range of actors to improve the access of disadvantaged children to and their success in education and training.

([1]) C(2013) 778 final. http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/files/c_2013_778_en.pdf

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-013236/13
a Bizottság számára
Kovács Béla (NI)
(2013. november 21.)

Tárgy: Uniós egységes piac a termőföld kapcsán

Az Európai Unió legalapvetőbb eleme az áruk és szolgáltatások szabad mozgása, az egységes piac létrejötte.

Számos, elsősorban régi tagország esetében a termőföld nem tartozik az áruk körébe.

Egyes országokra rákényszerítették a termőföld árustátuszát, holott az áru értelmezésének alapja annak mobilitása, azaz megveszem és viszem.

Miért nem lép fel a Bizottság annak érdekében, hogy az egységes piac intézményét védje olyan módon, hogy a termőföldet egységesen kivetesse az áruk köréből minden EU-s tagország vonatkozásában?

Michel Barnier válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2014. január 21.)

A Bizottság emlékeztet arra, hogy az adott tagállamban lakóhellyel nem rendelkező polgárok ingatlanbefektetései az uniós jog szerint tőkemozgásnak minősülnek. A tagállamok mezőgazdasági földterület vásárlással kapcsolatos jogi szabályozásának elsősorban az EUMSZ tőkemozgás szabadságáról szóló 63–66. cikkével kell összhangban lennie, az EUB ([1]) azonban az uniós jog más alapvető jogainak jelentőségére is utalt, mindenekelőtt a letelepedés szabadságára és a személyek szabad mozgására.

Az EUB kialakult ítélkezési gyakorlata szerint a szabad tőkemozgást csak olyan tagállami intézkedésekkel lehet korlátozni, amelyek az EUMSZ 65. cikkének (1) bekezdésében említett okok alapján indokoltak, nevezetesen a közrend és a közbiztonság, valamint közérdekű célok érdekében. Az EUB megállapította, hogy a korlátozás csak akkor elfogadható, amennyiben az megfelelő a szándékozott cél eléréséhez és nem lépi túl az annak eléréséhez szükséges mértéket (arányosság elve). Továbbá a 65. cikk (3) bekezdésével összhangban az említett intézkedések és eljárások „nem szolgálhatnak önkényes megkülönböztetés vagy teljes korlátozás eszközéül".

Ellenőrzési tevékenységei részeként a Bizottság megvizsgálja a releváns tagországi intézkedéseket és figyelembe veszi azok indokait és körülményeit, amelyek az EU-n belül esetleg eltérnek. A Bizottság lépéseket tett és szükség esetén kész megfelelő intézkedéseket hozni annak biztosítása érdekében, hogy a tagállamok betartsák az erre a területre vonatkozó uniós jogot.

([1]) Az Európai Unió Bírósága.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013236/13
to the Commission
Béla Kovács (NI)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: EU single market in relation to agricultural land

The most fundamental aspect of the European Union is the free movement of goods and services and the introduction of the single market.

For many Member States, primarily the old ones, agricultural land is not classified as a good.

The status of agricultural land as a good has been imposed on some countries, even though the definition of a good is based on its mobility, which means that we buy and take it.

Why does the Commission not take action to protect the institution of the single market in such a way that agricultural land is removed across the board from the goods category where every Member State is concerned?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(21 January 2014)

The Commission recalls that investment in real estate by non-residents is considered a capital movement under EC law. Therefore, legislation in Member States on the acquisition of agricultural land has to comply, in the first place, with Articles 63 to 66 of the TFEU concerning the free movement of capital, although the CJEU ([1]) has also referred to the relevance of other fundamental rules of EC law, in particular the freedom of establishment and the free movement of persons.

It is settled case law of the CJEU that the free movement of capital may only be restricted by national measures which are justified by reasons referred to in Article 65(1) of the TFEU, notably on grounds of public policy and public security, and by objectives in the public interest. The CJEU has found that a restriction is acceptable only if it is suitable for securing the objective which it pursues and does not go beyond what is necessary in order to attain it (principle of proportionality). Furthermore, in accordance with Article 65(3), the national rules and procedures in question 'shall not constitute a means of arbitrary discrimination'.

As part of its monitoring activities the Commission scrutinises relevant national measures, taking into consideration possible justifications and circumstances that may vary across the EU. The Commission has been taking steps and is ready to take actions as appropriate if needed to ensure that Member States comply with EC law in this field.

([1]) Court of Justice of the EU.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-013237/13
a Bizottság számára
Kovács Béla (NI)
(2013. november 21.)

Tárgy: A jogbiztonság sérülése betűméret miatt

Az Európai Unió egyik alappillére az állampolgárok jogbiztonsága.

Az EU egyetlen választott szerve a Parlament, így a képviselők fokozott kötelessége a polgárok jogainak érvényesítése.

Konkrétan a magyar választópolgárok jelezték felém, hogy a törvényben szabályozott tartalmú és formájú, a közjegyzők által kibocsájtott „Fizetési meghagyás" okiratok a létező legkisebb, gyakorlatilag olvashatatlan betűmérettel készült figyelmeztetéseket tartalmaznak.

Így a jogaik érvényesítésére már az átlagos látással rendelkező emberek is képtelenek, de az idősek és gyengén látók még kevésbé.

Akár a lakhatásuk vagy ingatlanjuk is veszélybe kerülhet emiatt.

Van-e olyan EU-s előírás, ami az ilyen tisztességtelen kormányzati praktikákkal szemben meg tudja védeni az embereket?

Elő van-e írva a hivatalos iratok minimális betűmérete?

Illetve van-e valamilyen szabályozás a tisztességtelen kereskedelmi gyakorlat tilalmának analógiájára a tisztességtelen kormányzati tevékenység ellen?

Michel Barnier válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2014. január 30.)

A Tisztelt Képviselő abbéli aggodalmának ad hangot, hogy egyes – törvényben szabályozott – hivatalos iratok esetében Magyarországon olyan kis betűméretű írást alkalmaznak, amely egyesek számára olvashatatlanná teszi ezen iratokat.

Ismereteink szerint nincs olyan uniós szintű jogi szabályozás, amely előírná a hivatalos iratok minimális betűméretét.

Ugyanakkor a fogyasztók jogairól szóló irányelv 31. cikke szerint „*A szerződési feltételeknek világosan, közérthető nyelven megfogalmazottnak és olvashatónak kell lenniük*".

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013237/13
to the Commission
Béla Kovács (NI)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Infringement of legal certainty due to font size

One of the European Union's basic pillars is legal certainty for citizens.

Parliament is the EU's only elected body and, as such, MEPs have an added obligation to enforce citizens' rights.

In specific terms, Hungarian voters have pointed out to me that the 'Payment Order' documents, which are issued by notaries and whose content and form are dictated by law, contain warnings printed in the smallest font size in use, making them virtually illegible.

Therefore, people with average sight are now also unable to assert their rights, let alone the elderly and visually impaired.

This may even put their home or property at risk as well.

Is there an EU regulation which can protect people against such unfair administrative practices?

Has a minimum font size been stipulated for official documents?

Is there a regulation similar to the ban on unfair commercial practices against unfair administrative activities?

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

The Honourable Member is concerned by some practices applied to some administrative documents in Hungary consisting in using small font size — dictated by national law — making these documents illegible for some citizens.

To our knowledge, there is no legislative requirement at EU level regarding a minimal font size that shall be used for administrative documents.

However, Article 31 of the Consumer Rights Directive on contracts terms specifies that 'Contract terms shall be expressed in plain, intelligible language and be legible.'

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-013238/13
a Bizottság számára
Kovács Béla (NI)
(2013. november 21.)

Tárgy: Repülőtéri üdítőárusítás

Az EU által hozott korlátozó intézkedéseknek köszönhetően a repülőtereken nem megengedett az ásványvizek és üdítők átvitele a biztonsági ellenőrzésen túli területre, pedig természetes emberi szükséglet a folyadék fogyasztása.

Sőt a kiszáradás egyenesen életveszélyes helyzetet teremthet.

A belső tranzitzónában van lehetőség italok vásárlására, azonban a normál bolti árhoz képest többszörös, gyakran 3-4-5-szörös áron.

Ha uniós jogszabály tiltja a tisztességtelen kereskedelmi gyakorlatot, és uniós jogszabály tiltja az italok bevitelét is, akkor a Bizottság miért engedi az ilyen rabló kereskedelmi gyakorlatot?

Egyúttal miért nem kötelezi a repülőtereket, hogy minimum háromféle ásványvizet és háromféle üdítőt minden reptér belső zónájában mindenkor kötelező legyen árusítani, de legfeljebb 1,50 euró/500 ml áron?

Joaquín Almunia válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2014. január 16.)

A kézipoggyászban elhelyezett folyadékokra vonatkozó jelenlegi korlátozásokat nyomós biztonsági okokból vezették be. 2006 óta csupán meghatározott mennyiségű folyadék vihető át a biztonsági ellenőrzésen túli területre. A folyékony robbanóanyagok jelentette fenyegetés továbbra is fennáll. A Bizottság ütemtervet dolgozott ki arra vonatkozóan, miként lehet a folyadékra vonatkozó korlátozásokat technológiai alapokra épülő robbanóanyag-felderítő módszerekkel helyettesíteni, és ezáltal fokozni az utasok kényelmét, ugyanakkor megőrizni az uniós légiközlekedés magas szintű biztonságát.

Az EU trösztellenes politikájának célja kedvezőbb árak és versenyképes termékek biztosítása a fogyasztók számára. A jelenlegi biztonsági intézkedések valóban befolyásolhatták az árakat, különösen abban az esetben, ha a repülőtér biztonsági területén az üzletek száma, illetve egyes termékek beszerzési forrásai korlátozottak.

Mindazonáltal semmi sem utal arra, hogy ez a helyzet az uniós trösztellenes szabályok megsértésének eredményeként alakult volna ki. Az EUMSZ 101. cikke értelmében tilos minden olyan vállalkozások közötti megállapodás, vállalkozások társulásai által hozott döntés és összehangolt magatartás, amelynek célja vagy hatása a belső piacon belüli verseny megakadályozása, korlátozása vagy torzítása. Az EUMSZ 102. cikke értelmében tilos az erőfölénnyel való visszaélés a belső piacon vagy annak jelentős részén. Mindkét tilalom kizárólag annyiban alkalmazandó, amennyiben a piaci magatartás jelentős hatást gyakorol a tagállamok közötti kereskedelemre.

A Bizottságnak nem áll szándékában a repülőtereken árusított víz árának vagy a víz-, illetve egyéb üdítőital-márkák mennyiségének szabályozása.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013238/13
to the Commission
Béla Kovács (NI)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Sale of soft drinks at airports

As a result of the restrictive measures introduced by the EU, air passengers are not allowed to take mineral water and soft drinks through to the area beyond the security check, even though people naturally need to consume fluids.

In fact, dehydration can directly create a life-threatening situation.

There is an opportunity to purchase drinks in the internal transit area. However, prices are several times, often three, four or five times the normal shop price.

If EU legislation bans unfair commercial practices, as well as drinks to be taken through, why then does the Commission permit such a 'rip-off' commercial practice?

Likewise, why is it not made compulsory for airports always to sell a minimum of three types of mineral water and three types of soft drink in every airport's internal area, but costing no more than EUR 1.50/500 ml?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(16 January 2014)

The current restrictions on carrying liquids in cabin baggage were implemented for serious security reasons. Since 2006 only limited quantities of liquids may be taken beyond security checkpoints. The threat from liquid explosives persists. The Commission has established a roadmap on how to replace liquid restrictions with technology-based explosive detection methods to facilitate passenger convenience while keeping high levels of EU aviation security.

The EU's antitrust policy aims at promoting lower prices and competitive goods for consumers. Arguably, the current security measures may have had an impact on prices, notably if the number of shops and sources of supply of some goods in the secured area of the airport is limited.

However, there is no indication that any such effect results from an infringement of EU antitrust rules. Article 101 TFEU prohibits agreements between undertakings, decisions between associations of undertakings and concerted practices which have as their object or effect the prevention, restriction or distortion of competition within the internal market. Article 102 TFEU prohibits the abuse of a dominant position within the internal market or in a substantial part of it. Both prohibitions only apply to the extent that the conduct may have an appreciable effect on trade between Member States.

The Commission has no intention of regulating the price of water or the number of water and/or other soft drink brands available for sale within airports.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-013239/13
a Bizottság számára
Kovács Béla (NI)
(2013. november 21.)

Tárgy: Mobiltelefon-anomália Belgiumban

Jelentős eredményeket sikerült elérni a roamingtarifák terén és az uniós mobiltelefon-piac harmonizálásában.

Ugyanakkor éppen az uniós intézmények székhelyén, Belgiumban a mobilszolgáltatók azt a gyakorlatot követik, hogy már 3-4 kicsörgés után üzenetrögzítőre irányítják a hívást, amit a hívó fél későn észlel, így nála hívásdíjat számláznak.

Majd a hívott fél is kénytelen lehallgatni a többnyire üres rögzítőt, illetve visszahívni a hívót, így újabb bevételei keletkeznek a szolgáltatónak.

Más országokban a tisztességes szolgáltatók akár egy percig is csörgetik a hívott félt, mielőtt a rögzítőt felajánlanák.

Nem volna időszerű ezt a rabló belga gyakorlatot megszüntetni, és az érintett szolgáltatókat megbírságolni, valamint a megkárosított előfizetőket kártalanítani?

Neelie Kroes válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2014. január 21.)

Az elektronikus hírközlésre vonatkozó európai uniós szabályozási keret és különösen az egyetemes szolgáltatási irányelv (2002/22/EK irányelv) több fontos, kifejezetten a hírközlésre vonatkozó fogyasztóvédelmi biztosítékot tartalmaz: egyebek mellett a szerződésekre, valamint az információk átláthatóságára és közzétételére vonatkozó rendelkezéseket.

Az uniós hírközlési keretszabályok azonban nem rendelkeznek a hangposta-szolgáltatásokra vonatkozó szabályok harmonizációjáról. Emiatt a szolgáltatók elvben szabadon dönthetnek arról, hogy mely hangposta-használati megközelítést alkalmazzák, amennyiben az megfelel a hatályos nemzeti hírközlési szabályoknak.

A belföldi mobilhívások piacát a Bizottság versenyalapúként kezeli, így arra nem vonatkozik átfogó szabályozás. Ugyanakkor az uniós hírközlési keret felhatalmazza a nemzeti szabályozó hatóságokat (Belgium esetében a BIPT-et), hogy megvizsgálják a megfelelő nemzeti piacokon tapasztalható verseny mértékét és szabályozás útján kötelezzék a piaci szereplőket a versenyt korlátozó gyakorlatok megszüntetésére. Ezenkívül a nemzeti fogyasztóvédelmi hatóságoknak adott esetben jogukban áll fellépni a nemzeti fogyasztóvédelmi szabályokat megsértő piaci szereplők ellen. Jelenleg a BIPT és az egyes szolgáltatók weboldalaikon ([1]) tájékoztatják a mobilhasználókat arról, miként tudják a csöngetés hosszát akár 30 másodpercre növelni, mielőtt a hangposta jelentkezne. Ami a fogyasztóvédelmi jogszabályokat illeti, amennyiben igazolást nyer, hogy az európai uniós fogyasztókat félrevezetik, a tisztességtelen kereskedelmi gyakorlatokról szóló irányelv (2005/29/EK irányelv) is szóba jöhet hivatkozásként.

([1]) Például: http://www.bipt.be/en/consumers/faq/155-duration-of-the-mobile-phone-ring

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013239/13
to the Commission
Béla Kovács (NI)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Mobile phone anomaly in Belgium

Significant results have been successfully achieved in terms of roaming tariffs and harmonising the EU's mobile phone market.

At the same time, mobile providers, precisely in the country where the EU's institutions are headquartered — Belgium — are engaged in a practice whereby calls are forwarded to the answering service after just 3-4 rings, which the caller finds out later on when a call charge is billed.

The call recipient will also be obliged to listen to what is mostly a blank message and to ring the caller back, thereby generating revenue again for the provider.

In other countries, fair providers ring the call recipient for as long as a minute before the answering service is provided.

Would it not be a good time to end this 'rip-off' Belgian practice and fine the providers involved, as well as compensate the subscribers affected?

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

The EU Regulatory Framework for electronic communications and in particular the Universal Service Directive (Directive 2002/22/EC) contains a number of important consumer protection safeguards specific to telecommunications, including provisions on contracts and transparency and publication of information.

However, EU telecoms framework does not harmonise the rules applicable for the use of voice mail services. For that reason operators are in principle free to choose their own approach to the use of voice mail, as long as it is in line with applicable national telecommunications law.

The markets for domestic mobile calls are considered competitive and are not generally regulated. However, the EU telecoms framework gives national regulatory authorities (in Belgium: BIPT) the power to examine the degree of competition at the relevant national markets and to impose regulatory obligations if markets are not competitive. Furthermore, national consumer protection authorities remain in a position to intervene, as appropriate, to address any case of violation of national consumer protection rules. Currently, the BIPT and individual operators inform mobile phone users on their websites ([1]) about the method to extend the ringing time to up to 30 seconds before the voice mail is activated. In relation to consumer protection legislation, the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive (Directive 2005/29/EC) could come into play if evidence showed that EU consumers were misled.

([1]) For instance; http://www.bipt.be/en/consumers/faq/155-duration-of-the-mobile-phone-ring

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-013240/13
a Bizottság számára
Kovács Béla (NI)
(2013. november 21.)

Tárgy: Allergének babakozmetikumokban

Számos anyag könnyen felszívódik a bőrön át, ezen alapulnak a gyógyhatású tapaszok, de ez az oka az allergiás bőrreakciók nagy részének is.

Allergénként nyilvántartott anyagok például a szója és a glutén, melyeket az élelmiszerek csomagolásán külön is fel kell tüntetni.

Ugyanakkor sok más allergénnel egyetemben ezek az anyagok előfordulnak babakozmetikumokban, például fürdetőkben, hintőporokban, minden valószínűség szerint egész életre szóló allergiát kiváltva az arra fogékony babákban.

Hogyan lehetséges, hogy kozmetikumok, különösen babakozmetikumok esetében az allergéneket nem kell külön kiemelten feltüntetni a csomagoláson?

Hogyan kerülhetnek bele egyáltalán ilyen, korábban soha nem használt anyagok a kisdedeknek szánt termékekbe?

Neven Mimica válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2014. január 23.)

Az 1223/2009/EK rendelet ([1]) szerint az Európai Unióban csak biztonságos kozmetikai termékeket lehet forgalmazni. A gyártónak vagy az importőrnek igazolnia kell az általa forgalmazott termékek biztonságosságát ([2]). A kisgyermekek számára készült termékek esetében az általános követelmények mellett a kozmetikai termék biztonsági értékelése során a célcsoport igényeit is figyelembe kell venni.

Az említett rendelet alapján az összetevők felsorolásában fel kell tüntetni az allergén anyagokat annak érdekében, hogy kontaktallergia esetén könnyebb legyen a diagnózis felállítása, és a fogyasztók el tudják kerülni azon termékek használatát, amelyek allergiás reakciókat váltanak ki náluk. A kozmetikai termékekkel való érintkezés, amely nagyrészt a bőrön keresztül történik, eltérő jellegű, mint az élelmiszerek szájon át való bevitele. Ez az oka annak, hogy a két termékcsoportra más címkézési követelmények irányadók.

A kozmetikai termékekre, a kisgyermekek számára készült tisztálkodási szereket is beleértve, ezenkívül más korlátozó intézkedések is vonatkoznak: a valószínűsíthetően a népesség jelentős része esetében allergiát okozó anyagok esetében például a betiltást vagy a koncentráció korlátozását is alkalmazzák.

([1]) Az Európai Parlament és a Tanács 2009. november 30-i 1223/2009/EK rendelete a kozmetikai termékekről (HL L 342., 2009.12.22., 59. o.).
([2]) Az 1223/2009/EK rendelet 10. cikke.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013240/13
to the Commission
Béla Kovács (NI)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Allergens in baby toiletries

Numerous substances can be easily absorbed through the skin. This is the principle on which medicinal plasters are based, but this also causes a large proportion of allergic skin reactions.

Substances registered as allergens include, for instance, soya and gluten, which also need to be mentioned separately on food packaging.

At the same time, these substances are occurring in combination with many other allergens in baby toiletries, such as baby bath washes and talcum powders, thereby triggering in all likelihood a lifelong allergy in babies susceptible to this.

How is it possible that, in the case of toiletries, especially baby toiletries, allergens do not need to be highlighted separately on the packaging?

How is it possible at all for these substances never used before to end up in products intended for babies?

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

According to Regulation (EC) No 1223/2009 ([1]), all cosmetic products placed on the Union's market must be safe. The manufacturer or importer has to demonstrate that the product they place on the market is safe ([2]). In the case of baby products the cosmetic product safety assessment should, in addition to the general requirements, address the specificities of the subpopulation they are intended for.

According to the abovementioned regulation, the presence of allergens has to be mentioned in the list of ingredients to improve the diagnosis of contact allergies and to enable consumers to avoid the use of cosmetic products which they do not tolerate. Exposure to cosmetic products (mostly via the dermal route) and food (via the oral route) are different. This is the reason why the labelling requirements are not the same across those two sectors.

In addition, for all cosmetic products, for including baby toiletries, other restrictive measures such as a ban or a restriction of concentration are imposed for substances which are likely to cause allergy to a significant part of the population.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1223/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on cosmetic products, OJ L 342, 22.12.2009, p. 59.
([2]) Article 10 of Regulation (EC) No 1223/2009.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013242/13
a la Comisión
María Irigoyen Pérez (S&D)
(21 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Exhibición y venta de simbología fascista en un colegio público de Madrid

El pasado mes de septiembre, se celebró, en el colegio público «Príncipes de Asturias», de Quijorna (Madrid), a iniciativa del Ayuntamiento de la localidad y de la Hermandad de Regulares de Ceuta, las jornadas de exposición «Militaria y Cultura de la Defensa», en las que se exhibieron, distribuyeron y vendieron símbolos fascistas de diferentes países, «con el ánimo de enseñar la Cultura de la Defensa a los vecinos del pueblo», en palabras de la propia alcaldesa. La exhibición fue seguida de un acto oficial solemne de restauración de una placa en honor al movimiento franquista.

La apología pública, negación o trivialización del fascismo es contraria a la normativa europea y debe ser constitutiva de delito penal, en base a la Decisión Marco 2008/913/JAI del Consejo de la Unión Europea. La Vicepresidenta y Comisaria Reding explicó a finales del pasado mes de agosto, en respuesta a una pregunta escrita (E-005756/2013), que España podría ser sancionada por la Comisión, a partir del 1 diciembre del 2014, sobre la base de la citada normativa.

Es lamentable que, tan sólo 29 días después de esta clara advertencia por parte de la Vicepresidenta, los responsables políticos del partido en el Gobierno de España no sólo haya hecho oídos sordos a sus palabras, sino que hayan pasado de la permisividad e inacción a la organización activa. Y lo que es más grave, utilizando un colegio público para la exposición de un mercadillo de simbología franquista, fascista y nazi, y trivializando públicamente la barbaridad del genocidio ([1]).

Si bien esperamos con interés el informe que prepara la Comisión sobre el estado de la aplicación de la Decisión Marco 2008/913/JAI, que previsiblemente recogerá ésta y otras tantas quejas que desde España le estamos haciendo llegar por distintos medios, ¿considera la Comisión suficientes sus acciones, ante la gran celeridad con la que avanzan los movimientos que pretenden rehabilitar los regímenes fascistas? ¿Qué medida eficaz pretende tomar la Comisión, de aquí al 1 de diciembre del año 2014, para conseguir que el Gobierno de España actúe frontalmente contra las actividades de enaltecimiento del fascismo?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(20 de enero de 2014)

La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a su respuesta a la pregunta escrita E-011140/2013 ([2]).

([1]) Sírvase la Comisión, como ejemplo, de este corte de un programa de televisión independiente de gran difusión nacional: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sSmajh9JiVE
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/es/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013242/13
to the Commission
María Irigoyen Pérez (S&D)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Exhibition and sale of fascist symbols in a State school in Madrid

In September of this year, exhibitions on 'Militaria and the Culture of Defence' were held at the Príncipes de Asturias state school in Quijorna, Madrid. They were organised by the local town council and the Brotherhood of the Armed Forces of Ceuta (Hermandad de Regulares de Ceuta), and fascist symbols from various countries were exhibited, distributed and sold 'with the intention of educating the inhabitants of the town about the Culture of Defence', in the words of the mayoress herself. The exhibition was followed by a solemn official function to restore a plaque honouring the pro-Franco movement.

The public defence, denial or trivialisation of fascism is contrary to European regulations and must constitute a criminal offence, on the basis of Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA. At the end of August, in response to a written question (E-005756/2013), Vice-president and Commissioner Reding explained that Spain could be sanctioned by the Commission, as of 1 December 2014, on the basis of the abovementioned regulation.

It is deplorable that, only 29 days on from this clear warning from the Vice-president, the policymakers of the governing party in Spain have not only turned a deaf ear to these words, but have moved from permissiveness and inaction to active organisation. Even more serious is the use of a state school to display a bazaar of pro-Franco, fascist and Nazi symbols, and publicly trivialise the atrocities of the genocide ([1]).

While we await with interest the report that the Commission is drafting on the implementation of Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA, which will presumably consider this and many other complaints that we are channelling to it by various means from Spain, does the Commission consider its actions to be sufficient, considering the great speed with which movements attempting to resurrect fascist regimes are advancing? What effective measure does the Commission intend to take, between now and 1 December 2014, to ensure that the Spanish Government takes direct action to oppose activities that glorify fascism?

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

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-011140/2013 ([2]).

([1]) I suggest the Commission watches, as an example, this clip from an independent television programme that has been widely broadcast nationally: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sSmajh9JiVE

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

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-013243/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(21. November 2013)

Betrifft: Katastrophale ökologische Folgen illegaler Goldminen im Regenwald

Angesichts der Finanzkrise ist der Goldpreis in den vergangenen Jahren verhältnismäßig stark angestiegen. Eine sehr ernstzunehmende Folge daraus ist die Abholzung und Vergiftung vor allem des peruanischen Regenwaldes, in dem illegale Goldsucher vollkommen rücksichtslos ihrem Geschäft nachgehen.

1. Sind der Kommission der beträchtlichen Zunahmen illegaler Goldminen und die damit verbundenen enormen Umweltschädigungen bekannt?

2. Gibt es vonseiten der Europäischen Union Unterstützungsinitiativen, um diesem, angesichts des Klimawandels globalen Problem zu begegnen?

2.1. Wenn ja in welchem finanziellen Rahmen bewegen sich die dafür bereitgestellten Mittel?

3. Gedenkt die Kommission, die peruanische Regierung im Kampf gegen illegale Goldminen zu unterstützen, um so zum Erhalt der für das Weltklima sehr bedeutsamen Regenwälder beizutragen?

Antwort von Herrn Piebalgs im Namen der Kommission
(31. Januar 2014)

Der Kommission ist bekannt, dass der illegale Goldbergbau in Peru zunimmt. Dies verursacht Schäden für die Ökosysteme und führt dazu, dass Gebiete mit großer biologischer Vielfalt abgeholzt und die Wasserressourcen durch Quecksilber verunreinigt werden, was eine Gesundheitsgefährdung für die lokale Bevölkerung darstellt.

Die Regierung von Peru ergreift Maßnahmen, um den illegalen Bergbau in den formellen Sektor zu überführen. Dies ist jedoch ein schwieriger und langwieriger Prozess, der zunächst eine Stärkung der staatlichen Strukturen und der Rechtsdurchsetzung erfordert. Die Kommission wirkt derzeit an der diesbezüglichen Bedarfsermittlung mit und könnte entsprechende Maßnahmen, soweit relevant und angemessen, gemeinsam mit anderen Partnern unterstützen. Derzeit werden in Peru zwei thematische Projekte mit Bezug zum illegalen Bergbau durchgeführt, die über das Instrument für die Entwicklungszusammenarbeit finanziert werden.

Ferner unterstützt die Kommission die Initiative für Transparenz in der Rohstoffwirtschaft (EITI) und das Thema wird im Rahmen der bilateralen Konsultationen zwischen der EU und der peruanischen Regierung regelmäßig erörtert. Darüber hinaus haben die EU und Peru das Minamata-Übereinkommen über Quecksilber unterzeichnet, das die Vertragsstaaten dazu verpflichtet, die Verwendung von Quecksilber im Goldbergbau schrittweise zu reduzieren bzw. ganz einzustellen.

Die EU-Mitgliedstaaten und die Kommission unterstützen Peru im Rahmen der Partnerschaftsfazilität „Wald-Kohlenstoff" (Forest Carbon Partnership Facility), des Waldinvestitionsprogramms, der REDD-Fazilität der EU und des REDD-Programms der Vereinten Nationen (UNREDD) bei der Entwicklung und Umsetzung einer Strategie, mit der die durch Entwaldung und Waldschäden bedingten CO_2-Emissionen, verlangsamt, gestoppt und umgekehrt werden sollen (REDD+). Hierzu zählt auch die Auseinandersetzung mit den Ursachen für die Entwaldung wie Bergbau und Landwirtschaft.

Die Kommission beabsichtigt, sich auch weiterhin aktiv für die Förderung einer nachhaltigen Bewirtschaftung und der Transparenz in der mineralgewinnenden Industrie zu engagieren.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013243/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Disastrous ecological consequences of illegal gold mines in the rainforest

In view of the financial crisis, the price of gold has risen relatively sharply in the last few years. One consequence of this that needs to be taken very seriously is the deforestation and contamination of the Peruvian rainforest, where illegal gold prospectors carry on their business with complete recklessness.

1. Is the Commission aware of the substantial increase in illegal gold mines and the considerable environmental damage they cause?

2. Does the European Union have any support initiatives in place to tackle this problem, which, in view of climate change, is a global one?

2.1. If so, within which financial framework do the resources made available for this fall?

3. Does the Commission intend to support the Peruvian Government in the fight against illegal goldmines in order to help to preserve the rainforest, which is extremely important for the global climate?

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

The Commission is fully aware of the increase in illegal gold mining in Peru, causing detrimental impact on ecosystems, deforestation in areas of great biodiversity, and contamination of aquatic resources by mercury risking harmful effects on the health of the local population.

The government of Peru is undertaking efforts to formalise the illegal mining business, but this is a difficult and slow process which, in the first instance, requires a strengthening of the government apparatus and law enforcement. The Commission is currently participating in the identification of needs and may consider, where relevant and appropriate, supporting measures together with other partners. Two thematic cooperation projects related to illegal mining, funded under the Development Cooperation Instrument, are being implemented in Peru.

The Commission also supports the efforts of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, (EITI) and the issue has been regularly discussed between the EU and the Peruvian authorities in the framework of the bilateral consultation mechanism. In addition, the EU and Peru have signed the Minamata Convention on mercury that obliges parties to reduce or phase out the use of mercury in gold mining.

Through the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility, the Forest Investment Program, the EU REDD Facility and UNREDD, EU Member States and the Commission are helping Peru to develop and implement a strategy to slow, halt and reverse CO_2 emissions from deforestation and forest degradation-REDD+. This includes addressing the drivers of deforestation such as mining and agriculture.

The Commission intends to continue to engage actively in supporting sustainable management and transparency of extractive industries.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-013244/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(21 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Μείωση της γεννητικότητας στην Ελλάδα

Σύμφωνα με τα πρόσφατα δημογραφικά στοιχεία της Eurostat για το 2012, ο πληθυσμός της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης των 28 αυξήθηκε κατά 1 099 000 και έφθασε τα 505,7 εκατ., σημειώνοντας αύξηση σε 17 κράτη μέλη και μείωση σε 11 κράτη μέλη. Χώρες όπως η Ελλάδα και η Ιταλία, που πλήττονται από την οικονομική κρίση, καταγράφουν τον τρίτο χαμηλότερο δείκτη γεννήσεων (9‰) στην ΕΕ, μετά τη Γερμανία (8,4‰) και την Πορτογαλία (8,5‰).

Πιο συγκεκριμένα, ο πληθυσμός της Ελλάδας σημείωσε σημαντική μείωση κατά 5,5‰ (τοις χιλίοις), υποχωρώντας κατά 60 500 την περασμένη χρονιά και φθάνοντας τους 11 161 000 κατοίκους. Παράλληλα, μέσα στο 2012, στην Ελλάδα γεννήθηκαν 100 400 παιδιά, ενώ που καταγράφηκαν 116 700 θάνατοι. Αξίζει να σημειωθεί ότι την ίδια περίοδο εγκατέλειψαν τη χώρα περισσότεροι από 44 000 άνθρωποι.

Τα εν λόγω στατιστικά στοιχεία καταδεικνύουν ότι οι υψηλότεροι δείκτες γεννητικότητας σημειώθηκαν στην Ιρλανδία (15,7‰), στο Ηνωμένο Βασίλειο (12,8‰), στη Γαλλία (12,6‰), στη Σουηδία (11,9‰) και στην Κύπρο (11,8‰) ενώ στην ΕΕ καταγράφηκαν 5,23 εκατομμύρια γεννήσεις και 5,01 εκατομμύρια θάνατοι και εισήλθαν 882 200 μετανάστες.

Σύμφωνα με τα παραπάνω ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Κατά πόσον εκτιμά ότι η έντονη οικονομική κρίση που βιώνουν χώρες όπως η Ελλάδα και η Ιταλία έχει άμεση συνάρτηση με το δημογραφικό αυτών των χωρών;

2. Στο πλαίσιο ανταλλαγής βέλτιστων πρακτικών, ποιες πολιτικές θα μπορούσαν να αξιοποιήσουν χώρες, που παρουσιάζουν σημαντική μείωση στους δείκτες γεννητικότητας;

3. Σύμφωνα με στοιχεία που διαθέτει σε ποιο ποσοστό έχει μειωθεί ο αριθμός των οικογενειών με 2 τέκνα καθώς και των πολυτέκνων οικογενειών στην Ελλάδα την τελευταία πενταετία;

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(20 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Η Επιτροπή (Eurostat) συλλέγει τακτικά δημογραφικές στατιστικές από τα κράτη μέλη και υπολογίζει τους δημογραφικούς δείκτες βάσει των στοιχείων που έχουν συλλεχθεί.

1. Η Επιτροπή αξιολόγησε τον αντίκτυπο της πρόσφατης κρίσης στη γονιμότητα σε όλα τα κράτη μέλη ([1]).

2. Ο κ. βουλευτής αναφέρεται στην απάντηση της Επιτροπής στην ερώτηση E-11418/2013 ([2]) σχετικά με τις αποτελεσματικές πολιτικές για την αντιμετώπιση της μείωσης στη γονιμότητα και τον ρόλο της Επιτροπής για την υποστήριξη των πολιτικών αυτών.

3. Τα στοιχεία από την έρευνα εργατικού δυναμικού δείχνουν ότι, από το 2007 έως το 2012, ο συνολικός αριθμός των νοικοκυριών στην Ελλάδα αυξήθηκε από 4 233 σε 4 385 χιλιάδες, όπου το μεγαλύτερο μέρος της αύξησης προέρχεται από νοικοκυριά χωρίς παιδιά. Κατά τη διάρκεια της περιόδου αυτής ο αριθμός των νοικοκυριών με δύο παιδιά ηλικίας 14 ετών ή λιγότερο παρέμεινε σταθερός, περνώντας από 386 χιλιάδες σε 385 χιλιάδες, ενώ ο αριθμός των νοικοκυριών με 3 ή περισσότερα παιδιά αυξήθηκε από 76 χιλιάδες το 2007 σε 80 χιλιάδες το 2012.

([1]) Βλ. http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-SF-13-013/EN/KS-SF-13-013-EN.PDF
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/el/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013244/13
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: The falling birth rate in Greece

According to the recent Eurostat demographic data for 2012, the population of the European Union of the 28 has increased by 1 099 000, reaching 505.7 million, with an increase in 17 Member States and a drop in 11 Member States. Countries such as Greece and Italy, hit by the economic crisis, record the third lowest birth rate (9 ‰) in the EU, after Germany (8.4 ‰) and Portugal (8.5 ‰).

More specifically, the population of Greece has seen a significant reduction of 5.5 ‰ (per thousand), declining by 60 500 last year, and reaching the figure of 11 161 000. At the same time, 100 400 babies were born in Greece in 2012, whilst 116 700 deaths were recorded. It is worth mentioning that more than 44 000 people left the country during the same period.

The statistical data in question show that the highest birth rates were seen in Ireland (15.7 ‰), the UK (12.8 ‰), France (12.6 ‰), Sweden (11.9 ‰) and Cyprus (11.8 ‰), with the EU recording 5.23 million births, 5.01 million deaths, and the entry of 882 200 immigrants.

1. To what extent does the Commission believe that the serious economic crisis experienced by countries such as Greece and Italy correlates directly with the demographics of these countries?

2. Within the framework of sharing best practices, what policies could countries seeing a significant decline in the birth rate apply?

3. According to the data in the Commission's possession, what is the rate of reduction in the number of families with two children and the number of families with a large number of children in Greece over the past five years?

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

The Commission (Eurostat) regularly collects demographic statistics from the Member States and calculates demographic indicators based on the data collected.

1. The Commission has assessed the impact of the recent crisis on fertility in all Member States ([1]).

2. The Honourable Member is referred to the Commission's answer to Question E-11418/2013 ([2]) on policies that are effective in tackling the decline in fertility and the Commission's role in supporting them.

3. Data from the Labour Force Survey show that, from 2007 to 2012, the total number of households in Greece increased from 4 233 to 4 385 thousand, most of the increase coming from households without children. During this period, the number of households with two children aged 14 or less remained stable, passing from 386 thousand to 385 thousand while the number of households with 3 or more children increased from 76 thousand in 2007 to 80 thousand in 2012.

([1]) See http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-SF-13-013/EN/KS-SF-13-013-EN.PDF
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-013245/13
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(21 november 2013)

Betreft: Gevolgen van onafhankelijkheid (follow-up)

In haar antwoord op vraag E-011131/2013 zegt de Commissie — bij monde van voorzitter Barroso — dat scenario's waarin een regio van een lidstaat zich van die lidstaat losmaakt, of waarin een nieuwe staat wordt gecreëerd, niet neutraal zijn in het licht van de EU-Verdragen; met andere woorden: de Verdragen zouden niet van toepassing zijn op dergelijke nieuwe staten.

1. Werkt de Commissie aan een gedetailleerde studie van de algemene gevolgen van de onafhankelijkheid van dergelijke nieuwe staten, teneinde het beginsel van juridische zekerheid te waarborgen, dat door het Hof van Justitie is erkend als een van de algemene beginselen van de EU, dat inhoudt dat de juridische implicaties van het Europees recht voorzienbaar moeten zijn?

2. Wat is het standpunt van de Commissie ten aanzien van de toekomst van het EU-burgerschap, zoals toegekend krachtens artikel 20 VWEU, met betrekking tot dergelijke nieuwe staten? Wat zou bijvoorbeeld de impact van de nieuwe situatie zijn op het leven en de rechten van de burgers van die nieuwe staten?

3. Wat vindt de Commissie van de nieuwe vormen van participatie in de EU, zoals gedeeltelijk lidmaatschap of beperkt lidmaatschap, waarover in de academische wereld reeds meerdere debatten zijn gevoerd? Heeft het onderwerp van de mogelijke onafhankelijkheid van bepaalde regio's ten aanzien van dergelijke vormen van participatie aanleiding gegeven tot meer debat onder juridische deskundigen over de toekomst van de EU, tegen de achtergrond van de EU-Verdragen en het antwoord van voorzitter Barroso?

Antwoord van de heer Barroso namens de Commissie
(14 januari 2014)

1. Neen.

2. en 3. De Commissie verwijst het geachte Parlementslid naar haar antwoorden op de parlementaire vragen E-008133/2012, P-009756/2012 en P-009862/2012 [1].

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013245/13
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Consequences of independence (follow-up)

In its answer to Question E-011131/2013, given by President Barroso, the Commission made it clear that scenarios in which a region of a Member State separates from that Member State or in which a new state is created would not be neutral in the light of the EU Treaties: therefore, the Treaties would no longer apply to such new states.

1. Is the Commission planning an detailed study of the general consequences of the independence of such new states, in order to safeguard the principle of legal certainty, which is recognised by the Court of Justice as one of the general principles of the EU, according to which the legal implications of European law should be foreseeable?

2. Could the Commission share its view on the future of EU citizenship, as accorded under Article 20 TFEU, in relation to any such new states? For instance, what impact would the new situation have on the lives and rights of the citizens of the new states?

3. What is the Commission's view on the new forms of participation in the EU, such as partial membership or limited membership, which have already been the subject of various debates in the academic world? Has the issue of the possible independence of certain regions in relation to such forms of participation given rise to further debate among legal experts about the future of the EU, in the context of the EU Treaties and the answer given by President Barroso?

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

1. No.

2/3. The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its replies to parliamentary questions E-008133/2012, P-009756/2012 and P-009862/2012 ([1]).

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

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-013246/13
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(21 november 2013)

Betreft: Duitsland: succes afgestraft — follow-up

Op woensdag 13 november 2013 heeft de Commissie een formeel diepgaand onderzoek ingesteld naar het Duitse overschot op de lopende rekening, waarover ik de Commissie al ondervraagd heb. Vervolgens heeft Günther Oettinger, commissaris voor energie, op dinsdag 19 november 2013 verklaard dat het beboeten van Duitsland vanwege zijn excessieve overschot op de lopende rekening „ondenkbaar" is ([1]).

Gezien het bovenstaande:

1. Kan de Commissie haar standpunt over deze kwestie toelichten?

2. Waarom heeft de Commissie een diepgaand onderzoek naar de Duitse economie ingesteld wanneer zij een boete „ondenkbaar" acht?

3. Heeft de Commissie zich inmiddels gerealiseerd dat een diepgaand onderzoek naar de meest concurrerende economie van de Europese Unie niet had moeten worden ingesteld?

4. Kan de Commissie bevestigen dat het niet alleen „ondenkbaar" is Duitsland te beboeten, maar dat het eveneens ondenkbaar is een dergelijke boete aan Nederland op te leggen vanwege de uitvoer van aardgas? Zo ja, kan commissaris Oettinger publiekelijk verklaren dat het ook „ondenkbaar" is om Nederland te beboeten?

Antwoord van de heer Rehn namens de Commissie
(17 januari 2014)

De Commissie heeft op 15 november 2013 haar waarschuwingsmechanismeverslag (WMV) aangenomen, dat een economische lezing van een scorebord van indicatoren omvatte. Het geachte lid van het Europees Parlement wordt verzocht inzage te nemen van de bevindingen van de Commissie in het WMV ([2]) alsmede het in deze context uitgebrachte memo ([3]), dat informatie verschaft over de zienswijze van de Commissie betreffende Duitsland in dit verband.

Voor Nederland is een diepgaande analyse uitgevoerd in 2013. Op basis van de bevindingen van de toetsing heeft de Commissie geconcludeerd dat Nederland macro-economische onevenwichtigheden ondervindt die monitoring en beleidsactie verdienen. Met name bepaalde macro-economische ontwikkelingen ten aanzien van de schuld van de particuliere sector en de druk om deze af te bouwen, in combinatie met nog bestaande inefficiënties op de woningmarkt, verdienen aandacht. Momenteel wordt een nieuwe diepgaande toetsing uitgevoerd die samen met die van de andere LS waarvoor dit is aangekondigd in het voorjaar van 2014 zal worden gepubliceerd.

([1]) http://www.lesechos.fr/economie-politique/monde/actu/afp-00565196-enquete-sur-l-export-en-allemagne-le-commissaire-allemand-juge-une-amende-impensable-630676.php.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/2014/amr2014_nl.pdf
([3]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-13-970_nl.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013246/13
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Germany, punished for success — follow-up

On Wednesday, 13 November 2013 the Commission launched a formal, in-depth review of Germany's current account surplus, a subject on which I have already put questions to the Commission. On Tuesday, 19 November 2013 Energy Commissioner Günther Oettinger stated that fining Germany for its excessive current account surplus would be 'unthinkable' ([1]).

In the light of this:

1. Can the Commission clarify its stance on the issue?

2. Why has the Commission launched an in-depth review of the German economy if it deems a fine 'unthinkable'?

3. Has the Commission now realised that an in-depth review of the most competitive economy in the European Union should not have been launched?

4. Can the Commission confirm that — just as fining Germany is 'unthinkable' — fining the Netherlands in a similar fashion for its natural gas exports would also be unthinkable? If so, can Commissioner Oettinger publicly declare that fining the Netherlands is 'unthinkable' too?

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

The Commission adopted on 15 November 2013 its Alert Mechanism Report (AMR), which included an economic reading of a scoreboard of indicators. The Honourable Member of the European Parliament is invited to consult the Commission's findings in the AMR ([2]) as well as the Memo issued in this context ([3]) , which provides information regarding the Commission's view on Germany in this respect.

As for the Netherlands, an in-depth analysis was carried out in 2013. On the basis of the findings of the review, the Commission concluded that the Netherlands are experiencing macroeconomic imbalances, which deserve monitoring and policy action. In particular, macroeconomic developments regarding private sector debt and deleveraging pressures, also coupled with remaining inefficiencies in the housing market deserve attention. A new in-depth review is currently being conducted and will be published in Spring 2014, together with those of the other MS for which this was announced.

([1]) http://www.lesechos.fr/economie-politique/monde/actu/afp-00565196-enquete-sur-l-export-en-allemagne-le-commissaire-allemand-juge-une-amende-impensable-630676.php
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/2014/amr2014_en.pdf
([3]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-13-970_en.htm

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-013247/13
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(21 november 2013)

Betreft: Gevolgen van opt-outs in de realiteit

Chris Grayling, de Britse minister van Justitie, probeert met spoed te achterhalen of het Handvest van de grondrechten van de EU van toepassing is in het VK, nadat een rechter van het Hooggerechtshof had gezegd dat het Handvest naar zijn mening onopzettelijk deel was gaan uitmaken van het nationale recht ([1]).

1. Is de Commissie op de hoogte van dit probleem?

2. Kan de Commissie een definitie geven van een „opt-out"?

3. Welke gevolgen hebben de opt-outs voor het nationaal recht en voor het Europees recht?

4. Welke autoriteit, nationaal dan wel Europees, is bevoegd de protocollen inzake opt-outs te interpreteren?

5. Wanneer bovengenoemde stelling juist is, betekent dit dat de bestaande opt-outs die met bijvoorbeeld Denemarken of Ierland overeengekomen zijn, naar believen geïnterpreteerd kunnen worden en geen sterke barrière vormen tegen de invloed van de EU?

Antwoord van de heer Barroso namens de Commissie
(29 januari 2014)

1. De bepalingen van het Handvest van de grondrechten van de Europese Unie, overeenkomstig artikel 51 van het Handvest, zijn uitsluitend gericht tot de lidstaten wanneer zij het recht van de Unie toepassen. In dit opzicht is het Handvest ook van toepassing op het Verenigd Koninkrijk.

Zoals het Hof van Justitie oordeelt in zijn arrest van 21 december 2011 (gevoegde zaken C-411/10 en C-493/10, *N. S./Secretary of State*) met betrekking tot Protocol nr. 30 betreffende de toepassing van het Handvest op Polen en het Verenigd Koninkrijk, doet dat Protocol niet af aan „de gelding van het Handvest voor het Verenigd Koninkrijk of Polen, welke zienswijze steun vindt in de considerans van dit protocol".

2. tot en met 5. „Opt-out" is geen rechtsbegrip. Het wordt vaak gebruikt om te verwijzen naar een situatie waarin de Verdragen, meestal in een protocol bij de Verdragen, bepalen dat de bepalingen van het Verdrag en de maatregelen die zijn vastgesteld op grond van de bepalingen van het Verdrag, in een bepaald gebied niet bindend zijn voor, noch van toepassing zijn in een bepaalde lidstaat. De gevolgen van een dergelijke „opt-out" worden nauwkeurig beschreven in deze protocollen, zowel voor de Unie (bijvoorbeeld voor het besluitvormingsproces voor de vaststelling van besluiten op dit gebied) als voor de betrokken lidstaat (bijvoorbeeld dat de vastgestelde maatregelen op dat gebied voor de lidstaat geen andere financiële gevolgen mogen hebben dan de administratieve kosten voor de instellingen). Met betrekking tot enige andere bepaling van het recht van de Unie, kunnen de bepalingen van deze protocollen in geval van een juridisch geschil worden uitgelegd door de nationale rechters en eventueel het Hof van Justitie van de Europese Unie.

([1]) http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2013/nov/19/chris-grayling-clarification-eu-charter-rights.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013247/13
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Actual consequences of opt-outs

Chris Grayling, the UK Justice Secretary, is urgently trying to clarify whether the European Union Charter of Fundamental Rights applies in the UK, after a High Court judge said he believed it had unintentionally become part of domestic law ([1]).

1. Is the Commission aware of this problem?

2. Could the Commission define an opt-out?

3. What are the consequences of opt-outs with regard to national and EC laws?

4. Which authority, national or European, may interpret the protocols on opt-outs?

5. If the statement mentioned above is true, does this mean that existing opt-outs, for instance those agreed by Denmark or Ireland, are open to interpretation instead of constituting a firm wall against the influence of the EU?

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

1. It should be recalled that, in accordance with its Article 51, the provisions of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union are only addressed to the Member States when they are implementing Union law. To that extent, the Charter applies also to the United Kingdom.

Indeed, as the Court of Justice has stated in its judgment of 21 December 2011 (Joined cases C-411/10 and C-493/10, *N.S./Secretary of State*) with respect to Protocol No 30 on the application of the Charter to Poland and to the United Kingdom, that Protocol 'does not call into question the applicability of the Charter in the United Kingdom or in Poland, a position which is confirmed by the recitals in the preamble to that protocol'.

2 to 5. 'Opt-out' is not a legal expression. It is commonly used to refer to a situation whereby the Treaties, usually in a Protocol to the Treaties, provide that in a certain area the Treaty provisions, and the measures adopted pursuant to those Treaty provisions, shall not be binding upon or applicable in a given Member State. The consequences of such an 'opt-out', both for the Union (for example on the decision-making process for the adoption of acts in that area) and for the Member State concerned (for example that it shall bear no financial consequences of the measures adopted in that area, other than administrative costs entailed for the institutions) are precisely spelled out in these protocols. The provisions of these protocols can, as with regard to any other provision of Union law, be interpreted in case of a legal dispute by the national judges and,; as the case may be, the Court of Justice of the European Union.

([1]) http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2013/nov/19/chris-grayling-clarification-eu-charter-rights

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013248/13
a la Comisión
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(21 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Fondos europeos recibidos por las ciudades gallegas

Como continuación a mi pregunta E-006107/2013, ¿puede la Comisión desglosar a nivel de las principales ciudades gallegas (A Coruña, Vigo, Ourense, Santiago de Compostela, Lugo, Pontevedra y Ferrol) la parte correspondiente a los más de 20 000 millones de euros asignados a Galicia provenientes de los Fondos europeos desde la entrada de España en la Unión Europea, desglosándolos conforme a los diversos períodos de financiación plurianual?

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

Dado que la Comisión no lleva un seguimiento de los datos con este nivel de detalle, Su Señoría encontrará en el anexo la información que ha solicitado facilitada por la autoridad de gestión en España y desglosada por períodos y municipios. Los datos proporcionados corresponden a las asignaciones financieras del Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo Regional (FEDER) gestionadas únicamente por estos municipios. En cuanto al Fondo de Cohesión, un desglose por municipios resulta imposible ya que estos no gestionan las asignaciones del Fondo de Cohesión de manera directa y es difícil precisar de qué parte de un proyecto (por ejemplo, una carretera) se benefició un municipio concreto y en qué términos financieros.

La autoridad de gestión solo pudo facilitar datos del FEDER a corto plazo, correspondientes a los períodos 2000-2006 y 2007-2013. La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a dicha autoridad para más información:

Ministerio de Hacienda y Administraciones Públicas — Madrid, España
Dirección General de Fondos Comunitarios, Subdirección General de Administración del FEDER
Paseo de la Castellana, 162
E-28071 Madrid
Subdirector General de Administración del FEDER
Tel.: +34 91 5835223
Fax.: +34 91 5835290

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013248/13
to the Commission
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: European funding received by Galician cities

To follow up on my earlier Written Question, E-006107/2013, can the Commission indicate the portion received by each of the major cities in Galicia (A Coruña, Vigo, Ourense, Santiago de Compostela, Lugo, Pontevedra and Ferrol) of the over EUR 20 000 in funding allocated to that region since Spain entered the EU, broken down as per each of the various multiannual funding periods?

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

Since the Commission does not monitor data on this level of detail, the Honourable Member will find in the annex the requested information provided by the managing authority in Spain. It is divided in periods and municipalities. The data provided corresponds to European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) financial allocations managed by these municipalities only. Concerning the Cohesion Fund, a breakdown by municipalities is not possible since they do not manage the Cohesion Fund allocations directly and it is difficult to indicate which part of a project (for example a road) benefitted a municipality to what financial extent.

The managing authority could only provide on a short term the ERDF data on the 2000-2006 and 2007-2013 periods. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the managing authority for further information:

Ministerio de Hacienda y Administraciones Públicas- Madrid, España
Dirección General de Fondos Comunitarios, Subdirección General de Administración del FEDER
Paseo de la Castellana, 162
E-28071 Madrid
Subdirector General de Administración del FEDER
Tel.: +34 91 5835223
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(České znění)

Otázka k písemnému zodpovězení E-013249/13
Komisi
Vojtěch Mynář (S&D)
(21. listopadu 2013)

Předmět: Vodní koridor Dunaj-Odra-Labe a nařízení o hlavních směrech Unie pro rozvoj transevropské dopravní sítě

Vzhledem k tomu, že dne 19. listopadu 2013 přijal Evropský parlament návrh nařízení Evropského parlamentu a Rady o hlavních směrech Unie pro rozvoj transevropské dopravní sítě (COM(2011)0650/3 – C7-0375/2012 – 2011/0294(COD));

Vzhledem k tomu, že příloha č. 1 k nařízení stanoví mapu hlavní a globální sítě s tím, že na území středoevropských členských států není zařazen projekt propojení tří evropských řek Dunaj, Odra a Labe;

Vzhledem k tomu, že čl. 54 nařízení předpokládá revizi nařízení až v roce 2023, což se jeví pro významné dopravní projekty podporující evropské cíle Strategie 2020 a představeného programu NAIADES II jako příliš vzdálený termín;

Za předpokladu, že pro projekt vodního koridoru Dunaj-Odra-Labe bude zpracována studie proveditelnosti a předložena stanoviska dotčených členských států;

1. Žádám o vyjádření, jestli může Komise využít možnost stanovenou v čl. 49 odst. 3, a sice přijmout akt v přenesené pravomoci a podle písm. c) upravit mapu infrastruktury tak, aby zahrnula projekt propojení tří evropských moří?

2. Pokud nikoliv, existuje jiná legislativní možnost, jak upravit mapu dopravní sítě dle aktuální shody členských států?

Odpověď pana Kallase jménem Komise
(20. ledna 2014)

Komise odkazuje na nařízení Evropského parlamentu a Rady (EU) č. 1315/2013 o hlavních směrech Unie pro rozvoj transevropské dopravní sítě přijaté dne 11. prosince 2013 ([1]).

1) Podle čl. 49 odst. 4 je Komise zmocněna přijímat akty v přenesené pravomoci pro přizpůsobení příloh I a II nařízení zejména s cílem zohlednit případné změny vyplývající z množstevních limitů stanovených v nařízení.

Úprava zahrnuje možnost v přísně omezené míře upravit mapy silniční a železniční infrastruktury a infrastruktury vnitrozemských vodních cest za účelem zohlednění pokroku při budování sítě TEN-T. Přenesení pravomoci neumožňuje přidávat do transevropské sítě nové úseky.

2) Pokud jde o změny, které přesahují přenesení pravomoci, příloha nařízení č. 1315/2013 může být upravena pouze řádným legislativním postupem. Článek 54 nařízení ukládá Komisi provést do 31. prosince 2023 přezkum realizace hlavní sítě. V případě potřeby a na základě výsledků přezkumu může Komise předložit návrh na změnu nařízení.

([1]) Úř. věst. L 348, 20.12.2013, s. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013249/13
to the Commission
Vojtěch Mynář (S&D)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: the Danube-Oder-Elbe water corridor and the regulation on Community guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network

Whereas on 19 November 2013, Parliament adopted a draft Regulation of the Parliament and of the Council on Community guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network (COM(2011)0650/3 — C7-0375/2012 — 2011/0294(COD));

Whereas Annex No 1 to the regulation sets out a map of the main network and the global network which does not include the project to link up the Danube, Oder and Elbe rivers in several central European Member States;

Whereas Article 54 of the regulation assumes that the regulation will not be revised until 2023, which seems to be an excessively long timeframe for important transport projects that support the European objectives of Strategy 2020 and the proposed NAIADES II programme;

Assuming that a feasibility study will be carried out on the Danube-Oder-Elbe water corridor and that the opinions of affected Member States will be submitted;

1. Can the Commission say whether it can take advantage of the possibility provided for in Article 49(3) of adopting a delegated act and, pursuant to point (c), of modifying the infrastructure map to include the project that aims to link three European seas?

2. If not, is there another legislative option that could be taken to modify the transportnetwork in order to bring it into line with what the Member States have now agreedupon?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(20 January 2014)

The Commission would refer to Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council on Union Guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network as adopted on the 11th of December 2013 [1].

1) Article 49(4) empowers the Commission to adopt delegated acts concerning certain adaptations of Annexes I and II of the regulation, notably to take due account of possible changes resulting from the quantitative thresholds as laid down in the regulation.

The adaptation includes the possibility to adjust the maps for road, railway and inland waterway infrastructure in a strictly limited way so as to reflect the progress in completing the TEN-T network. The delegation of power does not allow to add new additional sections to the trans-European network.

2) For changes which go beyond the delegation of power, the annex to Regulation 1315/2013 can only be adapted through the ordinary legislative procedure. Article 54 of the regulation imposes upon the Commission, by 31 December 2023, to carry out a review of the implementation of the core network. If necessary and based on the outcome of the review, the Commission may submit a proposal for modification of the regulation.

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[1] OJ L 348, 20.12.2013, p.1.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-013250/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(21 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Προκλήσεις της τρόικα στην Ελλάδα

Κύριο θέμα του Συμβουλίου Κορυφής του Δεκεμβρίου είναι η κάλυψη του μεγάλου κενού Πολιτικής Ασφάλειας και Άμυνας σε ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο.

Μέχρι τώρα, η ρήτρα αμοιβαίας συνδρομής στην άμυνα και αμοιβαίας αλληλεγγύης που προβλέπονται αντίστοιχα στο άρθρο 42 παρ. 7 της Συνθήκης της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης και στο άρθρο 222 της Συνθήκης της Λισαβόνας είναι κενό γράμμα. Πρώτα απ' όλα θα πρέπει να εγγυηθούμε τα σύνορα των κρατών μελών ως Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση.

Ήδη σήμερα η ολομέλεια του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου ψήφισε δύο εκθέσεις με τις οποίες το Κοινοβούλιο συνδράμει την σύνοδο κορυφής και προτείνει την ανάπτυξη και υποβοήθηση μικρομεσαίων επιχειρήσεων αμυντικής βιομηχανίας.

Την ίδια στιγμή η τρόικα στην Ελλάδα επιμένει στο κλείσιμο ελληνικών αμυντικών βιομηχανιών όπως της Α.Ε Ελληνικά Αμυντικά Συστήματα (ΕΑΣ) ΛΑΡΚΟ, ΕΑΒ κ.λπ. για λόγους δήθεν περικοπής δαπανών.

Η επιμονή αυτή της τρόικα, εκτός του ότι θέτει εν κινδύνω την άμυνα της Ελλάδας είναι αντίθετη προς την ευρωπαϊκή αμυντική πολιτική που ψήφισε το Κοινοβούλιο σήμερα και, κατά πάσα πιθανότητα θα διαμορφώσει και η σύνοδος κορυφής του Δεκεμβρίου.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Είναι διατεθειμένη, ενόψει των ανωτέρω, να καταστήσει σαφές στην τρόικα ότι δεν μπορεί να παίζει με την άμυνα ενός κράτους μέλους, ούτε να διαμορφώνουν απλοί υπάλληλοι πολιτικές αντίθετες προς τις αποφάσεις του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και τις προβλέψεις των συνθηκών της ΕΕ που μνημονεύονται ανωτέρω.

Θεωρεί ότι έχουν αρμοδιότητα απλοί υπάλληλοι, να επιβάλλουν απόψεις αντίθετες προς τις Συνθήκες; Αν όχι, να τους μαζέψει …

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

Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει τον κύριο βουλευτή στις απαντήσεις που έδωσε στις ερωτήσεις E-12045/13 και E-12575/13. Η Επιτροπή επαναλαμβάνει ότι δεν προτίθεται να παρέμβει στις πολιτικές της Ελλάδας στον τομέα της άμυνας, υπό την προϋπόθεση ότι αυτές είναι σύμφωνες με τη νομοθεσία της ΕΕ.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013250/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Challenges facing the Troika in Greece

The main theme of the December summit is to cover the large security and defence policy gap at European level.

So far, the provisions on mutual defence and mutual solidarity provided in Article 42(7) of the Treaty on European Union and Article 222 of the Lisbon Treaty respectively are a dead letter. First and foremost, we need to guarantee the borders of European Union Member States.

Already today, the plenary of the European Parliament has adopted two reports assisting the summit and proposing a development in support of small and medium-sized enterprises in the defence industry.

At the same time, the Troika is proposing the closure of Greek defence companies such as Hellenic Defence Systems a.s., LARCO, Hellenic Aerospace Industry and others, allegedly due to spending cuts.

The insistence of the Troika, besides jeopardising the defence of Greece, is contrary to the European defence policy adopted by Parliament today, which will probably be further shaped by the December summit.

Is the Commission prepared, in view of the above, to make it clear to the Troika that it cannot play with the defence of a Member State, and neither can ordinary employees form policies which are contrary to the decisions of Parliament and the above EU Treaty provisions?

Does it believe that ordinary employees have the competence to impose views that are contrary to the Treaties? If not, it should call them into line.

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member of the European Parliament to its replies to questions E-12045/13 and E-12575/13. The Commission reiterates that it has no intention to influence the defence policies of Greece, provided that they are in line with EC law.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013251/13
to the Commission
Rebecca Taylor (ALDE)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Rights of persons with disabilities

There is evidence to show that persons with disabilities in the European Union are being disproportionately affected by cuts in public spending ([1]). This is having a severe impact on the rights of persons with disabilities under the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, and the European Social Charter, as well as other established laws and conventions to which the EU is bound.

Whilst performing its role as part of the 'troika', and in terms of its role in the European Semester process, what is the Commission doing to ensure that it is upholding its commitments under these conventions and charters, as well as the goals laid down in the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-010955/2013 ([2]).

([1]) 'Assessing the Impact of European Governments' Austerity Plans on the Rights of People with Disabilities' European Foundation Centre, 2012 http://www.efc.be/news_events/Pages/austerity-measures.aspx
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-013253/13
à la Commission (Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante)
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(21 novembre 2013)

Objet: VP/HR — Aides européennes aux colonies israéliennes

Les lignes directrices encadrant les aides européennes destinées aux colonies israéliennes sont-elles bien appliquées?

Ces lignes directrices définissent les conditions d'octroi des aides de l'Union européenne aux entités israéliennes établies dans les territoires occupés par Israël depuis juin 1967 ou aux activités qu'elles y déploient. Elles s'appliqueront aux programmes et aides de l'Union européenne sur la période 2014-2020 et visent, essentiellement, à garantir que ces derniers ne bénéficieront pas aux colonies israéliennes.

À cet égard, elles tendent à assurer le respect des positions et des engagements adoptés par l'Union européenne, en conformité avec le droit international, en ce qui concerne la non-reconnaissance par l'Union de la souveraineté d'Israël sur les territoires occupés par le pays depuis juin 1967.

Quelle est la position des institutions européennes face à la politique israélienne concernant les colonies?

Réponse donnée par Mme Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(5 février 2014)

L'Union européenne et ses États membres considèrent que les colonies israéliennes sont illégales au regard du droit international, constituent un obstacle à la paix et menacent la viabilité de la solution fondée sur la coexistence de deux États dans le conflit israélo-palestinien (les colonies israéliennes dans les territoires palestiniens occupés sont illégales en vertu du droit international: l'article 49 de la quatrième convention de Genève interdit à la puissance occupante de transférer des parties de sa population dans les territoires qu'elle occupe). L'UE et ses États membres ne reconnaissent aucune modification du tracé des frontières d'avant 1967, qui n'aurait pas été approuvée par les parties.

Les conclusions du Conseil Affaires étrangères expriment aussi l'engagement de l'UE de veiller à ce que, conformément au droit international, tous les accords entre l'État d'Israël et l'Union européenne indiquent clairement et expressément qu'ils ne s'appliquent pas aux territoires occupés par Israël en 1967.

La position de l'UE sur l'application correcte des lignes directrices sur l'aide européenne en faveur des colonies israéliennes figure dans la réponse à la question parlementaire E-013106/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013253/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — European aid to Israeli settlements

Are the guidelines for European aid to Israeli settlements being properly applied?

These guidelines set out the conditions for granting EU aid to Israeli entities established in the territories occupied by Israel since June 1967 or to the activities they carry out there. They will apply to EU programmes and aid for the 2014-2020 period and aim, primarily, to ensure that these will not benefit Israeli settlements.

In this respect, they are designed to ensure that the positions and commitments adopted by the European Union, in accordance with international law, on the non-recognition by the EU of Israel's sovereignty over the territories occupied by Israel since June 1967 are upheld.

What is the European institutions' position on Israeli settlement policy?

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

The European Union and its Member States consider that Israeli settlements are illegal under international law, constitute an obstacle to peace and undermine the viability of a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories are illegal under international law. Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention prohibits the occupying power from transferring parts of its own population into territories it occupies). The EU and its Member States do not recognise any changes to the pre-1967 borders other than those agreed by the parties.

The Foreign Affairs Council Conclusions also expressed the EU's commitment to ensure that — in line with international law — all agreements between the State of Israel and the European Union had to unequivocally and explicitly indicate their inapplicability to the territories occupied by Israel in 1967.

The EU's position on the issue of the guidelines for European aid to Israeli settlements being properly applied is given in the reply to parliamentary Question E-013106/2013.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013254/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(21 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Misure dell'UE per ottenere trasparenza fiscale dal Lussemburgo

— All'apertura del Forum mondiale di Giacarta (21-22 novembre 2013) sulla trasparenza e lo scambio di informazioni in materia fiscale, è emerso, da parte degli esperti del gruppo di valutazione, un atto d'accusa molto preciso nei confronti del Lussemburgo;

— a questo Stato membro dell'UE vengono rimproverate sia la mancanza di trasparenza circa l'identificazione dei proprietari dei veicoli finanziari, sia l'imprecisione delle risposte alle domande formulate dalle autorità di indagine fiscale degli altri Stati, nonché la totale chiusura delle banche lussemburghesi alle richieste di informazioni delle autorità inquirenti;

— altri rilievi, peraltro meno gravi, sono formulati a carico di Cipro, delle Isole Vergini britanniche e delle Seychelles.

Può dire la Commissione se intende attuare con la massima urgenza le misure atte a far sì che, in particolare, il Lussemburgo ponga fine a questa totale mancanza di trasparenza fiscale, posto che vi hanno sede, notoriamente, le «scatole cinesi» che occultano i pacchetti di controllo di moltissime società operanti negli Stati membri e banche che custodiscono enormi stock di prodotti derivati?

Risposta di Algirdas Šemeta a nome della Commissione
(7 gennaio 2014)

La Commissione sostiene decisamente l'operato del Forum mondiale sulla trasparenza e lo scambio di informazioni in materia fiscale per quanto riguarda la promozione di una buona governance fiscale a livello internazionale. Ad oggi il Forum mondiale ha completato solo le cosiddette valutazioni della fase 2 (che riguardano l'attuazione pratica delle norme) per 50 dei suoi 122 paesi e organi giurisdizionali. La Commissione ha preso nota dei risultati di queste valutazioni per il Lussemburgo e alcuni altri paesi dell'UE. Essa esaminerà i motivi che hanno indotto il Forum mondiale a ritenere che alcuni Stati membri dell'UE non soddisfino o soddisfino solo in parte le norme internazionali e, se necessario, valuterà cosa si possa fare per affrontare la questione.

Dall'entrata in vigore della direttiva 2011/16/UE ([1]), all'inizio di quest'anno, gli Stati membri dell'UE devono attenersi a regole di cooperazione reciproca che sono più rigorose degli obblighi internazionali, ad esempio, imponendo termini per rispondere alle richieste di informazioni provenienti da altri Stati membri. Finora la Commissione non ha ricevuto denunce riguardanti l'applicazione di queste nuove regole da parte del Lussemburgo e di Cipro. Un feedback sul primo anno di applicazione della direttiva sarà disponibile nei prossimi mesi. Se ciò dovesse rivelare un'applicazione non corretta della direttiva, la Commissione compirà tutti i passi necessari per garantire il pieno rispetto del diritto dell'UE.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/taxation/tax_cooperation/mutual_assistance/direct_tax_directive /index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013254/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: EU measures to obtain fiscal transparency from Luxembourg

At the opening of the Jakarta Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes (21-22 November 2013), experts from the valuation group levelled a very specific accusation against Luxembourg.

The EU Member State was criticised for its lack of transparency in identifying the owners of financial vehicles, for its lack of clarity when answering the questions put by the financial investigation authorities of other States, and for its banks' outright refusal to fulfil requests for information from investigative authorities.

Other, less serious, criticisms were levelled at Cyprus, the British Virgin Islands and the Seychelles.

Will the Commission act with the utmost urgency to ensure that Luxembourg, in particular, puts an end to this total lack of fiscal transparency, since the country is known to host chains of holding companies that conceal controlling interests in a very large number of companies operating in the Member States, as well as banks that hold enormous stocks of derivative products?

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

The Commission very much supports the work of the Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes in promoting tax good governance internationally. The Global Forum has to date only completed so-called phase 2 reviews (survey of the practical implementation of the standards) for 50 of its 122 countries and jurisdictions. The Commission has taken note of the results of the phase 2 reviews for Luxembourg and some other EU countries. It will look into the reasons that led the Global Forum to consider some EU Member States as non-compliant or partially compliant with the international standards and, if necessary, see what should be done to address this.

Since the entry into force of Directive 2011/16/EU ([1]) at the beginning of this year EU Member States are obliged to operate standards of cooperation with each other that go above and beyond international requirements, e.g. with compulsory deadlines to answer requests for information from other Member States. So far the Commission has received no complaints regarding the application of these new rules by Luxembourg and Cyprus. Feedback on the first year of application of the directive will become available in the coming months. If this should reveal incorrect application of the directive, the Commission will take all necessary steps to ensure full compliance with EC law.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/taxation/tax_cooperation/mutual_assistance/direct_tax_directive /index_en.htm

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-013256/13
a Bizottság számára
Kovács Béla (NI)
(2013. november 21.)

Tárgy: Az uniós intézmények fűtési légszennyezése

Elviekben az Európai Unió a leghatározottabban fellép Földünk levegőjének tisztasága érdekében.

A gyakorlatban a brüsszeli uniós intézmények épületeit gázolajjal (mazout) fűtik, melynek égése során korom, kén, valamint kadmium, higany, ólom és más nehézfémek és egyéb szennyezőanyagok kerülnek a levegőbe. Földgázzal való fűtés esetén ilyen szennyezőanyagok nem lennének.

Hány épületet fűtenek olajjal és évente mennyi a felhasznált fűtőanyag mennyisége hozzávetőleg?

Mennyi olyan szennyezőanyag keletkezik évente ezáltal, amit gázfűtés esetén nem kellene az embereknek és a többi élőlénynek belélegezniük?

Természetesen anyagonként lebontva és csak közelítőleg.

Az EU-nak a környezet védelme melletti nagyfokú elkötelezettségére való tekintettel mi indokolja az olajfűtést akkor, amikor bőségesen van földgáz?

Maroš Šefčovič válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2014. február 6.)

A Bizottság csak saját épületei tekintetében tudja megválaszolni a kérdést, a többi intézmény épületei tekintetében nem.

A Bizottság Brüsszel fővárosi régióban található 65 épülete közül 62 gázfűtéssel, 3 pedig olajfűtéssel rendelkezik.

Az olajfogyasztás 2012-ben 195,9 m^3-t tett ki, mindössze 2,2%-át a Bizottság brüsszeli épületeinek fűtésére felhasznált energiának.

A szennyezőanyagok konkrét szintjéről ebben a szakaszban nem állnak rendelkezésre részletes adatok.

Mindazonáltal ki kell emelnünk: a Bizottság tisztában van azzal, hogy a gázfűtés során kevesebb fajta és kisebb mennyiségű szennyezőanyag keletkezik, mint az olajfűtés esetében; a Bizottság ezért minden létesítményében fokozatosan megszünteti az olajfűtést. A jelenleg még olajfűtéssel rendelkező 3 épület közül az egyik pillanatnyilag felújítás alatt áll, 2014-től gázfűtéssel fog üzemelni; egy másik pedig később meghatározandó időpontban fog átállni a gázfűtésre; a harmadik épület jövőjével kapcsolatban jelenleg tanulmányokat készítünk, az egyik lehetőség szerint az épületet 2015-től elhagyjuk.

Ez a megközelítés összhangban van a Bizottság EMAS ([1]) elnevezésű környezetvédelmi politikájával, amelynek célja a természeti erőforrások jobb felhasználása, a szennyezést megelőző intézkedések bevezetése, valamint a tevékenységek és épületek környezetvédelmi teljesítményének folyamatos javítása.

([1]) Környezetvédelmi vezetési és hitelesítési rendszer (Eco-Management and Audit Scheme).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013256/13
to the Commission
Béla Kovács (NI)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Heating pollution from EU institutions

In principle, the European Union is strongly committed to act to protect the purity of our planet's air.

In practice, the buildings of the EU institutions in Brussels are heated by fuel oil (mazout), resulting in the emission of combustion products such as soot, sulphur, cadmium, mercury, lead and other heavy metals and pollutants into the atmosphere. Heating with natural gas would not produce such pollutants.

How many buildings are heated with oil, and what is the approximate annual amount of heating fuel used?

How much pollution is created every year in this manner that people and other living creatures would not have to breathe in if we heated with gas?

Naturally, I mean a breakdown by pollutants, and only approximate figures.

In view of the EU's strong commitment to environmental protection, what justifies oil heating when there is plenty of natural gas?

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

The Commission can only answer this question for its own buildings, and not for the buildings of the other Institutions.

62 out of the 65 Commission buildings located in the Brussels Capital Region are heated using natural gas and only 3 are heated using oil.

As regards oil consumption, it amounted to 195.9 m^3 in 2012, representing only 2.2% of the total energy used for heating Commission buildings in Brussels.

Detailed statistics about the specific level of pollutants are not available at this stage.

Nevertheless, it should be highlighted that the Commission is well aware that the pollutants resulting from combustion of natural gas are far fewer in volume and number than those from the combustion of oil; for that reason the Commission is proceeding to a phase out of all the installations heated by oil. Out of the 3 buildings still heated using oil, one is currently being renovated and will be heated using natural gas from 2014; another will change from oil to natural gas heating at a date still to be determined; studies are ongoing concerning the future of the third building, one scenario envisaged being to leave the building from 2015.

This approach is consistent with the Commission EMAS ([1]) environmental policy that aims at making a better use of natural resources, taking measures to prevent pollution and continuously improve the environmental performances of its activities and buildings.

([1]) Eco-Mangement and Audit Scheme.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-013257/13
a Bizottság számára
Kovács Béla (NI)
(2013. november 21.)

Tárgy: Az autók féklámpái

Az utóbbi időben rohamosan terjednek a LED-es féklámpák és pótféklámpák. Amennyire hasznosak ezek a nagy fényerejű lámpák a baleset-megelőzés szempontjából autópályán sűrű esőben vagy ködben, olyannyira zavarók a városi dugókban való araszoláskor.

Kifejezetten alkalmasak a követő jármű vezetőjének elvakítására, ezáltal a gyalogosok észlelését is akadályozzák. Műszakilag ma már könnyen megvalósítható volna, hogy a féklámpák fényerejét automata szabályozza a sebesség és a megvilágítottság függvényében.

Az EU ambiciózus célokat tűzött ki a közúti balesetek áldozatai számának csökkentéséről.

Fentiek okán nem volna-e időszerű rendeletet alkotni a vakító féklámpák ellen?

Antonio Tajani válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2014. január 21.)

A féklámpák maximális megengedett fényintenzitását az ENSZ Európai Gazdasági Bizottságának 7. sz. előírása ([1]) (6. pont) határozza meg, amely a gépjárművek általános biztonságáról szóló 661/2009/EK rendelet révén kötelező az Európai Unióban. Az ENSZ-EGB-előírás mind a hagyományos, mind a modern féklámpákra vonatkozóan részletes leírást tartalmaz.

A Bizottság tisztában van azzal, hogy sokak szerint a személygépjárművek hátuljára szerelt modern lámpák némelyike bizonyos körülmények között túl erősen világít. Azonban meg kell jegyezni, hogy nem áll rendelkezésre olyan baleseti statisztika vagy egyéb releváns információ, amely alapján meg lehetne állapítani, hogy a szóban forgó lámpák csakugyan túl fényesek lennének, csillogást okoznának, vagy olyan mellékhatásuk lenne, amely a vezetőt befolyásolja a jármű biztonságos vezetésében.

([1]) HL L 148., 2010.6.12., 1. o.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013257/13
to the Commission
Béla Kovács (NI)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Motorcar brake lights

Recently there has been a rapid spread in the use of LED brake lights and supplemental brake lights. While these high-intensity lights are useful for accident prevention on motorways in heavy rain or thick fog, they are also distracting when crawling along in congested urban traffic.

They are eminently suitable for blinding the drivers of the vehicles behind, preventing them from noticing pedestrians. Current technology could provide a solution for the automatic regulation of brake light brightness according to speed and road lighting.

The EU has set ambitious targets for reducing the number of road accident victims.

For the reasons above, would it not be timely to draft a regulation against these blinding brake lights?

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

The maximum luminous intensity permitted for stop lamps is laid down in Regulation No 7 ([1]) (paragraph 6) of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europen (UNECE) which is, by virtue of Regulation (EC) No 661/2009 on the general safety of motor vehicles, compulsory in the EU. This UNECE Regulation contains detailed prescriptions for both conventional and modern stop lamps.

The Commission is aware of the perception that some modern lamps used on the rear of cars appear to be very bright under some circumstances. However, it is noted that there is no accident data, or other relevant information available that show that such lamps are indeed too bright or cause glare or have any other side-effects that may affect the driver's ability to safely operate the vehicle.

([1]) OJ L 148, 12.6.2010.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-013258/13
aan de Commissie
Judith A. Merkies (S&D)
(21 november 2013)

Betreft: Astroturfing en neprecensies

Clickfarms, astroturfing en neprescensies. Het internet biedt kwaadwillende bedrijven veel mogelijkheden om consumenten te misleiden ([1]). The New York Times berichtte afgelopen september over een aanpak van deze praktijken. De staat New York legt 19 bedrijven een dwangsom van in totaal 350.000 dollar op. Ook publiceert zij de lijst van overtreders ([2]).

De Commissie heeft, in haar Richtlijn 2005/29/EG betreffende oneerlijke handelspraktijken van ondernemingen jegens consumenten vastgelegd, dat partijen zich onder geen voorwaarde valselijk mogen voordoen als een consument.

Toch blijven bedrijven zich presenteren als consumenten, via neprecensies, maar ook via in scene gezette burgerinitiatieven („astroturfing"), bijv. met behulp van onechte mail- of YouTube-accounts. In november 2012 was het Europees Parlement slachtoffer van een dergelijk actie, toen de Poolse schaliegasindustrie onder de noemer van „burgerinitiatief" onverhulde promotie maakte in het Europees Parlement met een dure tentoonstelling ([3]).

Neprecensies

1. Onderneemt de Commissie stappen om het toezicht op en het straffen van neprecensies aan te pakken? Kan de Commissie een inschatting maken van de extra winst die bedrijven door deze praktijken maken, als richtsnoer voor de strafmaat?

2. Is de Commissie bereid volledige openheid te geven over de bedrijven die aangesproken worden op neprecensies?

Astroturfing

3. Welke stappen onderneemt de Commissie stappen om burgerinitiatieven te toetsen aan de Richtlijn 2005/29/EG die vastlegt dat partijen zich onder niet mogen voordoen als een consument?

4. Is de Commissie bereid volledige openheid te geven over de bedrijven die zich schuldig maken aan astroturfing?

Antwoord van mevrouw Reding namens de Commissie
(11 februari 2014)

De Commissie is zich bewust van het algemene probleem van verborgen reclame en online neprecensies, met inbegrip van „astroturfing" en „fictieve" getuigenissen. In dit verband verwijst de Commissie het geachte Parlementslid naar het antwoord op vraag E-010900/2013.

Volgens Richtlijn 2005/29/EG ([4]) mogen handelaars consumenten niet misleiden over een breed scala van elementen, met inbegrip van de motieven voor de handelspraktijk, en wordt het zich op bedrieglijke wijze voordoen als consument (onder alle omstandigheden) verboden (bijlage I, nr. 22).

Overeenkomstig de consumentenagenda van de Commissie ([5]) worden er belangrijke actiegebieden vastgesteld in het verslag over de toepassing van Richtlijn 2005/29/EG ([6]), dat is goedgekeurd op 14 maart 2013. Een van deze actiegebieden is de onlinesector, met inbegrip van instrumenten voor klantenbeoordeling en prijsvergelijkingswebsites ([7]), waarvoor de handhavingsinspanningen moeten worden opgedreven. In dit verband herziet de Commissie het huidige richtsnoer over de toepassing van Richtlijn 2005/29/EG ([8]) om nieuwe problemen aan te kunnen pakken, zoals valse beoordelingen, verklaringen en getuigenissen.

([1]) http://www.computerbild.de/artikel/cb-Aktuell-Internet-gefaelschte-Bewertungen-Online-Shops-7474604.html
([2]) http://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/23/technology/give-yourself-4-stars-online-it-might-cost-you.html?_r=0.
([3]) http://www.greens-efa.eu/astroturfing-in-the-ep-8588.html
([4]) PB L 149 van 11.6.2005.
([5]) COM(2012) 225.
([6]) COM(2013) 139.
([7]) COM(2013) 139, punt 3.4.2 Instrumenten voor klantenbeoordeling en prijsvergelijkingswebsites, blz. 24-26.
([8]) Leidraad voor de tenuitvoerlegging/toepassing van Richtlijn 2005/29/EG betreffende oneerlijke handelspraktijken (SEC(2009) 1666, werkdocument van de diensten van de Commissie), 3 december 2009 — http://ec.europa.eu/justice/consumer-marketing/files/ucp_guidance_en.pdf

In een dialoog tussen de diverse belanghebbenden, geleid door de Commissie, werd aanbevolen ([9]) dat beheerders van online vergelijkingsinstrumenten (met inbegrip van tussenpersonen voor verschillende handelaars) maatregelen moeten nemen om de echtheid te waarborgen van de gebruikersbeoordelingen en waarderingscijfers die online staan. De Commissie laat zowel een diepgaande studie uitvoeren naar dergelijke instrumenten, als een specifieke studie naar hotelreserveringen. In beide studies zullen gebruikersbeoordelingen worden behandeld. De resultaten worden verwacht in de eerste helft van dit jaar.

In oktober heeft de Commissie een openbare raadpleging gehouden over de herziening van Verordening 2006/2004/EG betreffende samenwerking inzake consumentenbescherming ([10]). In de herziening worden mogelijkheden onderzocht om kostenefficiënt en snel te reageren op het gebied van rechtshandhaving bij inbreuken die een groot aantal consumenten in de EU schaden.

([9]) Verslag over de dialoog met de belanghebbenden over vergelijkingsinstrumenten: http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/documents/consumer-summit-2013-msdct-report_en.pdf

([10]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_consumer/dgs_consultations/ca/consumer_protection_cooperation_ regulation_201310_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013258/13
to the Commission
Judith A. Merkies (S&D)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Astroturfing and bogus reviews

Click farms, astroturfing and bogus reviews: the Internet offers malevolent businesses a great many opportunities to mislead consumers ([1]). *The New York Times* reported last September about an attempt to tackle such practices. New York State has fined 19 companies a total of USD 350 000. It is also publishing the list of the guilty parties ([2]).

In Directive 2005/29/EC concerning unfair business-to-consumer commercial practices in the internal market, the Commission stipulated that parties must not, under any circumstances, falsely represent themselves as consumers.

Nevertheless, businesses continue to pass themselves off as consumers, via bogus reviews, but also via staged citizens' initiatives ('astroturfing') or using fake email or YouTube accounts. In November 2012, the European Parliament fell victim to this kind of activity when, under the banner of a citizens' initiative, the Polish shale gas industry carried out unconcealed promotion in the European Parliament with an expensive display ([3]).

Bogus reviews

1. Is the Commission taking steps to tackle the monitoring and punishment of bogus reviews? Can it provide an estimate of the extra profits that companies make through such practices, as a guide for the level of penalty?

2. Is the Commission prepared to provide complete transparency about which companies are involved with bogus reviews?

Astroturfing

3. What steps is the Commission taking in order to test citizens' initiatives' compliance with Directive 2005/29/EC, which states that parties must not represent themselves as consumers?

4. Is the Commission prepared to provide complete transparency about which companies are guilty of astroturfing?

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

The Commission is aware of the general problem of hidden advertising and online fake reviews, including the practices of 'astroturfing' and 'bogus' testimonials. In this connection, the Commission refers the Honourable Member to the response given to Question E-010900/2013.

Directive 2005/29/EC ([4]) requires traders not to mislead consumers on a wide range of elements including the motives of a commercial practice and it prohibits (in all circumstances) the practice of falsely representing oneself as a consumer (Annex I n. 22).

In line with the Commission's Consumer Agenda ([5]), the report on the application of Directive 2005/29/EC ([6]) adopted on 14 March 2013 identifies key areas for actions, including the online sector such as customer review tools and price comparison websites ([7]), where enforcement should be stepped up. In this connection, the Commission is reviewing the current Guidance on the application of Directive 2005/29/EC ([8]) to address emerging challenges like fake reviews, endorsements and testimonials.

A Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue, led by the Commission, recommended ([9]) that online comparison tools operators (including intermediaries to various retailers) take measures to ensure the authenticity of the user reviews and ratings they feature. The Commission is launching an in-depth study on such tools as well as a specific study on hotel bookings: both will cover user reviews. The findings are expected in the first half of 2014.

([1]) http://www.computerbild.de/artikel/cb-Aktuell-Internet-gefaelschte-Bewertungen-Online-Shops-7474604.html
([2]) http://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/23/technology/give-yourself-4-stars-online-it-might-cost-you.html?_r=0
([3]) http://www.greens-efa.eu/astroturfing-in-the-ep-8588.html
([4]) OJ L 149, 11.6.2005.
([5]) COM(2012) 225.
([6]) COM(2013) 139.
([7]) COM(2013) 139, Section 3.4.2 Customer Review Tools and Price Comparison Websites, p. 22-24.
([8]) Guidance on the application /implementation of Directive 2005/29/EC on Unfair Commercial Practices (SEC(2009) 1666, Commission Staff Working Document) 3 December 2009 — http://ec.europa.eu/justice/consumer-marketing/files/ucp_guidance_en.pdf
([9]) Report from the Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue on Comparison Tools: http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/documents/consumer-summit-2013-msdct-report_en.pdf

In October the Commission launched a public consultation on the review of the Consumer Protection Cooperation (CPC) Regulation 2006/2004/EC ([10]). The review explores ways to provide a cost-efficient and fast enforcement response to infringements concerning a large number of consumers across the EU.

([10]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_consumer/dgs_consultations/ca/consumer_protection_cooperation_ regulation_201310_en.htm

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-013260/13
an die Kommission
Ulrike Lunacek (Verts/ALE) und Eva Lichtenberger (Verts/ALE)
(21. November 2013)

Betrifft: Geheimhaltung Vertragsverletzungsverfahren Flughafen Wels

Zum Vertragsverletzungsverfahren Flughafen Wels wurde Zugang zu den Dokumenten beantragt und vom Generalsekretariat der Europäischen Kommission abgelehnt.

Aus verschiedenen Medienberichten in Österreich ist eindeutig nachvollziehbar, dass den Redaktionen die Originalunterlagen des Vertragsverletzungsverfahrens vorliegen. Es ist dabei nicht nachvollziehbar, warum in diesem Fall die „Offenlegung des Dokuments die noch anhaltenden Gespräche zwischen den österreichischen Behörden und der Kommission mit Sicherheit beeinträchtigen". Genauso könnte die Offenlegung die Gespräche positiv beeinflussen. Ebenso ist nicht nachvollziehbar, warum die Veröffentlichung „Untersuchungstätigkeiten beeinträchtigt" oder „das System der Kontrolle staatlicher Beihilfen gefährdet".

Kann die Kommission dazu folgende Fragen beantworten:

1. Warum verweigert die Kommission einseitig den Zugang zu den Dokumenten des Vertragsverletzungsverfahren Flughafen Wels, und ist die Kommission bereit, diese Unterlagen zu veröffentlichen.

2. Wie wird die Weitergabe des Originalschreibens an verschiedene Medien erklärt?

3. Welche Änderungen der Rechtslage sind notwendig bzw. werden von der Kommission vorgeschlagen, um künftig derartige Ablehnungen von Anträgen auf Dokumentenzugang für BürgerInnen zu verhindern?

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

In Fragen der Untersuchung bei mutmaßlichen Vertragsverletzungen sind eine ehrliche Zusammenarbeit und gegenseitiges Vertrauen zwischen der Kommission und dem betreffenden Mitgliedstaat erforderlich, damit beide Seiten Beratungen zur Suche nach einer einvernehmlichen Lösung aufnehmen können. Die Sicherstellung dieses Ziels rechtfertigt gemäß Artikel 4 Absatz 2 der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1049/2001 ([1]) die Verweigerung des Zugangs zu Unterlagen (einschließlich der Aufforderungsschreiben und der mit Gründen versehenen Stellungnahmen) im Zusammenhang mit laufenden Vertragsverletzungsverfahren.

Die Vorgehensweise der Kommission bei Anträgen auf Offenlegung von Unterlagen wurde unlängst durch die Rechtsprechung des Gerichtshofs der Europäischen Union im Urteil vom 14. November 2013 in den verbundenen Rechtssachen C-514/11 P und C-605/11 P (Randnr. 63) ([2]) bestätigt. Deshalb hält die Kommission (einen Vorschlag für) eine Änderung der derzeitigen Rechtsvorschriften nicht für erforderlich.

Aufforderungsschreiben und mit Gründen versehene Stellungnahmen abgeschlossener Vertragsverletzungsverfahren im Umweltbereich werden auf der Website der GD ENV ([3]) veröffentlicht.

Was die Unterlagen und Schreiben der Kommission im Rahmen des laufenden Vertragsverletzungsverfahrens Nr. 2012/4140 (Flughafen Wels) anbelangt, so hat sie diese weder Dritten offengelegt, noch hat sie einer diesbezüglichen Offenlegung zugestimmt.

([1]) ABl. L 145 vom 31.5.2001.
([2]) ABl. C 9 vom 11.1.2014.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/legal/law/infrigments_docs.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013260/13
to the Commission
Ulrike Lunacek (Verts/ALE) and Eva Lichtenberger (Verts/ALE)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Confidentiality of infringement proceedings relating to the airport of Wels

A request was made for access to the documents relating to the infringement proceedings in respect of the airport of Wels. This request was denied by the Commission's General Secretariat.

Based on various media reports in Austria it is clear that the editors are in possession of the original documents relating to the infringement proceedings. It is therefore difficult to see why, in this case, 'disclosure of the documents would certainly adversely affect the ongoing talks between the Austrian authorities and the Commission'. Disclosure is just as likely to have a positive effect on the talks. It is also difficult to understand why publication would 'adversely affect investigation work' or 'jeopardise the system of state aid control'.

1. Why is the Commission unilaterally denying access to the documents relating to the Wels airport infringement proceedings, and is it prepared to publish these documents?

2. How does it explain the disclosure of the original letter to various media outlets?

3. What amendments to current legislation are necessary or will be proposed by the Commission in order to prevent such a denial of citizens' requests for access to documents in future?

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

In the matter of investigations of alleged infringements, sincere cooperation and a mutual confidence between the Commission and the Member State concerned are required to allow both parties to engage in a process of discussion to search for an amicable solution. The safeguarding of this objective warrants the refusal of access to documents related to ongoing infringement procedures, including letters of formal notice and reasoned opinions, on the basis of Article 4(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 ([1]).

The Commission's approach to requests for disclosing documents of ongoing infringement procedures has been confirmed by the case-law of the Court of Justice in its recent judgment of 14 November 2013 in joint cases C-514/11 P and C-605/11 P (paragraph 63) ([2]). Therefore, the Commission does not consider it necessary to (propose to) amend the current legislation.

Letters of formal notice and reasoned opinions of closed infringement cases in the environmental area are published on the website of DG ENV ([3]).

As regards the documents and letters of the Commission in the context of the ongoing infringement procedure No 2012/4140 (Airport Wels), the Commission neither disclosed them to third parties nor did it approve their disclosure.

([1]) OJ EU L 145 of 31.5.2001.
([2]) OJ EU C 9 of 11.1.2014.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/legal/law/infrigments_docs.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013261/13
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Apprenticeships

What is the current state of play as regards the Commission's call, in its Youth Opportunities Initiative of 20 December 2011, for Member States and social partners to increase the number of apprenticeships in the EU by at least 10%, i.e. 370 000, by the end of 2013, and for which the Commission indicated it would set aside EUR 1.3 million of ESF Technical Assistance?

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

ESF Technical Assistance is provided under a service contract to support the Youth Opportunities Initiative ([1]). The Commission has set up a dedicated website to provide advice and support ([2]).

Such ESF Technical Assistance contributes *inter alia* to helping the Member States and the social partners to improve the quality and increase the supply of apprenticeships, including by making better use of EU funding. Those are also the goals of the European Alliance for Apprenticeships, another Commission initiative for stepping up the commitment of the Member States, the social partners and the stakeholders to increasing the number of apprenticeships across the EU significantly. Further steps taken by the Commission and other stakeholders can be consulted at the Alliance's website ([3]).

([1]) 'Providing targeted advice on ESF support to apprenticeship and traineeship schemes', Call for tenders VT/2012/039, contract signed on 19 December 2012.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/youthtraining
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/apprenticeships-alliance

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013262/13
to the Council
Emer Costello (S&D)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: UN Convention on the Rights of the Child — Paragraph 26

What action has the Council taken, or what action is it considering taking, on foot of Parliament's resolution (P7_TA(2012)0500) of 12 December 2012 on the situation of fundamental rights in the European Union (2010-2011), most notably paragraph 26, which urged it (and the Commission) to take steps towards becoming a party to other international human rights treaties, such as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child?

Reply
(10 February 2014)

The Council has taken note of the Parliament's resolution of 12 December 2012 on the situation of fundamental rights in the European Union (2010-2011) (P7_TA(2012)0500), and in particular paragraph 26 thereof.

The rights of the child are explicitly recognised in Article 24 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights and, in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter, this provision is addressed to the institutions, bodies, offices and agencies of the Union, with due regard to the principle of subsidiarity, and to the Member States when they are implementing Union law. The Stockholm Programme states that the rights of the child concern all Union policies and must be systematically and strategically taken into account with a view to ensuring an integrated approach. In that context the European Council invited the Commission to identify measures to which the Union can bring added value in order to protect and promote the rights of the child.

Most recently, on 16 December 2013, the Council and the European Parliament adopted the regulation establishing a Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme for the period 2014 to 2020. In that programme, one of the specific objectives for which the funding should be provided over the next seven years is the objective '*to promote and protect the rights of the child*.' The Council notes that it recently received a proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on procedural safeguards for children suspected or accused in criminal proceedings ([1]) which it will examine in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure.

([1]) 17633/13.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013263/13
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: UN Convention on the Rights of the Child — Paragraph 26

What action has the Commission taken, or what action is it considering taking, on foot of Parliament's resolution (P7_TA(2012)0500) of 12 December 2012 on the situation of fundamental rights in the European Union (2010-2011), most notably paragraph 26 which urged it (and the Council) to take steps towards becoming a party to other international human rights treaties, such as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child?

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

The relationship between the European Union and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child raises a number of questions, firstly because in accordance with Articles 46 and 48 of the UNCRC, this international instrument is open to accession by State parties only. Secondly, it also raises questions as regards the status of the Convention in Union law and the powers of the European Union in the area of children's rights. Under the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the European Union has no general power in relation to protection of children's rights. The European Union can act only within the limits of the competences conferred upon it by Treaties. However, within those limits the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU confers upon Union institutions and Member States when implementing Union law the obligation to respect the rights of the child as enshrined in Article 24. As stated in the explanations related to the Charter ([1]), the provisions of Article 24 are based on the UNCRC.

For these reasons, the accession of the European Union to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is not at this stage envisaged by the Commission. However, the communication on an EU Agenda for the Rights of the Child reaffirms the Commission's commitment to ensure the protection and promotion of children's rights in all actions of the European Union in accordance with international standards as defined by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/charter/convent49_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013265/13
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Public access to environmental information (Directive 2003/4/EC)

Further to its answer of 23 April 2008 to Written Question E-001202/2008, what was the outcome of the Commission's conformity check, particularly in relation to the issue of reasonable charges under certain circumstances? Under what circumstances can a request for information under Directive 2003/4/EC be denied?

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

The Commission has reviewed the Irish legislation transposing Directive 2003/4/EC of Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2003 on public access to environmental information and repealing Council Directive 90/313/EEC ([1]) (European Communities (Access to information on the Environment) Regulations 2007, ref. S.I. No 133 of 2007). The Commission is still discussing with the Irish authorities a number of issues covered by this legislation, including the issue of reasonable charges.

The Aarhus Convention and Directive 2003/4/EC provide for the public to have access to environmental information, subject to limited exceptions. The exhaustive list of the grounds for refusing access to environmental information is provided under Article 4 of the Access to Environmental Information Directive. These exceptions have to be interpreted in a restrictive way, taking into account the public interest served by disclosure.

In addition, the public authorities are obliged to provide reasons for every refusal to make environmental information available. In cases where the requestor disagrees with a refusal and/or its reasoning or if his/her request has been ignored, the public is provided with the right to request an administrative review and judicial review.

([1]) Directive 2003/4/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2003 on public access to environmental information and repealing Council Directive 90/313/EEC , OJ L 041, 14/02/2003, p.26.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013266/13
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: EU support for not-for-profit organisations promoting life skills among school pupils

Could the Commission indicate what EU programmes planned for the 2014-2020 period would be of interest to a not-for-profit organisation which runs workshops aimed at promoting skills such as entrepreneurship, critical thinking, risk analysis, money management and teamwork among school pupils as well as boosting their confidence so as to help them become successful and responsible adults?

When does the Commission expect to see calls for proposals issued under the new Employment and Social Innovation programme?

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

In 2014-2020, the European Social Fund (ESF) will directly support entrepreneurship and other policies aimed to support young people into employment and education. Young people, in particular those not in employment, education or training, are expected to benefit from a large share of ESF support in areas like labour market integration, combating early school leaving, lifelong learning and active inclusion. .

NGOs and other organisations active in these fields can apply for projects under the operational programmes managed by ESF Managing Authorities in each Member State once they are adopted, in 2014. The contact details are available on the ESF website: www.ec.europa.eu/esf. At EU level, there are two programmes that will benefit young people and that will enter into force on 1 January 2014.The Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) and the Erasmus+ programme, which will support a range of activities aimed at improving education, training and youth work across Europe.

The calls for proposals for the EaSI will be launched from the 2nd quarter 2014. Specific calls will be devoted to social policy experimentation in areas such as youth employment. As for the Erasmus+ programme, the call for proposals, including the Programme Guide, are available on the Erasmus+ website: http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/index_en.htm. Organisations active in the fields of education, training and youth (including schools, NGOs, other organisations) can apply for funding for collaborative projects to develop, transfer and/or implement innovative practices. Improving the level of key competences and skills, including entrepreneurship, is among the objectives of the programme, and is a priority in the 2014 call for proposals.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013267/13
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: European high-level working group on SSGI

Further to its answer of 22 August 2013 to my Written Question E-007986/2013 on the issue of social services of general interest, what is the Commission's current stance with regard to paragraph 50 of Parliament's resolution of 5 July 2011 on the future of social services of general interest ([1]), which proposed the establishment of an open, flexible and transparent, high-level multi-stakeholder working group, broadly representative of stakeholders and focused on achieving reforms such as the policy initiatives identified in Parliament's 2011 resolutions, in the third SSGI Forum recommendation, the Commission's second Biennial Report, the Social Protection Committee reports, and any other relevant proposals as may arise?

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

As stated when following-up on the Parliament's resolution of 5 July 2011, the Commission is open to dialogue with stakeholders on social services of general interest. Such a dialogue should nonetheless respect the different roles, responsibilities and competences of the institutions involved.

The Commission believes that this dialogue should continue to take place in existing fora and, in particular, in the Social Protection Committee. Over the years, the Committee through its Informal Working Groups has already promoted such dialogue: for instance, in May and in November 2012, the Informal Working Group on the application of EU rules to social services organised two seminars, inviting Members of the European Parliament, members of the Economic and Social Committee and of the Committee of Regions, associations representing regional and local public authorities in the Member States, social partners as well as representatives of the civil society, and notably of service users and providers.

([1]) Texts adopted, P7_TA(2011)0319.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013268/13
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: European Ombudsman's inquiry into Frontex

What is the current situation with regard to the implementation by Frontex [1] of the European Ombudsman's draft recommendations of April 2013 in her own-initiative inquiry 0115/2012/BEH-MHZ, opened on foot of the adoption by Parliament and the Council of Regulation 1168/2011/EU which enhances Frontex's role and provides that Frontex shall fulfil its tasks in full compliance with the Charter of Fundamental Rights, by, for example, putting in place mechanisms and instruments to promote and monitor compliance with its obligations as regards respect for human rights?

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

The Commission has asked Frontex [1] to provide a response to the question raised by the Honourable Member. The Agency's reply will be sent by the Commission to the Honourable Member as soon as possible.

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[1] European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013269/13
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Improving the range and quality of support and services available to older people through public interest trusts

Could the Commission indicate what current and planned EU programmes would be of relevance for an initiative aimed at improving the range and quality of support and services available to older people through public interest trusts run on social enterprise principles? Could the Commission indicate when the next call for proposals will be made available under these programmes?

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

In the last years, the European Union has opened a number of its funding programmes to innovatory practices to address challenges connected to an ageing population and social enterprises. They tend to be of different size and nature, ranging from the Structural Funds (ESF, ERDF), to smaller programmes developed to support a specific issue or policy area. For instance, the regulation for the European Social Fund includes a new specific investment priority for social economy and social enterprises for the new programmation period 2014-2020.

Among other actions taken by the Commission in the field of support for older persons and social enterprises are also the calls for proposals under PROGRESS programme addressing social policy experimentation (2009-2013). The purpose of this instrument is to provide policy-makers with financial support to test social and labour market policy measures with a view to their scaling-up. The promotion of this specific purpose will continue from 2014 onwards through the Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI). The next call for proposal for social policy experimentation supporting the social investment approach (including elderly related issues) will be published in the first half of 2014.

Active and healthy ageing issue will be also supported by the Societal Challenge part of the Horizon 2020 programme. The first call for proposals was published on 11th December 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013270/13
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Funding for youth services

Could the Commission indicate what EU funding programmes planned for the 2014-2020 period would be of interest in relation to the provision of services aimed at young people? Could the Commission indicate when the calls for proposals for these programmes are expected?

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

In 2014-20 the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) will support measures that target young people not in employment, education or training, notably under the Youth Guarantee.

The YEI comprises EUR 3 billion from a specific EU allocation dedicated to the YEI and at least EUR 3 billion from ESF, available as of 2014. However expenditure is eligible from 1 September 2013. Besides YEI, the ESF remains a major instrument to support young people in different areas.

The new EU Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) which replaces the three existing Programmes, the Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity (Progress), European Employment Services (EURES) and the Progress Microfinance Facility, also focuses on the youth. EaSI supports and promotes social innovation, labour mobility, social entrepreneurship and access to microcredits. Specific calls will be devoted to social policy experimentation in areas such as youth employment.

EaSI budget for 2014-20 is EUR 920 million. The calls for proposals will be launched from the 2nd quarter 2014; they will be published on the new EaSI website.

Young people are also the main target population of the new Erasmus+ Programme (2014-2020), aiming at boosting skills and employability and modernising education, training and youth work in Europe. The programme will have a budget of EUR 14.7 billion. The general call for proposals for the implementation of Erasmus+ in 2014 has been published on 12 December 2013 and is available at:
http://new.eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.C_.2013.362.01.0062.01.ENG

It is complemented by a Programme Guide available at:
http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/documents/erasmus-plus-programme-guide_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013271/13
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Planned EU study of groups at high risk of becoming victims of trafficking in human beings

Further to its answer of 4 March 2013 to my Written Question E-000573/2013 on trafficking in human beings, what is the current situation with regard to the Commission's plans to commission a study on specific groups at high risk of becoming victims of trafficking in human beings?

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

A call for tender for the study on high risk groups of trafficking in human beings was published in October 2013, with a deadline for proposals 19 November 2013 ([1]). The evaluation of proposals will soon take place according to the procedures on public tenders.

With this study the Commission aims to develop knowledge and increase understanding on vulnerable groups that are at greater risk of trafficking in human beings, ensuring a gender perspective. This study is a key deliverable of the EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings 2012-2016 ([2]).

The results of the study should contribute to the evidence-based policy development of the Commission, as well as to inform policy implementation and policy evaluation. The results should enable the Commission better to understand emerging trends and ensure an effective response.

The study should cover practices in the 28 Member States of the European Union, but will not be focused on a specific Member State. The study should look into all forms of trafficking in human beings, including but not exhaustively trafficking for sexual exploitation, for forced labour, forced marriages, domestic servitude, forced begging, removal of organs, child-buying.

([1]) All relevant information can be found on the EU Anti-Trafficking Website: http://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/EU+Policy/Call_Tender_Studies_THB
([2]) The EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings 2012-2016, COM(2012) 286 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013272/13
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Poolbeg incinerator Dublin complaint

What is the current situation in relation to the complaint lodged with the Commission in spring 2013 regarding the possible breach of EC law, most notably public procurement legislation, by Dublin City Council in connection with the award of the contract for the construction of an incinerator at Poolbeg in Dublin? When does the Commission expect to be in a position to take a decision on this complaint?

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

The Commission can confirm the receipt of the complaint in connection with the award of the contract for the construction of an incinerator at Poolbeg by the Dublin City Council. Various contacts have taken place both with the complainant and with the Dublin City Council to gather facts and to assess the legal situation in the light of EU public procurement rules. Once the analysis of the case is finalised (foreseen for February 2014), appropriate action will be taken.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013273/13
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Social and economic rights in the Union

What action has the Commission taken or is what action is it considering taking on foot of Parliament's resolution of 12 December 2012 on fundamental rights in the European Union (2010-2011) ([1]), most notably paragraph 12 thereof, which called on the Commission to ensure that its annual report on the application of the Charter of Fundamental Rights addresses the situation of social and economic rights in the Union, and, in particular, how these are implemented in the Member States?

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

The 2013 annual report on the application of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights is currently under preparation. In the report itself and in the Staff Working Document accompanying the report, the Commission intends to present a thorough analysis of the measures undertaken to comply with the different articles under Chapter IV 'Solidarity', such as, among others, worker's rights, the right to healthcare, the right of access to services of general economic interest, and consumer protection.

([1]) Texts adopted, P7_TA(2012)0500.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013274/13
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Pilot project — promoting protection of the right to housing

Further to Commission Decision C(2012)4690 of 11 July 2012 adopting the annual work programme of grants and contracts for 2012 (update), what is the current situation with regard to the planned pilot project — promoting protection of the right of housing — for which the call for tender was due to be published in the third quarter of 2012?

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

The call for tender concerning the pilot project to which the Honourable Member refers was published in the Official Journal on 29 July 2013 with the title 'Pilot project — Promoting protection of the right to housing — Homelessness prevention in the context of evictions'. The deadline for the receipts of bids was 9 September 2013 and the bids were opened on 19 September 2013. The Commission services are at present completing the necessary steps which should lead to signing the contract with the selected bidder by the end of this year.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013275/13
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Investigation procedure C31/2007

Article 3(3) of the Treaty on European Union commits the Union to establishing an internal market, to working for the sustainable development of Europe based on balanced economic growth, and to promoting economic, social and territorial cohesion.

Further to Written Question E-003112/09 and subsequent questions, what is the current situation with regard to the Commission's formal investigation, initiated by its decision of 18 July 2007 (C 31/2007), into the compensation payments, investment and training grants received by Bus Éireann (Irish Bus) and Dublin Bus?

How will the Commission ensure that its decision in this case does not infringe Article 36 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (which commits the Union to recognising and respecting access to services of general economic interest in order to promote the social and territorial cohesion of the Union), Article 14 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (which commits the Union to taking care to ensure that such services operate on the basis of principles and conditions which enable them to fulfil their mission), and Protocol No 26 on Services of General Interest?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(16 January 2014)

The investigation is ongoing, under case number SA.20580, C 31/2007 (ex NN 17/07) — 'State aid to Córas Iompair Éireann Bus Companies (Dublin Bus and Irish Bus'.

The Commission will endeavour to adopt a final decision with regard to this investigation as early as possible in the first half of 2014.

The final decision will take into account all relevant provisions of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013276/13
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Funding for the conservation and preservation of material relating to the architecture of Ireland

Could the Commission indicate what EU funding programmes planned for the 2014-2020 period would be of interest regarding the conservation and preservation of material relating to the architecture of the island of Ireland, and regarding bringing this resource to a wider European public? Could the Commission indicate when the calls for proposals for these programmes are expected?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(21 January 2014)

The current European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) co-funded programmes in Ireland do not support activities for the conservation and preservation of material relating to architecture. In the light of preliminary discussions with the Irish authorities on orientations for the forthcoming 2014-2020 period, and given the focus in the regulatory framework on promoting R&D investment and competitiveness of the business sector, it is unlikely that the ERDF co-funded programmes in future will provide direct support for this type of activity.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013277/13
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: European Schools system

What action has the Commission taken, and what action is it taking, in response to Parliament's resolution of 27 September 2011 on the European Schools system (P7_TA(2011)0402)?

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

The European Schools (ES) are managed by intergovernmental cooperation between the Member States and the European Commission. The stakeholders are represented in the Board of Governors (BoG), where decisions concerning the financial, regulatory and political aspects of the ES system are taken. It is of primordial importance for the Commission that high quality education for the children of its staff is provided but it cannot act on its own.

The Secretariat General of the European Schools (SGES) presented a reflection paper with an analysis of the Parliament's resolution you refer to, the so called Cavada report, to the BoG in April 2012. (1)

Many developments have taken place in the meantime for example the creation of a working group in order improve the current appeals system and to clarify the legal situation. Other topics where decisions have been taken by the BoG are: school fees, accreditation of additional schools, a reform of the Baccalaureate, participation in the Pisa study etc.

Furthermore, two major developments are:

The BoG reached an agreement on the principles for the cost sharing between Member States in November 2013.

Moreover, an important decision on the reorganisation of the secondary years S1-3 was taken in December 2013. In order to safeguard the recognition and quality of the European Baccalaureate it was furthermore agreed that an external evaluation will be conducted for the proposal covering the years S4-7.

This reorganisation has been discussed and prepared in a working group with all stakeholders (including parents). Upon the Commission request, the working group will continue to address other issues such as the elaboration of an alternative certificate once the reorganisation is adopted.

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(1) Doc. 2012-03-D-26-en-1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013278/13
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: EU funding to tackle homelessness over 2014-2020 period

Could the Commission indicate what EU funding programmes planned for the 2014-2020 period would be of interest in relation to the provision of services and activities aimed at tackling homelessness, in particular for the renovation and regeneration of empty properties ('voids') for the purposes of providing housing units for homeless persons and for pilot projects aimed at presenting homelessness through targeted supports for at-risk children and communities?

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

The regulations ([1]) on the EU Structural and Investment Funds for 2014-20 identify several fields of intervention addressing the needs of disadvantaged people, including homeless people. In particular, at least 20% of European Social Fund (ESF) resources are to be devoted to 'promoting social inclusion, combating poverty and any discrimination'.

In addition, the European Regional Development Fund will continue to co-finance investments in social housing and could also support the regeneration of empty properties aimed at tackling homelessness.

The Progress 2007-2013 programme has helped finance social policy experimentation and innovation projects relating to homelessness (for example, the *Hope in Stations* and *Housing First Europe* projects). This will continue in the new financial period under the Programme for Employment and Social Innovation.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/esf/home.jsp?langId=en

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013279/13
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: EU funding for services for older people

Could the Commission indicate what EU funding programmes planned for the 2014-2020 period would be of interest in relation to the provision of community services aimed at older people, and when the calls for proposals for these programmes are expected to be made?

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

The provision of community services aimed at older people is a responsibility of the Member States. However, the new EU programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) will support innovative social policies, as well as facilitate access to microcredits and encourage social entrepreneurship. This could potentially be of interest in relation to the provision of community services aimed at older people. EaSI will make EUR 920 million available for the 2014-2020 period.

The activities to be funded will be defined in annual work programmes to be adopted by the Programme Committee. To apply for funding, eligible organisations must respond to a call for tender or/and to a call for proposals ([1]) or, in the case of microfinance and social entrepreneurship, request support from the financial intermediaries implementing this part of the EaSI programmes.

As regards the European Social Fund — supported activities for the period 2014-2020, Members States may wish to examine the possibility to fund projects relating to the provision of community services aimed at older people under the Investment Priorities on ‘active and healthy ageing’ and on ‘access to affordable, sustainable and high-quality services, including healthcare and social services of general interest’.

([1]) Information on new calls for proposals/tender is available on http://ec.europa.eu/social/home.jsp?langId=en

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013280/13
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: EU funding for Musicanta — a music school for Roma children and young people

Could the Commission indicate what EU funding programmes planned for the 2014-2020 period would be of interest in relation to the provision of a music school for Roma children and young people in Ireland and the integration of the Roma community in Ireland? Could it indicate when the calls for proposals for these programmes are expected to be made?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(30 January 2014)

The Honourable Member will be aware that the Erasmus+ programme, which started in January 2014, will support exchanges and networking activities among institutions in the field of education and training. It should, however, be clearly understood that Erasmus+ does not provide operational funding.

The first call for proposals has already been published and more details on the rules of the programme can be found at: http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/index_en.htm.

The Irish National Agency can provide more specific answers. The contact details are:
Léargas the Exchange Bureau
Fitzwilliam Court, Leeson Close, Dublin 2
D1, Dublin
Ireland
Tel: 0035318871201
Web: http://www.leargas.ie
Email: jmullin@leargas.ie

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013281/13
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: EU financial support for overcoming addiction

The EU Action Plan on Drugs (2013-2016), prepared by the Irish Presidency and adopted by the Council on 6-7 June 2013, includes the objective ('objective 2') of enhancing 'the effectiveness of drug treatment and rehabilitation, including services for people with comorbidity, to reduce the use of illicit drugs; problem drug use; the incidence of drug dependency and drug-related health and social risks and harms and to support the recovery and social re/integration of problematic and dependent drug users'.

What action is the Commission taking or considering taking to help Member States achieve this objective? What EU financial support is available under the EU Drug Prevention and Information Programme, the EU Health Programme or other current or planned EU initiatives for organisations, operating at Member State level, that seek to support and empower people, their families and young children to overcome addiction, and when will the next call for proposals be made under these programmes?

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

The Commission complements and supports Member States' action on drug-demand reduction by promoting the development of innovative approaches, for instance, or the sharing of best practices, through EU financial programmes.

Moreover, as announced in the communication 'Towards a Stronger European Response to Drugs' ([1]) in October 2011, the Commission supports Member States' efforts to develop and implement minimum quality standards in drug-demand reduction, in order to improve the effectiveness of services, such as treatment and rehabilitation.

The Drug Prevention and Information Programme ([2]) covers the period 2007-2013 and the EU Health Programme ([3]) covers the period 2008-2013. Both programmes have already awarded their last calls for project grants. Their successors, the Justice Programme and the Health for Growth Programme, both covering the period 2014-2020, have not been adopted yet.

The Commission has so far funded around 15 projects and studies focusing on treatment, rehabilitation, recovery and reintegration through the Drug Prevention and Information Programme. These include: ORION, which developed an e-health tool to reduce the risk of overdose, ESBIRTES, which developed effective tools for screening, brief interventions and referral to treatment for young adults, ACCESS, which focused on the implementation of harm reduction services and access to treatment for drug users in custody, and the EQUS study, which produced an overview of existing quality standards in treatment, harm reduction, rehabilitation and social reintegration services.

([1]) COM(2011) 689 final, 25.10.2011.
([2]) Decision No 1150/2007/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 September 2007 establishing for the period 2007-2013 the Specific Programme Drug prevention and information as part of the General Programme Fundamental Rights and Justice, OJ L 257, 3.10.2007, p. 23-29.
([3]) Decision No 1350/2007/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2007 establishing a second programme of Community action in the field of health (2008-2013), OJ L 301, 20.11.2007.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013282/13
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: EU financial support for green infrastructure, in particular for natural water retention measures

Further to Commissioner Potočnik's speech entitled 'Protecting our rivers is a sound economic and environmental investment' delivered to the European River Restoration Conference in Vienna on 13 September 2013, could the Commission provide additional information on whether possible EU financial support for green infrastructure, in particular for natural water retention measures, is envisaged for the 2014-2020 period under the common agricultural policy, EU Cohesion and Structural Funds, and European Investment Bank loans, as referred to by the Commissioner? Could the Commission outline the current situation with regard to the inclusion of such green infrastructure in the Partnership Agreements that the Commission is currently negotiating with the Member States for the 2014-2020 period?

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

Green Infrastructure (GI) investments, including Natural Water Retention Measures (NWRM), are eligible for support under a number of EU funding instruments for the period 2014-2020. In the context of the discussions on the draft Partnership Agreements (PAs) the Commission has developed guidance documents to assist national authorities in the preparation of the Pas, including GI investments in nature-based solutions to address issues such as water management connecting Natura 2000 areas, flood risk, protecting biodiversity, adapting to climate change, and supporting sustainable rural development.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013283/13
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Equitable Life Assurance Society

Further to its answer of 24 November 2010 to Written Question E-007099/2010, could the Commission indicate if it has discovered or received evidence of any infringement of EC law in the intervening period, and if it is still monitoring this matter?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(21 January 2014)

The Commission fully understands the difficulties the collapse of the Equitable Life Assurance Society has created for Equitable Life policy-holders and beneficiaries.

The Commission has not identified any infringement of EC law in the period referred to. The Commission would like to assure the Honourable Member that it will be ready to take appropriate action if any infringement of EC law emerges from the proceedings set in motion by the UK authorities.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013285/13
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Charges for collecting recyclable material

The EU waste directive commits Member States to setting up separate collection systems by 2015 for at least paper, metal, plastic and glass (Article 11(1) of Directive 2008/98/EC).

In its answer to Written Question E-001970/2003 the Commission acknowledged that charging consumers at the point of return may have a negative impact on the collection results for waste electrical and electronic equipment, but that such charges would not contravene Community legislation until Article 5(2a) of Directive 2002/96/EC takes effect, i.e. by 13 August 2005 at the latest.

In its communication on a Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe (COM(2011)0571), the Commission stated on page 8 that a combination of policies would help create a full recycling economy, including incentives for waste recycling, and that it wanted to ensure that recycling and re-use of waste would be economically attractive options for the public and private sectors by 2020.

Does the Commission believe that charging the public for collecting recyclable materials is compatible with EU waste legislation such as Directive 2008/98/EC? Does it believe that such charges may have a negative impact on the collection results for recyclable materials and would represent a disincentive for waste recycling?

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

Member States are free to choose the best methods of waste management, including separate collection, in line with the provisions of Article 15 of the Directive 2008/98/EC ([1]). Charging the public for collecting recyclable materials is normal practice in several Member States and does not contravene EU waste legislation.

In parallel, in line with the polluter pays principle, pay-as-you-throw schemes can be designed to increase the collection of recyclable materials by applying higher fees to the amount of mixed non-recyclable waste generated in households.

([1]) OJ L 312, 22.11.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013286/13
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Bosnia and Herzegovina — implementation of the Sejdić-Finci ruling

What action is being taken in response to Parliament's resolution of 23 May 2013 on the 2012 Progress Report on Bosnia and Herzegovina ([1]), and most notably to paragraph 17, which urged the EU Special Representative and Head of Delegation to further strengthen his efforts to facilitate an agreement on the implementation of the Sejdić-Finci ruling?

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

A solution to implement the Sejdić/Finci ruling needs to be agreed by the political leaders of Bosnia and Herzegovina so that it can be applied for the general elections of 2014. During 2013, the Head of Delegation/EUSR has continued his political facilitation efforts. Progress has resulted in calling a meeting of the High Level Dialogue on the Accession Process on 1 and 10 October 2013 under the chairmanship of Commissioner Füle, which reached a general political agreement amongst the political parties on principles regarding the election of members of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Further intensive bilateral and multilateral consultations with party representatives were conducted throughout October, November, December and January, with meetings in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Budapest and Prague. However, thus far no consensus could be reached. The legislative framework needs to be amended before May, to be applicable for the next elections.

([1]) P7_TA(2013)0225.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-013288/13
à la Commission
Véronique De Keyser (S&D)
(21 novembre 2013)

Objet: Bus israélien

Dans sa réponse P-002683/2013 à ma question sur les craintes d'une forme d'apartheid dans les bus israéliens, la Commission a répondu:

«Les délégations de l'Union européenne à Tel-Aviv et à Jérusalem-Est suivront attentivement l'évolution de cette situation, en particulier afin de vérifier si des Palestiniens titulaires de permis d'entrée sur le territoire d'Israël qui ont, dès lors, le droit d'utiliser les transports publics, sont autorisés ou non à prendre les autobus publics de leur choix.»

Huit mois après cette réponse, qu'ont pu observer et constater les délégations de l'Union européenne sur le terrain?

Si les faits observés durant cette période ont permis de constater que les deux compagnies de transports incriminées ont bien mis en place, directement ou indirectement, un système où l'accès aux bus est séparé et que les Palestiniens ne peuvent librement accéder aux autobus de leur choix, quelle a été l'attitude des délégations européennes et quelles mesures ont été prises par la haute représentante de l'Union face à cette mesure que l'on peut qualifier d'apartheid?

Réponse donnée par Mme Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(17 janvier 2014)

Les délégations de l'UE n'ont pas connaissance de l'existence de certaines lignes d'autobus séparées desservant la Cisjordanie. Cette question continue de faire l'objet d'un débat au sein de la classe politique israélienne. Il apparaît que l'augmentation du nombre de Palestiniens travaillant en Israël au cours de l'année écoulée a entraîné une fréquentation excessive des autobus reliant le nord de la Cisjordanie au centre d'Israël. Ces lignes d'autobus desservent également de grandes colonies de peuplement, notamment celle d'Ariel. Au mois de mars, le ministère des transports a mis en place de nouveaux services de transport par autobus afin de prendre en charge les travailleurs palestiniens au poste de contrôle d'Eyal, près de Qalqilya, et de les acheminer directement vers leurs lieux de travail en Israël (voir question écrite P-002683/2013). Toutefois, les Palestiniens continuent d'emprunter toutes les autres lignes d'autobus, notamment pour regagner leur domicile en soirée. Pour remédier au problème de fréquentation excessive des autobus desservant les colonies, le ministère des transports a augmenté leur nombre.

Lors de débats au sein de la sous-commission de la Knesset chargée des affaires étrangères et de la défense, le 12 novembre 2013, le maire de la colonie d'Ariel, M. Eliyahu Shaviro, s'est prononcé en faveur de «lignes d'autobus séparées» pour les Palestiniens du nord de la Cisjordanie, à l'instar de M. Mordechai Yogev, député israélien membre de la commission des affaires étrangères et de la défense. Cela étant, un fonctionnaire du ministère israélien des transports a répondu lors de cette même séance que le gouvernement s'employait à rechercher des fonds pour financer la mise en service d'autobus supplémentaires sur les lignes concernées par le problème de fréquentation excessive entre le nord de la Cisjordanie et Israël et a précisé qu'il n'était pas prévu de faire circuler des autobus séparés en Cisjordanie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013288/13
to the Commission
Véronique De Keyser (S&D)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Israeli buses

In its answer to my question (P-002683/2013) on fears regarding a form of apartheid on Israeli buses, the Commission said:

'The EU delegations in Tel Aviv and East Jerusalem will closely follow further developments on this issue, especially whether Palestinians who hold entrance permits to the State of Israel and who are therefore by law allowed to use public transportation, are prohibited or not from using the public bus lines of their choice.'

Eight months after this answer, what have the EU delegations observed and ascertained on the ground?

If the facts observed over this period have confirmed that the two transport companies in question actually have put in place, directly or indirectly, a system of separate bus services and that Palestinians are not free to take the buses of their choice, what has been the attitude of the European delegations, and what action has been taken by the High Representative of the Union in the face of this 'apartheid' measure?

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

The EU delegations are not aware of any segregated bus lines in the West Bank. The matter continues to be the subject of debate within the Israeli political system. The increase in the number of Palestinians working in Israel over the past year appears to have led to overcrowding on buses linking the northern West Bank and central Israel. These bus lines also serve major settlements, notably Ariel. In March, the Ministry of Transport introduced new bus services to pick up Palestinian workers at Eyal checkpoint near Qalqilyah and take them directly to places of work in Israel (the subject of Written Question P-002683/2013). However, it continues to be the case that Palestinians travel on all other bus lines as well, notably in the evening when returning home. The Ministry of Transport has increased the number of buses serving the settlements as an additional measure to ease overcrowding.

In a hearing of a Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defence subcommittee on 12 November 2013, the mayor of Ariel settlement, Eliyahu Shviro, called for 'segregated bus lines' for Palestinians in the northern West Bank, as has MK Mordhay Yogev, a member of the Foreign Affairs and Defence committee. However, an official of the Israeli Ministry of Transport responded during the 12 November hearing, saying that the government was in the process of finding the funds to add more buses to congested lines between the northern West bank and Israel and clarified that there were no plans to provide segregated bussing in the West Bank.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-013289/13
do Komisji
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(21 listopada 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: W związku z postępowaniem antykorupcyjnym w Centrum Projektów Informatycznych

W kwietniu ubiegłego roku Komisja Europejska zawiesiła płatności dotyczące części projektów realizowanych w ramach Programu Operacyjnego Innowacyjna Gospodarka. Ówczesną decyzję podjęto w związku z prokuratorskim śledztwem dotyczącym korupcji przy przetargach na zakup sprzętu i usług teleinformatycznych realizowanych przez Centrum Projektów Informatycznych. Po kilku miesiącach, w następstwie wyjaśnień przedstawicieli polskich władz, wypłaty funduszy wznowiono.

Niestety w bieżącym tygodniu doszło do kolejnych zatrzymań, które okazały się pokłosiem prowadzonego od trzech lat śledztwa w powyższej sprawie. Dotychczasowe zarzuty obejmują 38 postępowań o zamówienie publiczne przeprowadzonych w CPI, a według szefa Centralnego Biura Antykorupcyjnego jest to jedna z największych spraw prowadzonych przez Biuro.

Wyrażając zaniepokojenie z powodu sytuacji w instytucjach polskiej administracji publicznej oraz w trosce o bezpieczeństwo realizacji projektów finansowanych ze środków europejskich, zwracam się z prośbą o udzielenie informacji:

1. Czy, w przypadku potwierdzenia nieprawidłowości przy zamówieniach publicznych, polskim projektom informatycznym grozi powtórne zablokowanie finansowania?

2. Czy Komisja była i jest na bieżąco informowana przez stronę polską odnośnie przedmiotowego śledztwa?

3. Czy w związku z nowymi okolicznościami Komisja będzie rozważać przeprowadzenie dodatkowych audytów projektów realizowanych przez CPI?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Johannesa Hahna w imieniu Komisji
(27 stycznia 2014 r.)

1. Komisja podchodzi ostrożnie do wszelkich zarzutów dotyczących nieprawidłowości związanych z europejskimi funduszami strukturalnymi i inwestycyjnymi. W dniu 17 grudnia 2013 r. poinformowała zatem polskie władze, że realizacja przyszłych wniosków o zwrot kosztów poniesionych w związku ze wszystkimi projektami e-administracji wdrożonymi w ramach priorytetu VII programu Innowacyjna Gospodarka zostanie przerwana do momentu wyjaśnienia sytuacji ogólnej.

2. Po zwróceniu przez Komisję uwagi na doniesienia w mediach, instytucja zarządzająca programem poinformowała Komisję o współfinansowanych projektach objętych toczącym się postępowaniem prokuratorskim. Komisja nie może potwierdzić otrzymania pełnych informacji ze względu na poufny charakter śledztwa prowadzonego przez polskie służby dochodzeniowe.

3. Po przeanalizowaniu wszystkich informacji Komisja zadecyduje o konieczności podjęcia ewentualnych dodatkowych działań kontrolnych w odniesieniu do projektów wdrożonych przez Centrum Projektów Informatycznych i ich charakterze. Komisja mogłaby zadecydować, że polska Instytucja Audytowa (IA) jest w stanie przeprowadzić kontrolę w oparciu o wskaźniki nadużyć. IA składałaby wówczas polskim organom zajmującym się zwalczaniem nadużyć sprawozdania odnośnie do każdego projektu, w związku z którym zaistniałoby podejrzenie korupcji. Organy te podejmowałyby decyzję o dalszych działaniach. OLAF został poinformowany o tej sprawie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013289/13
to the Commission
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Anti-corruption proceedings against Poland's IT Projects Center

In April 2012, the Commission suspended payments for a number of projects implemented under the Innovative Economy Operational Programme. The decision was taken on the back of an anti-corruption investigation by the public prosecutor's office into tenders put out by Poland's IT Projects Center for purchases of ICT equipment and services. Several months later, and once explanations had been provided by representatives of the Polish authorities, payments started up again.

Further hold-ups have unfortunately occurred this week and have turned out to be linked to the three-year investigation into the above case. At present 38 of the IT Project Center's public tendering procedures are subject to allegations of corruption, which is one of the largest cases handled by Poland's Central Anti-Corruption Bureau according to the Bureau's Director.

Prompted by concerns over practices in Poland's institutions of public administration and with a view to safeguarding the implementation of EU-funded projects, I should like to ask the following questions:

1. If it is confirmed that irregularities occurred in connection with public tenders, is there a risk that funds for Polish IT projects could be blocked again?

2. Has Poland kept the Commission up-to-date on the progress of this investigation, and is it continuing to do so?

3. Will these new circumstances prompt the Commission to consider carrying out additional audits for projects implemented by the IT Projects Center?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(27 January 2014)

1. The Commission takes a precautionary approach towards any allegations of irregularities involving the European Structural and Investment Funds. Therefore, on 17 December 2013 the Commission informed the Polish authorities that future requests for reimbursement of payments incurred in relation to all e-administration projects implemented under priority VII of the programme Innovative Economy would be interrupted until such time as the overall situation had been resolved.

2. After discovering reports in the media, the Commission was subsequently informed by the managing authority of the programme about the co-financed projects subject to an ongoing prosecutorial investigation. The Commission cannot confirm whether this information has been completed due to the confidential nature of the investigation carried out by the Polish investigative services.

3. After reviewing all information, the Commission will consider whether and what additional audit actions are necessary in relation to projects implemented by the IT Projects Centre. The Commission could decide that the Polish Audit Authority (AA) is in a good position to do a review based on 'fraud-indicators'. The AA would then report any project with a suspicion of possible corruption to the Polish anti-fraud bodies who should decide on a further follow-up. OLAF has been informed about the case.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013290/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Perforaciones petrolíferas en aguas de las islas Canarias

La multinacional de origen español Repsol ha anunciado, el pasado 14 de noviembre, que iniciará sus prospecciones petrolíferas en aguas cercanas al archipiélago de las islas Canarias, suponiendo una actividad que pone en riesgo el patrimonio natural marino de dicha comunidad.

Repsol ha presentado un estudio de impacto ambiental del proyecto «Sondeos exploratorios marinos en Canarias» que ha sido facilitado al profesor Richar Steiner, catedrático y biólogo de conservación marina de la Universidad de Alaska con más de 30 años de experiencia en temas relacionados con la contaminación petrolífera. Dicho experto ha realizado un examen pericial del citado estudio de impacto ambiental, confirmando los peores temores sobre los riesgos ambientales que conllevaría dicha explotación petrolífera en aguas canarias.

Steiner, en su evaluación, concluye que: «El EIA de Repsol sobre las islas Canarias no es adecuado para el fin que persigue, por lo que se recomienda al Gobierno de España que no lo tenga en cuenta y no permita las prospecciones en la forma en la que se han propuesto». Un estudio de estas características debe incorporar las lecciones aprendidas de anteriores accidentes, como el del pozo de Macondo que causó el desastre en el Golfo de México en 2010. Steiner cifra un vertido «en el peor caso posible» en unos 30 000 barriles diarios durante 60 días, mientras que el EIA cifra ese mismo supuesto en unos 1 000 barriles diarios durante 30 días. Esta considerable diferencia se produce en función de si se toma en consideración la pasada experiencia del pozo de Macondo y otros desastres petrolíferos relacionados, o no. El experto también afirma que el vertido podría avanzar hacia el sur, alcanzando la zona ecuatorial del Atlántico y contaminando un área mucho mayor de lo planteado. Además, el examen pericial de Steiner afirma que no se encuentra prueba alguna de que se haya realizado una evaluación de riesgos detallada sobre la integridad de los pozos, requisito fijado en la Directiva 2013/30/UE sobre la seguridad de las operaciones relativas al petróleo y al gas mar adentro.

¿Conoce la Comisión el estudio de impacto ambiental del proyecto «Sondeos exploratorios marinos en Canarias»? ¿Considera que dicho EIA emplea toda la información existente sobre el tipo de riesgos que trata de analizar? ¿Considera que dicho EIA cumple con lo estipulado en la Directiva 2013/30/UE? ¿Considera que un EIA de estas características puede estar invisibilizando los verdaderos riesgos medioambientales y, por tanto, no ajustarse a lo establecido en la Directiva 2003/4/CE? ¿Piensa instar a las autoridades españolas a detener el citado proyecto hasta que se realice un EIA adecuado a Derecho?

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

La Directiva 2011/92/UE ([1]) (Directiva EIA) exige que se brinde al público interesado la posibilidad real de participar desde una fase temprana en los procedimientos de toma de decisiones medioambientales relativas a proyectos cuya realización requiera una evaluación de impacto ambiental. Así pues, toda persona interesada tiene derecho a expresar sus observaciones y opiniones antes de que se adopte una decisión sobre la solicitud de autorización del proyecto. Además, las autoridades competentes deben tomar en consideración los resultados de las consultas en el procedimiento de autorización de desarrollo del proyecto.

Según la información de que dispone la Comisión, en el caso del proyecto de prospecciones de hidrocarburos mencionado por Su Señoría está en curso el procedimiento de evaluación de impacto ambiental, de conformidad con las disposiciones de la Directiva EIA. Teniendo en cuenta que dicho procedimiento aún no se ha completado, es imposible determinar si las autoridades españolas han aplicado o no correctamente la Directiva EIA.

([1]) Directiva 2011/92/UE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 13 de diciembre de 2011, relativa a la evaluación de las repercusiones de determinados proyectos públicos y privados sobre el medio ambiente, DO L 26 de 28.1.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013290/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 November 2013)

Subject: Oil drilling in the waters off the Canary Islands

On 14 November 2013, the Spanish multinational Repsol announced that it would begin prospecting for oil in waters around the Canary Islands; such activity endangers the natural marine heritage of this community.

Repsol has presented an environmental impact assessment (EIA) of the project 'Exploratory sea drilling in the Canaries', which was given to Professor Richard Steiner, a professor and biologist at the University of Alaska, who specialises in marine conservation and has over 30 years experience in oil pollution issues. He conducted an expert analysis of the environmental impact assessment, substantiating the worst fears over the environmental risks oil exploration in the waters off the Canaries would entail.

In his analysis, Prof. Steiner concludes that the EIA carried out by Repsol on the Canary Islands is unsuitable for the stated aim, and therefore recommends that the Spanish Government disregard it and not allow prospecting in its proposed form. Any study of these features should take account of the lessons learned from previous accidents, such as that involving the Macondo well, which caused the disaster in the Gulf of Mexico in 2010. Prof. Steiner estimates that a 'worse-case scenario' oil spill would leak 30 000 barrels per day for 60 days, while the figure in the EIA is 1 000 barrels per day for 30 days. This considerable difference is down to whether the past experience of the Macondo well and other related oil disasters are taken into account or not. The expert also claims that an oil spill could move south, spreading as far as the equatorial Atlantic and contaminating a much larger area than envisaged. Moreover, according to Prof. Steiner's expert analysis, there is no proof whatsoever that a detailed risk assessment was carried out for all the wells, as required by Directive 2013/30/EU on safety of offshore oil and gas operations.

Is the Commission aware of the environmental impact assessment of the 'Exploratory sea drilling in the Canaries' project? Does it think that the EIA provides all the information there is about the kinds of risks it attempts to analyse? Does it think that the EIA complies with the requirements of Directive 2013/30/EU? Does it think that an EIA of these features could be hiding the real environmental risks and, therefore, not comply with the provisions of Directive 2003/4/EC? Does it plan to call on the Spanish authorities to halt the aforementioned project until a legitimate EIA is carried out?

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

Directive 2011/92/EU ([1]) (EIA Directive) requires that the public concerned be given early and effective opportunities to participate in the decision-making procedures concerning projects that are to be made subject to an environmental impact assessment. Thus, any person concerned is entitled to express comments and opinions before the decision on the request for development consent is taken. Furthermore, the competent authorities shall take into consideration the results of such consultations in the development consent procedure.

The information available to the Commission indicates that an environmental impact assessment procedure in compliance with the provisions of the EIA Directive is still ongoing in relation to the hydrocarbon exploration project mentioned by the Honourable Member. As this procedure has not yet been completed, it is not possible to establish whether or not the Spanish authorities have correctly applied the EIA Directive.

([1]) EIA Directive of 13 December 2011 on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment, OJ L 26, 28.1.2012.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-013291/13
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(22. November 2013)

Betrifft: Zugriff der EZB auf nationale Goldreserven

Anlässlich des G20-Gipfels in Cannes wurde bereits 2011 angedacht, zumindest einen Teil der Währungs- und Devisenreserven der Notenbanken der Mitgliedsländer der Währungsunion zur Euro-Rettung heranzuziehen. Auch goldgedeckte Eurobonds prägten bereits über kurze Zeit die politische Debatte. Eine von Kommissionspräsident Barroso eingesetzte Arbeitsgruppe denkt Medienberichten zufolge bereits eine — an Voraussetzungen geknüpfte — Entziehung von staatlichen Goldreserven an.

Der Zugriff auf staatliche Goldbestände bzw. jene der nationalen Notenbanken käme insbesondere in den Ländern des ehemaligen D-Mark-Blocks einer Enteignung der Bevölkerung gleich, da diese Länder Inhaber sind und die Zentralbank lediglich als Verwalter der Bestände fungiert.

Die Nordstaaten des Euroraumes verfügen teils über verhältnismäßig umfangreiche Goldreserven und tragen bisher die finanzielle Hauptlast der Euro-Rettung, weshalb ein Zugriff auf das Gold erneut eine asymmetrische Lastenverteilung mit sich bringen würde. Auf Grund des bisherigen Engagements der Kommission sowie ihrer grundsätzlichen Möglichkeit zur Gesetzesinitiative beim Thema Euro-Rettung und Goldreserven möchte ich der Kommission diese Fragen stellen, wenngleich mir bewusst ist, dass sie keine direkten Weisungsbefugnisse gegenüber der EZB noch Einfluss auf ihr Statut hat:

1. Wird derzeit angedacht, die nationalen Goldreserven der Länder im Euro-System — in welcher Weise immer — über die EZB für die Euro-Rettung und damit verbundene Maßnahmen einzusetzen?

2. Wenn ja: in welcher Form und in welchem absolut zu quantifizierenden Ausmaß?

3. Besteht derzeit die Absicht und die rechtliche Möglichkeit, zwecks Euro-Rettung und damit verbundener Maßnahmen die nationalen Goldreserven der Länder im Euro-System gegen den Willen der jeweiligen Regierungen einzusetzen?

4. Welche Möglichkeiten hat die EZB, in die Devisenbewirtschaftung der Mitgliedsländer des Euro-Systems einzugreifen?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(17. Januar 2014)

Die Europäische Kommission ist nicht an der Verwaltung von Gold- oder Währungsreserven beteiligt. Die Gold- und Währungsreserven sind Bestandteil der Bilanz der zum Eurosystem gehörenden Zentralbanken und werden von diesen im Rahmen des Vertrags völlig eigenständig verwaltet.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013291/13
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(22 November 2013)

Subject: The ECB's access to national gold reserves

At the G-20 summit in Cannes back in 2011 considerations were already being given to using at least part of the monetary and foreign exchange reserves of the central banks of the Member States participating in the monetary union for the euro bailout. Even gold-backed Eurobonds dominated the political debate for a while. According to media reports, a working group set up by Commission President Barroso is already considering the withdrawal of national gold reserves — subject to certain conditions.

Access to national gold holdings or those of the national central banks would be tantamount to an expropriation of the people, particularly in the countries of the former Deutsche-Mark bloc, as these countries own the holdings and the central bank merely manages them.

Some of the northern euro area Member States have relatively extensive gold reserves, and so far they have been bearing the main financial burden of the euro bailout. Therefore, access to the gold would once again result in an asymmetrical distribution of the burden. On account of the involvement of the Commission up to now and its fundamental capacity to initiate legislation on the matter of the euro bailout and gold reserves, I would like to put the following questions to the Commission, although I am aware that it has no direct authority over the European Central Bank (ECB) nor any influence on its statute:

1. Are considerations currently being given to using the national gold reserves of the countries within the Eurosystem — in whatever way — via the ECB for the euro bailout and associated measures?

2. If so, in what form and to what extent, quantified in absolute terms?

3. Is there currently an intention, and is it legally possible, for the purpose of the euro bailout and associated measures, to use the national gold reserves of the countries within the Eurosystem against the will of the governments concerned?

4. What scope does the ECB have for interfering in the foreign exchange control of those Member States within the Eurosystem?

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

The European Commission is not involved in the management of gold or foreign currency reserves. Monetary gold and foreign reserves are part of Eurosystem central banks' balance sheets, which they manage in full independence within the Treaty framework.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013292/13
alla Commissione
Raffaele Baldassarre (PPE) e Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(22 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Tromba d'aria su Gallipoli e intervento dell'UE per prevenire e risanare le zone colpite

Una tromba d'aria che si è abbattuta lo scorso 19 novembre su Gallipoli (Italia) ha devastato il litorale, ribaltando decine di barche e danneggiando case ed edifici pubblici fra cui scuole, la sede del Tribunale e la caserma dei carabinieri. La prima stima dei danni è stata fatta dall'ufficio tecnico comunale e dal Sindaco, che hanno quantificato in non meno di 15-17 milioni di EUR i danni provocati. La furia del vento ha danneggiato una scuola elementare e un liceo. Molte sono le case danneggiate, tante le famiglie rimaste senza dimora.

Tutto ciò premesso, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Valuterà la possibilità di aiutare l'area colpita, eventualmente tramite risorse del Fondo di sviluppo regionale?

2. Quali altre misure urgenti intende prendere al fine di sostenere le popolazioni civili e provvedere al ristabilimento di condizioni minime di vivibilità in quei territori?

3. Considerati la strategia UE di adattamento ai cambiamenti climatici e il Libro verde sulle assicurazioni nell'ambito delle catastrofi naturali adottato in concomitanza con la strategia, quali strumenti comuni la Commissione prevede di mettere in atto al fine di prevenire le catastrofi e sensibilizzare i cittadini e le imprese?

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

1. Il programma regionale della Puglia, cofinanziato dal FESR [1], dispone di un bilancio di 144 370 600 EUR per la «prevenzione e attenuazione dei rischi naturali», nell'ambito del quale possono essere finanziati progetti di prevenzione e attenuazione dei rischi nella zona di Gallipoli. In linea con il principio della gestione condivisa, le autorità nazionali sono responsabili della selezione e dell'attuazione dei progetti. La Commissione suggerisce pertanto all'onorevole deputato di contattare direttamente l'autorità di gestione [2].

2. Il Fondo di solidarietà dell'UE può essere mobilitato in caso di gravi catastrofi naturali. La normale soglia di attivazione del Fondo per l'Italia riguarda danni superiori a 3,6 miliardi di euro. Per le catastrofi minori, il Fondo di solidarietà può essere utilizzato unicamente in condizioni del tutto eccezionali. Le autorità italiane, qualora desiderino richiedere l'assistenza del Fondo, devono presentare una domanda entro 10 settimane dall'inizio della catastrofe. Finora le autorità italiane non hanno comunicato l'intenzione di presentare una domanda di intervento del Fondo di solidarietà per il caso in questione.

3. La Commissione non ha ancora deciso in merito ad eventuali azioni di follow-up del Libro verde. La Commissione sostiene misure di adattamento nelle città, in particolare avviando un'iniziativa attraverso la quale le autorità locali possono impegnarsi volontariamente ad adottare strategie di adattamento e svolgere attività di sensibilizzazione a livello locale. Nel 2014 avrà inizio una fase pilota, che sarà poi estesa a tutta l'UE a partire dal 2015. L'adattamento figura tra le attività di prevenzione di cui alla legislazione relativa al meccanismo unionale di protezione civile, che dovrebbe entrare in vigore nel gennaio 2014. Il Centro di risposta alle emergenze inaugurato nel maggio 2013 fornisce informazioni di allarme rapido e funge da centro di raccolta e diffusione delle informazioni.

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[1] Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale
[2] Autorità di Gestione POR Puglia,Viale Japigia, n. 145, 70126 BARI; adgfesr@regione.puglia.it

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013292/13
to the Commission
Raffaele Baldassarre (PPE) and Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(22 November 2013)

Subject: Tornado over Gallipoli and prevention and reconstruction action by the EU in the areas affected

A tornado which hit Gallipoli in Italy on 19 November has devastated the coast, overturning dozens of boats and damaging houses and public buildings, including schools, the court building and the police barracks. An initial damage estimate has been carried out by the city's technical office and the mayor's office, and they have calculated the damage caused to be at least EUR 15-17 million. The wind was so strong that it damaged a primary school and a secondary school. Many houses were damaged, and a large number of families were left without any accommodation.

1. Will the Commission look at the possibility of helping the affected area, if necessary by using resources from the Regional Development Fund?

2. What other urgent measures does it intend to take with a view to supporting civilians and restoring minimum living conditions in these regions?

3. In view of the EU strategy on adaptation to climate change and the Green Paper on the insurance of natural and man-made disasters, accompanying the strategy, what common tools does the Commission plan to put in place to prevent disasters and to raise awareness among individuals and businesses?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(24 January 2014)

1. The Puglia regional programme, which is co-financed by the ERDF ([1]), has a budget of EUR 144 370 600 for 'prevention and mitigation of natural risk' under which risk prevention and mitigation projects might be funded in the Gallipoli area. In line with the shared management principle, project selection and implementation is the responsibility of the national authorities. The Commission therefore suggests that the Honourable Members contact directly the managing authority ([2]).

2. The EU Solidarity Fund may be mobilised in the event of major natural disasters. The normal threshold for activating the Fund for Italy is damage exceeding EUR 3.6 billion. For smaller disasters, the Solidarity Fund could only be used under very exceptional conditions. If assistance for the Fund is sought, an application would have to be made by the national Italian authorities within 10 weeks of the start of the disaster. Up to now, the Italian authorities have not communicated their intention to submit an application for Solidarity Fund assistance for this case.

3. The Commission has not yet decided on possible follow-up actions for the Green Paper. The Commission is supporting adaptation measures in cities, particularly by launching an initiative through which local authorities can make a voluntary commitment to adopt local adaptation strategies and awareness-raising activities. A pilot phase will start in 2014 which will be then rolled out from 2015 across the entire EU. Adaptation is among the prevention activities in the Union Civil Protection Mechanism legislation which is expected to enter into force in January 2014. The Emergency Response Centre inaugurated in May 2013 provides early warning information and acts as an information hub.

([1]) European Regional Development Fund.
([2]) Autorità di Gestione POR Puglia,Viale Japigia, n. 145, 70126 BARI; adgfesr@regione.puglia.it

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013293/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(22 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Problemi di accesso al credito per le PMI italiane

In un sondaggio condotto dalla BCE su 8 035 imprese, di cui il 92 % rappresentato da piccole e medie imprese dell'eurozona, relativo al periodo aprile-settembre 2013, emerge che è sempre più difficile per le imprese italiane ottenere prestiti dalle banche. Nell'area dell'euro le PMI di Italia, Paesi Bassi e Belgio, evidenzia la Banca centrale europea, segnalano un ulteriore «marginale deterioramento della disponibilità di prestiti bancari».

Mentre grossi miglioramenti sono stati fatti in Portogallo (passato dal -32 % al 2 %), Irlanda (dal -22 % al -7 %) e Spagna (dal -17 % al - 7 %), in Italia cresce la percentuale di piccole imprese che vedono aumentare la stretta al credito. In media, in tutta l'Unione europea, il 65 % delle aziende che ha chiesto un prestito alle banche è riuscito ad ottenerlo nella sua totalità, mentre in Italia si scende poco sopra al 50 %: una piccola o media impresa su due non ha ottenuto il finanziamento di cui aveva bisogno. Nel 16 % dei casi un'impresa italiana si è vista rifiutare la domanda di credito, mentre in circa tre casi su dieci l'importo concesso è stato inferiore a quello richiesto. L'1 % delle imprese ha inoltre respinto l'offerta ricevuta dalla banca in quanto ha ritenuto inaccettabili le condizioni proposte. Il rapporto evidenzia che il 16 % delle PMI europee ha individuato nell'accesso al credito «il problema più pressante». In Italia si arriva al 20 %, uno dei dati più elevati nell'UE-28 e inferiore soltanto a quelli registrati a Cipro (40 %), Grecia (32 %), Spagna e Croazia (23 %) e Slovenia (22 %). All'estremo opposto della classifica si trovano Austria (7 %), Germania (8 %) e Polonia (9 %).

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione far sapere:

quali azioni intende concretamente avviare per risolvere questo problema che minaccia la sopravvivenza delle PMI italiane?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(27 gennaio 2014)

La Commissione, consapevole delle difficoltà che molte PMI attualmente incontrano per accedere ai finanziamenti, ha preso una serie di iniziative volte a migliorare la situazione per le PMI in generale e, più in particolare, nei paesi menzionati nell'interrogazione.

Come illustrato nel piano d'azione del dicembre 2011, volto a migliorare l'accesso delle PMI ai finanziamenti, la Commissione ha adottato una serie di azioni normative. Tra queste, ad esempio, figurano la correzione della ponderazione del rischio delle regole prudenziali per i prestiti alle PMI; l'aumento del numero degli strumenti di credito a disposizione delle PMI (ad esempio il capitale di rischio); la riduzione dell'onere amministrativo a carico delle PMI in materia di costi di contabilità e di rendicontazione; e la proposta di sedi di negoziazione dedicate che potrebbero rendere i mercati dei capitali più interessanti per le PMI. La Commissione ha inoltre introdotto strumenti finanziari attraverso i fondi ESI ([1]), il programma COSME (programma per la competitività delle imprese e le PMI) e l'iniziativa Orizzonte 2020. Infine, la Commissione ha messo a punto strumenti che consentono una migliore informazione sia per le PMI, ad esempio la guida on-line a tutte le fonti di finanziamento, che sulle PMI, ad esempio il «credit score» (punteggi sull'affidabilità creditizia) e l'analisi creditizia.

Per far fronte alla situazione che si presenta in alcuni Stati membri, cosa sintomatica della frammentazione del mercato unico, la Commissione ha presentato proposte intese ad istituire un'unione bancaria, che dovrebbero tradursi in condizioni meno divergenti fra gli Stati membri e aumentare la disponibilità di finanziamenti per le PMI. Inoltre, la Commissione e la BEI hanno messo in atto un sistema di supporto per i prestiti alle PMI mediante cartolarizzazioni e meccanismi di garanzia, che è adesso a disposizione degli Stati membri.

([1]) Fondi strutturali e di investimento europei.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013293/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(22 November 2013)

Subject: Credit access problems for Italian small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)

A survey carried out by the European Central Bank on 8 035 enterprises, 92% of which were SMEs in the euro area, for the period April-September 2013, shows that it is becoming increasingly difficult for Italian enterprises to obtain bank loans. In the euro area, the European Central Bank states that Italian, Dutch and Belgian SMEs reported a further 'marginal deterioration in the availability of bank loans'.

While considerable improvements have been made in Portugal (increase from -32% to 2%), Ireland (from -22% to -7%) and Spain (from -17% to -7%), in Italy a growing percentage of small enterprises are seeing greater restrictions on lending. On average 65% of firms in the EU which applied for a bank loan succeeded in obtaining the full amount requested, while in Italy the figure fell to just over 50%: one SME in two failed to obtain the financing it needed. In 16% of cases, an Italian enterprise was refused credit, while in around three in ten cases the amount granted was less than that requested. One per cent of businesses rejected the offer received from the bank because they considered the proposed terms to be unacceptable. The report highlights that 16% of European SMEs identified access to credit as 'the most pressing problem'. In Italy this figure is 20%, one of the highest levels in the EU-28 and lower only than those in Cyprus (40%), Greece (32%), Spain and Croatia (23%) and Slovenia (22%). At the other extreme of the list are Austria (7%), Germany (8%) and Poland (9%).

In view of the above, could the Commission state what specific actions it intends to take to resolve this problem, which is jeopardising the survival of Italian SMEs?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(27 January 2014)

The Commission is aware of the difficulty that many SMEs are currently facing in accessing finance and has taken a series of actions to improve the situation, both for SMEs in general, and more specifically to improve the situation in the countries mentioned in the question.

As outlined in its Action Plan to improve SME access to finance of December 2011, the Commission has taken a number of regulatory actions as for example correcting the risk-weighting of prudential rules as regards SME lending; increasing the number of borrowing facilites available to SMEs, like venture capital; reducing the administrative burden for SMEs represented by accounting and reporting costs; and proposing dedicated trading venues that could make capital markets more attractive for SMEs. The Commission has also put in place financial instruments through ESIfunds ([1]), the COSME and Horizon 2020 programmes. Finally, the Commission has also developed tools that allow better information to SMEs, such as a web guide to all sources of finance, and on SMEs, like credit scoring and analysis.

To tackle the situation in some Member States, which is a sign of the fragmentation of the Single Market, the Commission has put forward proposals to establish a Banking Union, which should translate in less divergent conditions among Member States and should increase the availability of funding to SMEs. Moreover, the Commission and the EIB have put in place a system supporting SME lending through securitisations and guarantee mechanisms, that is now at the disposal of Member States.

([1]) European Structural and Investment Funds.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013294/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(22 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Contrasto ai fenomeni di contraffazione alimentare e «Italian sounding»

Secondo un'indagine condotta dalla Confederazione italiana agricoltori (CIA), il comparto export agroalimentare italiano, che oggi vale 34 miliardi di euro, potrebbe addirittura triplicare con un'azione radicale di contrasto al falso «Made in Italy». Il settore, infatti, non solo è uno dei più colpiti dalla contraffazione, ma subisce anche la concorrenza sleale dell'«Italian sounding», che genera un business illegale sui mercati globali di ben 60 miliardi di euro all'anno. Parmesan, Fontiago, Bovizola e Combozola — all'estero i prodotti travestiti da italiani occupano la metà degli scaffali del supermercato: si tratta di un danno economico e d'immagine inaccettabile per i produttori e per tutta la filiera agroalimentare italiana quotidianamente impegnata nella ricerca dell'eccellenza.

In particolare, ad essere vittima della contraffazione sono proprio i prodotti di qualità regolamentata, le DOP e le IGP, e il comparto del biologico, le categorie di prodotti cioè che dovrebbero offrire un'assoluta garanzia di sicurezza alimentare e che per otto italiani su dieci, peraltro, sono il primo criterio di scelta.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione far sapere se:

1. è a conoscenza di questi dati;

2. intende intensificare ancora la rete dei controlli e inasprire le sanzioni per contrastare illegalità e contraffazione;

3. intende costruire una task-force in ambito UE per contrastare le falsificazioni alimentari;

4. intende sostenere un'azione più decisa da parte dell'Europa nel negoziato OMC per un'effettiva difesa delle denominazioni?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(17 gennaio 2014)

1. La Commissione è consapevole del fatto che la commercializzazione di alimenti contraffatti o che non soddisfano gli standard minimi è un problema che tende ad aggravarsi.

2. Il 6 maggio 2013 la Commissione ha adottato una proposta di revisione delle attuali norme sui controlli ufficiali lungo l'intera catena agroalimentare ([1]), che ha lo scopo di mettere a disposizione delle autorità nazionali un quadro giuridico più efficiente e strumenti più incisivi per garantire il rispetto delle norme.

Tra l'altro, la proposta prevede che sia integrata nei piani di controllo nazionali una serie di controlli ufficiali regolari senza preavviso con lo scopo di identificare possibili violazioni intenzionali e di garantire che le sanzioni finanziarie applicate per contrastare tali violazioni siano di importo superiore al vantaggio economico generato dalla violazione stessa.

3. La Commissione sta operando attivamente per migliorare la capacità degli Stati membri di identificare e contrastare le possibili frodi. Una rete di punti di contatto anti-frode negli Stati membri è attualmente in corso di costituzione per facilitare l'assistenza e la cooperazione amministrativa nei casi di violazioni transfrontaliere. Vengono inoltre messi a punto adeguati moduli di formazione destinati al personale che opera negli organismi competenti.

4. Nell'ambito del ciclo di negoziati di Doha tra i membri dell'OMC, l'UE si impegna a migliorare la tutela delle indicazioni geografiche attraverso la creazione di un registro multilaterale giuridicamente vincolante in grado di facilitarne la tutela, ampliando inoltre l'ulteriore tutela attualmente disponibile solo per le indicazioni geografiche dei vini e degli alcolici nell'ambito dell'accordo TRIPS (vale a dire, la tutela oggettiva indipendente dal fatto che il pubblico sia o meno indotto in errore sull'origine geografica del prodotto) alle indicazioni geografiche per tutti i prodotti.

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 882/2004 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 29 aprile 2004, relativo ai controlli ufficiali intesi a verificare la conformità alla normativa in materia di mangimi e di alimenti e alle norme sulla salute e sul benessere degli animali, GU L 165 del 30.4.2004, pag. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013294/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(22 November 2013)

Subject: Combating food counterfeiting and the use of words that give the impression that a product is Italian

According to an investigation carried out by the Italian Farmers' Confederation (*Confederazione italiana agricoltori* or CIA), the Italian food export sector, currently valued at EUR 34 billion, could be worth as much as three times that amount if radical action were taken to combat products falsely labelled 'Made in Italy'. Not only is the sector one of the hardest hit by counterfeiting, but it also suffers from unfair competition through the use of words that make products sound as though they are Italian. These Italian-sounding products generate illegal business on the global markets amounting to as much as EUR 60 billion per year. Half of all supermarket shelves abroad are occupied by products that are passed off as Italian, such as Parmesan, Fontiago, Bovizola and Combozola. The financial harm and the damage caused to the image of producers and the Italian agri-food sector as a whole, which works hard every day to achieve excellence, is unacceptable.

Regulated quality, protected designation of origin (PDO) and protected geographical indication (PGI) products, together with the organic sector, are the main victims of counterfeiting. These are the categories of products that ought to offer an absolute guarantee of food safety. Moreover, for eight out of ten Italians these designations are the most important criterion when it comes to choosing which products to buy.

1. Is the Commission aware of these facts?

2. Does it intend to further strengthen the system of checks and to increase penalties in order to combat illegality and counterfeiting?

3. Does it intend to create a task force within the EU to combat food counterfeiting?

4. Does it intend to support more decisive action by Europe in the World Trade Organisation negotiations in order to protect designations?

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

1. The Commission is aware that the placing on the market of counterfeit or sub-standard food is a growing problem.

2. On 6 May 2013 the Commission adopted a proposal to review the current rules on official controls along the agri-food chain [1], which aims to provide national enforcers with a more efficient legal framework and stronger enforcement tools.

Among other things, the proposal requires that regular unannounced official controls to identify possible intentional violations rules be integrated into national control plans, and that financial penalties applied by to such violations be set at amounts that offset the economic advantage sought through the violation.

3. The Commission is actively working to improve the capacity of the Member States to identify and counter possible frauds. A network of food fraud contact points in the Member States is being set up to facilitate administrative assistance and cooperation in cases of cross border violations. Appropriate training modules are being designed for staff in the competent authorities.

4. In the Doha Round negotiations among WTO Members, the EU seeks to improve the protection of geographical indications through the creation of a legally binding multilateral register facilitating their protection as well as through the extension of the additional protection which is currently only available for wines and spirits geographical indications under the TRIPS Agreement (i.e. objective protection notably independent of whether the public is misled as to the geographical origin of the good) to geographical indications for all products.

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[1] Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules, OJ L 165, 30.4.2004, p. 1.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013295/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(22 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Indicazione di origine anche per i funghi pregiati

In Italia il consumo alimentare medio dei funghi si aggira intorno agli 800 grammi a persona per anno, tanto come prodotto fresco quanto come prodotto congelato o essiccato.

La produzione italiana di funghi pregiati è però molto bassa e si aggira intorno al 5 % del fabbisogno nazionale: si è quindi costretti a importare quasi tutti i porcini che mangiamo dai paesi dell'Est europeo, dalla Cina, dal Marocco e dall'Africa Meridionale. Le aziende che trasformano questi funghi svolgono controlli sulle materie prime al fine di prevenire pericoli per i consumatori.

Considerato che, sebbene consumando i funghi di importazione immessi nei normali circuiti legali di vendita non si vada incontro a rischi significativi, sarebbe comunque legittimo conoscerne l'origine; preso atto del fatto che le aziende serie dovrebbero evitare di mettere in vendita prodotti con etichette che, attraverso l'«italian sounding», fanno pensare che il prodotto sia italiano mentre di italiano ha soltanto il luogo di lavorazione,

può dire la Commissione:

1. È a conoscenza di questo fenomeno?

2. Intende intervenire per fermare questi abusi prevedendo anche per i funghi l'indicazione in etichetta del paese di origine?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(17 gennaio 2014)

La Commissione non è a conoscenza della questione specifica sollevata dall'onorevole parlamentare. Le prassi di etichettatura ingannevole sono vietate dalla direttiva 2000/13/CE ([1]) la quale stabilisce che l'etichettatura non deve essere tale da indurre in errore l'acquirente per quanto riguarda le caratteristiche dell'alimento e, tra l'altro, la sua origine o provenienza.

Qualunque indicazione volontaria che possa essere considerata come riferita all'origine deve essere conforme, dal 13 dicembre 2014, alle nuove norme stabilite dal regolamento UE concernente le informazioni alimentari ai consumatori ([2]). Secondo tali norme, il paese di origine di prodotti lavorati non totalmente ottenuti sul territorio di un singolo paese corrisponde al paese nel quale si è verificata l'ultima trasformazione sostanziale dell'alimento. Se il suo ingrediente fondamentale proviene da un luogo diverso, devono essere indicati anche il paese di origine o il luogo di provenienza di tale ingrediente.

Gli Stati membri sono responsabili per l'attuazione della normativa dell'UE in campo alimentare e verificano, mediante l'organizzazione di controlli ufficiali, che i requisiti pertinenti siano rispettati dagli operatori economici.

Come richiesto dall'articolo 26, paragrafo 5, del regolamento (UE) n. 1169/2011, entro il 13 (o 31?) dicembre 2014 la Commissione presenterà una relazione sui prodotti a base di un unico ingrediente e sugli alimenti non trasformati. In tale contesto esplorerà la possibilità di estendere ai funghi l'etichettatura di origine obbligatoria.

Per quanto riguarda le indicazioni geografiche protette (IGP) e le denominazioni di origine protetta (DOP), è opportuno notare che sino ad ora la sola IGP italiana registrata e protetta a livello dell'UE per questo tipo di prodotto è il «Fungo di Borgotaro».

([1]) GU L 109 del 6.05.2000, pag. 29.

([2]) Regolamento (UE) n. 1169/2011 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 25 ottobre 2011, relativo alla fornitura di informazioni sugli alimenti ai consumatori, che modifica i regolamenti (CE) n. 1924/2006 e (CE) n. 1925/2006 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio e abroga la direttiva 87/250/CEE della Commissione, la direttiva 90/496/CEE del Consiglio, la direttiva 1999/10/CE della Commissione, la direttiva 2000/13/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, le direttive 2002/67/CE e 2008/5/CE della Commissione e il regolamento (CE) n. 608/2004, GU L 304 del 22.11.2011, pag. 18.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013295/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(22 November 2013)

Subject: Indication of origin for rare mushrooms

In Italy the average consumption of mushrooms, in fresh, frozen or dried form, is about 800 grams per person per year.

However, production of rare mushrooms in Italy is very low, and accounts for approximately 5% of national demand: we are therefore forced to import almost all the ceps that we eat from countries in Eastern Europe, China, Morocco and Southern Africa. The firms that process these mushrooms carry out checks on the raw materials in order to prevent any risk to consumers.

Although eating imported mushrooms that are sold via the normal legal sales channels does not expose people to significant risks, it is only natural to want to know where they come from. Trustworthy firms should avoid putting on sale products with labels containing Italian-sounding words: they make purchasers think that the product is Italian, when the only thing Italian about it is the place of processing.

1. Is the Commission aware of this problem?

2. Will it take action to stop these abuses, by stipulating that the country of origin must be stated on the labels of mushrooms, too?

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

The Commission is not aware of the specific issue raised by the Honourable Member. Misleading labelling practices are prohibited by Directive 2000/13/EC ([1]) which requires that the labelling must not be such as could mislead the purchaser as to the characteristics of the food and, *inter alia*, as to its origin or provenance.

Any voluntary statement that can be considered as an indication of origin should, from 13 December 2014, comply with the new rules established in EU Regulation on food information to consumers ([2]). According to them, the country of origin of processed foods not wholly obtained in one single country corresponds to the country of the last substantial transformation of the food. If its primary ingredient originates from a different place, the country of origin or place of provenance of this ingredient should be also provided.

Member States are responsible for the enforcement of EU food law and verify, through the organisation of official controls, that the relevant requirements thereof are fulfilled by business operators.

As requested by Article 26(5) of Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 the Commission by 13 December 2014 will present a report on single ingredient and unprocessed products. In this frame it will explore the possibility to extend mandatory origin labelling to mushrooms

In relation to Protected Geographical Indications (PGI) and Protected Designations of Origin (PDO), is it has to be noted that till now the only Italian PGI registered and protected at EU level for this type of product is 'Fungo di Borgotaro'.

([1]) OJ L 109, 06.05.2000, p.29.

([2]) Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2011 on the provision of food information to consumers, amending Regulations (EC) No 1924/2006 and (EC) No 1925/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council, and repealing Commission Directive 87/250/EEC, Council Directive 90/496/EEC, Commission Directive 1999/10/EC, Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, Commission Directives 2002/67/EC and 2008/5/EC and Commission Regulation (EC) No 608/2004, OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p.18.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-013296/13
adresată Comisiei
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(22 noiembrie 2013)

Subiect: Cooperare între generații de antreprenori

Statisticile europene arată că numărul cetățenilor europeni care iau în considerare posibilitatea de a lucra ca independent, mai ales după un proces de restrângere a activității societății în care au lucrat un timp mai îndelungat, este în scădere, mai ales în contextul actual de nesiguranță economică.

Europa ar trebui să adopte măsuri și obiective specifice pentru ca antreprenoriatul să devină din nou atractiv, inclusiv pentru salariații cu calificare și experiență profesională îndelungată, dar și pentru realizarea unui schimb eficient de experiență cu tinerii aflați la început de carieră.

Cum intenționează Comisia să încurajeze cetățenii în vârstă să devină și să rămână antreprenori, mai ales în colaborare cu tinerii fără experiență sau la început de carieră profesională, pentru a contribui la combaterea efectelor șomajului ridicat în rândul tinerilor, dar și pentru a facilita transferul de competențe către tineri și a le da dreptul la o a doua șansă celor de vârsta a treia?

Răspuns dat de dl Andor în numele Comisiei
(24 ianuarie 2014)

Antreprenoriatul este de o importanță capitală pentru crearea de locuri de muncă și pentru combaterea șomajului, după cum s-a evidențiat în Planul de acțiune pentru 2020 privind antreprenoriatul. De asemenea, Planul de acțiune încurajează în mod specific persoanele mai în vârstă cu experiență să servească drept mentori noilor întreprinzători și să obțină sprijinul necesar pentru propriile inițiative antreprenoriale.

În perioada 2014-2020, noul Program pentru ocuparea forței de muncă și inovare socială (EaSI) va pune la dispoziție fonduri pentru sprijinirea antreprenoriatului și a activității independente.

Programele educaționale în domeniul antreprenoriatului pot fi finanțate și din FSE, pentru a asigura adaptarea competențelor la exigențele pieței forței de muncă, sau în cadrul măsurilor privind îmbătrânirea activă sau al promovării întreprinderii sociale. Pentru promovarea antreprenoriatului poate fi utilizat și FEDER, mai precis prin facilitarea exploatării economice a ideilor noi și prin încurajarea creării de noi întreprinderi, a inovării sociale și a sprijinului pentru întreprinderile sociale. Inițiativa privind ocuparea forței de muncă în rândul tinerilor va sprijini intervenții directe pentru tinerii care nu sunt încadrați profesional și nu urmează niciun program educațional sau de formare, inclusiv prin practică și ucenicie la locul de muncă și prin măsuri privind activitatea independentă. Această asistență poate include activități de mentorat la nivel internațional.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013296/13
to the Commission
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(22 November 2013)

Subject: Intergenerational cooperation between entrepreneurs

According to EU statistics, the number of European citizens considering the option of working for themselves is on the wane, especially after the activities carried out by the company they have worked at for a lengthy period of time have been scaled back, as well as in the current climate of economic insecurity.

Europe should adopt specific measures and objectives aimed at restoring the appeal of entrepreneurship, not only for well-qualified workers with long-standing professional experience, but also with a view to establishing an effective exchange of experience with young people embarking on their career.

How does the Commission intend to encourage elderly citizens to become and continue to be entrepreneurs, especially in cooperation with young people who are inexperienced or embarking on their professional career, in order not only to help tackle the impact of the high level of youth unemployment, but also to facilitate the transfer of skills to young people and give senior citizens the right to a second chance?

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

Entrepreneurship is key importance in job creation and fighting unemployment, as highlighted by the Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan. The action plan also specifically encourages experienced seniors to serve as mentors for new entrepreneurs and to obtain needed support for their own entrepreneurial initiatives.

In 2014-2020, funding from the new Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) will be available to support entrepreneurship and self-employment.

Entrepreneurship education programmes can also be funded under the ESF to ensure skills align to labour market needs or as part of active ageing measures or promotion of social enterprise. ERDF can also be used for the promotion of entrepreneurship, more precisely by facilitating the economic exploitation of new ideas and fostering the creation of new firms, social innovation and support for social enterprises. The Youth Employment Initiative will support direct interventions for young people not in employment, education or training, including through job practice and apprenticeships, as well as self-employment measures. This assistance can include elements of international mentoring.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013297/13
al Consejo
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: La economía de los hogares españoles y el Programa Nacional de Reformas

El pasado 20 de noviembre, el Instituto Nacional de Estadística presentó los resultados de la Encuesta de Condiciones de Vida que — como dato de interés— situaba en 23 123 euros los ingresos medios de los hogares españoles, alcanzando niveles anteriores a 2006.

Ni tan siquiera el fuerte incremento de las grandes fortunas del país ha podido compensar de manera suficiente la caída general de los ingresos de los españoles desde el inicio de la crisis económica. El informe señala también los efectos de la subida de los precios en las economías domésticas, de las cuales un 40,9 % no tiene capacidad de afrontar gastos imprevistos. El informe continúa señalando que, agregando los hogares que llegan a fin de mes con dificultad y con mucha dificultad, un 36,6 % de los hogares españoles apenas alcanza con sus ingresos a cubrir el montante de sus gastos corrientes mensuales. Un 9,2 % de los hogares presenta retrasos en el pago de los gastos básicos de su vivienda habitual, lo que verdaderamente supone economías domésticas al borde de la quiebra, que podrían llegar a la exclusión social.

Las políticas de recortes hacen recaer en las economías domésticas los gastos que cubría el Estado y esto —sumado al masivo descenso de los ingresos en los hogares, gracias a la reforma laboral— hace que los hogares deban contraer fuertemente su consumo generando una caída de la demanda agregada y, por tanto, impidiendo la regeneración económica del país. El pasado 14 de noviembre el Eurogrupo felicitaba a España por la exitosa ejecución del programa de reformas, asegurando que «la economía española ha retornado a un crecimiento positivo». Esta afirmación del éxito del Gobierno expresada por el Eurogrupo no hace referencia alguna a las economías domésticas en España, que parecen estar totalmente fuera de la agenda económica de Europa.

¿Cómo valora el Consejo los datos de esta encuesta del INE?

¿Considera sostenible un programa de reformas del sector financiero con unas economías domésticas incapaces de realizar los pagos más básicos y al borde de la quiebra?

¿Cuáles son los motivos por los que el posicionamiento del Eurogrupo sobre España, del 14 de noviembre, no hace ninguna referencia a la situación de las economías domésticas del país?

Respuesta
(10 de febrero de 2014)

En el contexto del ejercicio del Semestre Europeo de 2014, que comenzó con la publicación del Estudio Prospectivo Anual sobre el Crecimiento el 13 de noviembre de 2013, el Consejo Europeo de diciembre debatió los cinco ámbitos prioritarios especificados en dicho Estudio, entre los que se incluyen la lucha contra el desempleo y las consecuencias sociales de la crisis. El Consejo Europeo de diciembre acogió positivamente el Estudio Prospectivo Anual sobre el Crecimiento presentado por la Comisión y reconoció que, aunque la recuperación económica sigue siendo modesta, dispar y frágil, las perspectivas económicas están siendo gradualmente más positivas. El Consejo Europeo llegó a la conclusión de que una aplicación decidida y ambiciosa de las políticas acordadas apoyará la recuperación económica y la creación de empleo en 2014 y 2015.

El Consejo Europeo señaló que debe prestarse especial atención al refuerzo del funcionamiento y la flexibilidad del mercado único de bienes y servicios, a la mejora del entorno empresarial, y a un mayor saneamiento del balance de los bancos, con objeto de abordar la fragmentación de los mercados financieros y restablecer el préstamo normal a la economía. Debe darse prioridad a la mejora de la competitividad, al apoyo a la creación de empleo y a la lucha contra el desempleo, en particular el desempleo juvenil, incluso mediante la plena puesta en práctica de la Garantía Juvenil, y al seguimiento de las reformas relativas al funcionamiento de los mercados laborales. El Consejo Europeo recordó asimismo su compromiso para que la Iniciativa sobre Empleo Juvenil sea plenamente operativa en enero de 2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013297/13
to the Council
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 November 2013)

Subject: The economic situation of Spanish households and the National Reform Programme

On 20 November, the Spanish National Institute of Statistics presented the results from the Living Conditions Survey, which — as a point of interest — placed the average income for Spanish households at EUR 23 123, levels similar to those seen before 2006.

Not even the significant surge in the country's wealth has been able to sufficiently compensate for the general drop seen in the income of the Spanish population since the start of the economic crisis. The report also shows the effects of price increases on the economic situation of households, 40.9% of which are not able to meet unforeseen costs. The report continues showing that, adding together homes for which it is either a struggle, or a great struggle, to make ends meet, 36.6% of Spanish households barely manage to cover their regular monthly outgoings with their income. Some 9.2% of households are behind in the payment of basic costs for their place of residence, which truly represents household economies on the verge of bankruptcy, which could result in social exclusion.

The policies of cutbacks mean that outgoings that once were covered by the State now fall to households and this, added to the massive drop in household incomes thanks to the labour reform, means that households must severely restrict their consumption which generates a fall in aggregate demand and, therefore, impedes the country's economic regeneration. On 14 November, the Euro Group congratulated Spain for its successful execution of the programme of reforms, assuring that 'the Spanish economy has returned to positive growth'. This statement of the Government's success made by the Euro Group does not make any reference to household economies in Spain, which seem to fall completely outside the economic agenda for Europe.

What is the Council's assessment of the data arising from this survey by the Spanish National Institute of Statistics?

Does it believe the programme of reform of the financial sector to be sustainable, with household economies on the verge of bankruptcy and unable to fulfil the most basic of payments?

Why did the position of the Euro Group on Spain on 14 November make no reference to the situation of household economies in the country?

Reply
(10 February 2014)

In the context of the 2014 European Semester exercise, which started with the publication of the Annual Growth Survey (AGS) on 13 November 2013, the December European Council discussed the five priority areas identified in the AGS, which include tackling unemployment and the social consequences of the crisis. The December European Council welcomed the 2014 AGS presented by the Commission and acknowledged that while the economic recovery is still modest, uneven and fragile, the economic outlook is gradually becoming more positive. It concluded that determined and ambitious implementation of agreed policies would support economic recovery and job creation in 2014 and 2015.

The European Council noted that specific attention should be given to enhancing the functioning and flexibility of the single market for products and services, improving the business environment, and further repairing banks' balance sheets with a view to addressing financial fragmentation and restoring normal lending to the economy. Priority should be given to enhancing competitiveness, supporting job creation and fighting unemployment, particularly youth unemployment, including through the full implementation of the youth guarantee, and to the follow-up of reforms regarding the functioning of labour markets. The European Council also recalled its commitment to make the Youth Employment Initiative fully operational by January 2014.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013298/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Economía de los hogares españoles y el programa nacional de reformas

El pasado 20 de noviembre, el Instituto Nacional de Estadística presentó los resultados de la «encuesta de condiciones de vida» que — como dato de interés— situaba en 23 123 euros los ingresos medios de los hogares españoles, alcanzando niveles anteriores a 2006.

Ni tan siquiera el fuerte incremento de las grandes fortunas del país ha podido compensar en manera suficiente la caída general de los ingresos de los españoles desde el inicio de la crisis económica. El informe señala también los efectos de la subida de los precios en las economías domésticas, de las cuales un 40,9 % no tiene capacidad de afrontar gastos imprevistos. El informe continúa señalando que, agregando los hogares que llegan con dificultad y con mucha dificultad a fin de mes, un 36,6 % de los hogares españoles apenas alcanza con sus ingresos a cubrir el montante de sus gastos corrientes mensuales. Un 9,2 % de los hogares tiene retrasos en el pago de los gastos básicos de su vivienda habitual, lo que verdaderamente supone economías domésticas al borde de la quiebra, que podrían llegar a la exclusión social.

Las políticas de recortes hacen recaer en las economías domésticas los gastos que cubría el Estado y esto —sumado al masivo descenso de los ingresos en los hogares, gracias a la reforma laboral— hace que los hogares deban contraer fuertemente su consumo produciendo una caída de la demanda agregada y, por tanto, impidiendo la regeneración económica del país. El pasado 14 de noviembre, el Eurogrupo felicitaba a España por la exitosa implementación del programa de reformas, asegurando que «la economía española ha retornado a un crecimiento positivo». Esta afirmación del éxito del Gobierno realizada por el Eurogrupo no hace referencia alguna a las economías domésticas en España, que parecen estar totalmente fuera de la agenda económica de Europa.

¿Cómo valora la Comisión los datos de esta encuesta del INE?

¿Considera sostenible un programa de reformas del sector financiero con unas economías domésticas incapaces de realizar los pagos más básicos y al borde de la quiebra?

¿Qué acciones está tomando la Comisión para impedir o atenuar el masivo empobrecimiento de los hogares españoles?

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

1. y 3. La Comisión comparte la preocupación por las consecuencias de la crisis sobre los ingresos de los hogares y, en particular, sobre los grupos más vulnerables de la población.

El análisis de la Comisión ha sido refrendado en la recomendación específica adoptada por el Consejo y dirigida a España el 9 de julio de 2013 ([1]).

En particular, en las recomendaciones 4 y 6 se invita a España a mejorar la empleabilidad de los grupos vulnerables, junto con políticas más eficaces para luchar contra la pobreza y la exclusión social. La respuesta dada a estas recomendaciones se supervisará en el marco del Semestre Europeo.

Por otra parte, el paquete de medidas sobre inversión social ofrece orientaciones a los Estados miembros de la UE para que utilicen sus presupuestos sociales de forma más eficiente a fin de garantizar una protección social adecuada y sostenible, y aboga por prestaciones y servicios que pueden ayudar a las personas a mejorar su acceso al mercado laboral.

2. El avance en la aplicación del programa relativo al sector financiero es objeto de un estrecho seguimiento por la Comisión y por el BCE, así como, parcialmente, por el MEDE y por la ABE. El FMI también participa en este seguimiento. Las evaluaciones de conformidad correspondientes se publican. La más reciente puede consultarse en:
http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/ocp163_en.pdf

La evaluación confirmó que los avances en la ejecución del programa siguen ajustándose, en líneas generales, a lo previsto. También puso de relieve los retos pendientes para el cumplimiento de los objetivos del programa.

([1]) Recomendación del Consejo, de 9 de julio de 2013, sobre el Programa Nacional de Reforma de 2013 de España y por la que se emite un dictamen del Consejo sobre el Programa de Estabilidad de España para 2012-2016 (DO C 217 de 30.7.2013, p. 81).
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2013:217:0081:0085:ES:PDF
Véase, asimismo, el documento de trabajo de la Comisión SWD(2013) 359 final: «Evaluación del Programa Nacional de Reformas y del Programa de Estabilidad de España para 2013». http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/nd/swd2013_spain_es.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013298/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 November 2013)

Subject: The economic situation of Spanish households and the National Reform Programme

On 20 November, the Spanish National Institute of Statistics presented the results from the Living Conditions Survey, which — as a point of interest — placed the average income for Spanish households at EUR 23 123, levels similar to those seen before 2006.

Not even the significant surge in the country's wealth has been able to sufficiently compensate for the general drop seen in the income of the Spanish population since the start of the economic crisis. The report also shows the effects of price increases on the economic situation of households, 40.9% of which are not able to meet unforeseen costs. The report continues showing that, adding together homes for which it is either a struggle, or a great struggle, to make ends meet, 36.6% of Spanish households barely manage to cover their regular monthly outgoings with their income. Some 9.2% of households are behind in the payment of basic costs for their place of residence, which truly represents household economies on the verge of bankruptcy, which could result in social exclusion.

The policies of cutbacks mean that outgoings that once were covered by the State now fall to households and this, added to the massive drop in household incomes thanks to the labour reform, means that households must severely restrict their consumption, generating a fall in aggregate demand and, therefore, impeding the country's economic regeneration. On 14 November, the Euro Group congratulated Spain for its successful implementation of the programme of reforms, assuring that 'the Spanish economy has returned to positive growth'. This statement of the Government's success made by the Euro Group does not make any reference to household economies in Spain, which seem to fall completely outside the economic agenda for Europe.

What is the Commission's assessment of the data arising from this survey by the Spanish National Institute of Statistics?

Does it believe the programme of reform of the financial sector to be sustainable, with household economies on the verge of bankruptcy and unable to fulfil the most basic of payments?

What action is the Commission taking to prevent or minimise the mass impoverishment of Spanish households?

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

1 and 3. The Commission shares the concern about the consequences of the crisis on household's incomes and, in particular, on the most vulnerable groups of the population.

The Commission's analysis has been endorsed in the country-specific recommendation adopted by the Council and addressed to Spain on 9 July 2013 ([1]).

In particular recommendations 4 and 6 invite Spain to improve the employability of vulnerable groups, combined with more effective policies addressing poverty and social exclusion. The response given to these recommendations is monitored in the framework of the European Semester.

Moreover, the Social Investment Package provides guidance to EU Member States to use their social budgets more efficiently to ensure adequate and sustainable social protection, and advocates for benefits and services that can help people to improve access to the labour market.

2. Progress with the implementation of the financial sector programme is closely monitored by the Commission and the ECB, and partly by ESM and EBA. The IMF is also involved. The relative assessments of compliance are made public, and the most recent one can be found at: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/ocp163_en.pdf

The assessment confirmed that progress with the implementation of the programme continues to be broadly on track. It also highlighted the remaining challenges to meeting the programme's objectives.

([1]) Council Recommendation of 9 July 2013 on the National Reform Programme 2013 of Spain and delivering a Council opinion on the Stability Programme for Spain 2012-16. OJ C 217, 30.7.2013, p. 81. (http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2013:217:0081:0085:EN:PDF). See also the Commission's Staff Working Document: COM(2013) 359. Commission Staff Working Document. Assessment of the 2013 national reform programme and stability programme for Spain (http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/nd/swd2013_spain_en.pdf).

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013300/13
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(22 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Prospecciones petrolíferas ilegales

El Reino de España ha autorizado a tres multinacionales del petróleo prospecciones petrolíferas en aguas del archipiélago de Canarias, frente a las costas de las islas de Lanzarote y Fuerteventura. Esas empresas no cuentan con los preceptivos informes que las normativas europeas y nacionales exigen sobre el impacto ambiental de esta actividad en el medio ambiente, así como en materia de libre competencia.

Dichas zonas están declaradas como Reservas Mundiales de la Biosfera por la Unesco y contienen muchos hábitats y espacios protegidos por la UE y por tratados internacionales. Las actuaciones de estas multinacionales petroleras suscitan muchas preocupaciones, sobre todo en el sector del turismo y aún más en tiempos de crecimiento incesante de la tasa de desempleo.

En 2010, la catástrofe de la plataforma petrolífera *Deepwater Horizon* en el Golfo de México contaminó más de mil kilómetros de costa. Este desastre pone de manifiesto el enorme riesgo que entraña esa actividad.

La Directiva 92/43/CEE relativa a la conservación de los hábitats naturales y de la fauna y flora silvestres y la Directiva 79/409/CEE relativa a la conservación de las aves silvestres constituyen garantías en esta materia, ya que permiten cierta protección del medio ambiente.

Hay que recordar que el Reino de España ya fue condenado en 2011 por el Tribunal de Justicia de la Unión Europea por falta de protección jurídica adecuada para las zonas especiales de conservación (ZEC).

¿Considera la Comisión que dicha decisión del Reino de España es conforme a las directivas mencionadas?

¿Piensa la Comisión impulsar alguna acción sobre este asunto?

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

Las autoridades españolas han informado a la Comisión de que el proyecto en cuestión se está sometiendo en este momento a una evaluación completa del impacto ambiental de conformidad con lo dispuesto en la Directiva 2011/92/UE ([1]). Por tanto, todavía no se le ha concedido autorización alguna.

La evaluación de impacto ambiental en curso deberá tener en cuenta todos los aspectos medioambientales del proyecto y, en particular, aquellos que se deriven de la Directiva 92/43/CEE ([2]) (Directiva sobre hábitats).

En vista de lo anterior, en este momento, la Comisión no está en disposición de hacer observaciones sobre la aplicación por parte de las autoridades españolas de la legislación pertinente de la UE en materia de medio ambiente.

([1]) Directiva 2011/92/UE, de 13 de diciembre de 2011, relativa a la evaluación de las repercusiones de determinados proyectos públicos y privados sobre el medio ambiente (DO L 26 de 28.1.2012).
([2]) Directiva 92/43/CEE del Consejo, de 21 de mayo de 1992, relativa a la conservación de los hábitats naturales y de la fauna y flora silvestres (DO L 206 de 22.7.1992).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013300/13
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(22 November 2013)

Subject: Illegal oil exploration

The Kingdom of Spain has authorised three multinational oil companies to conduct oil exploration in waters off the coasts of Lanzarote and Fuerteventura, in the Canary Islands. These companies are not in possession of the mandatory reports that European and national regulations demand with regard to the environmental impact of this activity or free competition.

Unesco has declared the affected areas World Biosphere Reserves and they contain numerous habitats and spaces that are protected by the EU and by international treaties. The conduct of these multinational oil companies is giving rise to a huge amount of concern, in the tourism sector in particular, and even more so in these times of an ever rising unemployment rate.

In 2010, the Deepwater Horizon oil platform disaster in the Gulf of Mexico polluted more than 1 000 km of coastline, highlighting the enormous risk that this activity entails.

Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora and Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds constitute guarantees for this area, since they enable a certain amount of protection for the environment.

It should be recalled that the Kingdom of Spain has already been subject to a judgment from the European Court of Justice, in 2011, for lacking the appropriate legal protection for Special Areas of Conservation (SAC).

Does the Commission consider the said decision of the Kingdom of Spain to be in accordance with the abovementioned directives?

Does the Commission intend to encourage any action to be taken on this matter?

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

The Spanish authorities have informed the Commission that the project in question is currently being made subject to a full environmental impact assessment in accordance with the provisions of Directive 2011/92/EU ([1]). Therefore, this project has not yet been granted any authorisation.

The ongoing environmental impact assessment should take into account all the environmental aspects of the project and in particular those arising from Directive 92/43/EEC ([2]) (Habitats Directive).

In view of the above, the Commission is not in a position to comment at this stage on whether the Spanish authorities have applied the relevant EU environmental law.

([1]) EIA Directive of 13 December 2011 on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment, OJ L 26, 28.1.2012.
([2]) Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora — OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013301/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE) y Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE)
(22 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Expulsión exprés de personas a Marruecos

Medios de comunicación y ONG han denunciado las expulsiones exprés de personas migrantes realizadas en Melilla.

En 2012, Marruecos ratificó el acuerdo hispano-marroquí de 1992 sobre «readmisión de extranjeros entrados ilegalmente» ([1]), el cual ampara legalmente a los guardias civiles que realizan la expulsión. Sin embargo, dicho acuerdo bilateral, al prever que se proceda a la expulsión sin que se cumplan los trámites posteriores de solicitud de asilo, incumpliría la Convención de Ginebra sobre el Estatuto de los Refugiados —suscrita por España y por la UE— y el derecho a solicitar asilo.

Al parecer, las entregas nocturnas de personas inmigrantes por parte de la Guardia Civil a las fuerzas de seguridad marroquíes se realizan por mar o por tierra, en el sector A 13, un lugar donde no hay ninguna cámara de vigilancia.

¿Qué opinión tiene la Comisión sobre el acuerdo bilateral de readmisión de extranjeros entre España y Marruecos? ¿Permite el nuevo marco legislativo europeo la existencia de estos acuerdos bilaterales?

Dado que Melilla forma parte de las fronteras exteriores de la UE, ¿coopera Frontex en la realización de estas expulsiones?

Respuesta de la Sra. Malmström en nombre de la Comisión
(3 de febrero de 2014)

El Consejo adoptó las directrices de negociación para un acuerdo de readmisión entre la UE y Marruecos en 2000 y las negociaciones no se han completado aún. España tiene derecho a aplicar su acuerdo bilateral de readmisión con Marruecos, celebrado con anterioridad a la emisión de dichas directrices de negociación, hasta que la UE celebre un acuerdo similar.

En cualquier caso, las autoridades españolas deben respetar las salvaguardias mínimas enumeradas en el artículo 4, apartado 4, de la Directiva 2008/115/CE sobre el retorno ([2]), incluido el principio de no devolución. De acuerdo con este principio, los Estados miembros no pueden expulsar ni devolver a una persona a un territorio en el que existe un riesgo grave de que pueda ser objeto de persecución, tortura u otros tratos inhumanos o degradantes o de que se produzca la expulsión o la devolución a otro país vulnerando dicho principio.

Por otra parte, el código de fronteras Schengen ([3]) debe aplicarse sin perjuicio de los derechos de los refugiados y de las personas que solicitan protección internacional, en particular en lo que se refiere a la no devolución. Esto significa que, al realizar labores de control fronterizo, los Estados miembros deben respetar sus obligaciones en el marco del principio de no devolución y, en su caso, garantizar el acceso efectivo al procedimiento de asilo de conformidad con lo dispuesto en la Directiva sobre los procedimientos de asilo ([4]).

Frontex no participa en las operaciones de retorno forzoso de España a Marruecos.

([1]) http://www.boe.es/buscar/doc.php?id=BOE-A-1992-8976
([2]) Directiva 2008/115/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 16 de diciembre de 2008 , relativa a normas y procedimientos comunes en los Estados miembros para el retorno de los nacionales de terceros países en situación irregular. DO L 348 de 24.12.2008, p. 1.
([3]) Reglamento (CE) n° 562/2006 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo de 15 de marzo de 2006 por el que se establece un Código comunitario de normas para el cruce de personas por las fronteras (Código de fronteras Schengen). DO L 105 de 13.4.2006, p. 1.
([4]) Directiva 2005/85/CE del Consejo, de 1 de diciembre de 2005, sobre normas mínimas para los procedimientos que deben aplicar los Estados miembros para conceder o retirar la condición de refugiado. DO L 326 de 13.12.2005, p. 1.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-013301/13
an die Kommission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE) und Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE)
(22. November 2013)

Betrifft: Ausweisung von Personen im Schnellverfahren nach Marokko

Medien und nichtstaatliche Organisationen haben die Ausweisungen im Schnellverfahren von Migranten aus Melilla verurteilt.

Marokko hat im Jahr 2012 das Abkommen von 1992 zwischen Spanien und Marokko über die Wiederaufnahme von illegalen ausländischen Migranten ([1]) ratifiziert, das Angehörigen der spanischen Gendarmerie (Guardia Civil) rechtlichen Schutz gewährt, die eine Ausweisung durchführen. Im Falle einer Ausweisung, bei der nicht das ordentliche Verfahren im Anschluss an ein Asylgesuch angewendet wurde, verstößt dieses bilaterale Abkommen jedoch gegen das von Spanien und der Europäischen Union unterzeichnete Genfer Abkommen über die Rechtsstellung der Flüchtlinge und gegen das Recht, um Asyl zu ersuchen.

Offenbar werden Einwanderer von der spanischen Gendarmerie nachts auf dem See- oder Landweg in den Sektor A 13 gebracht, wo es keine Überwachungskameras gibt, und dort in die Obhut der marokkanischen Sicherheitskräfte übergeben.

Wie bewertet die Kommission das Abkommen zwischen Spanien und Marokko über die Wiederaufnahme von illegalen ausländischen Migranten? Erlaubt der neue EU-Rechtsrahmen solche bilateralen Abkommen?

Ist Frontex angesichts der Tatsache, dass Melilla einen Teil der EU-Außengrenzen bildet, an der Durchführung dieser Ausweisungen beteiligt?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(3. Februar 2014)

Der Rat hat die Verhandlungsrichtlinien für ein Rückübernahmeabkommen zwischen der EU und Marokko im Jahr 2000 erlassen, und bislang sind die Verhandlungen noch nicht abgeschlossen. Spanien ist berechtigt, das mit Marokko vor Erlassen der Verhandlungsrichtlinien geschlossene bilaterale Rückübernahmeabkommen so lange anzuwenden, bis die EU ein ähnliches Abkommen mit Marokko geschlossen haben wird.

Spanien muss in jedem Fall die in Artikel 4 Absatz 4 der Rückführungsrichtlinie ([2]) 2008/115/EG aufgeführten Mindestgarantien gewähren und auch den Grundsatz der Nichtzurückweisung einhalten. Nach diesem Grundsatz ist die Rückführung von Personen in Staaten untersagt, in denen ihnen Verfolgung, Folter oder andere unmenschliche oder erniedrigende Behandlung drohen oder die Gefahr der Abschiebung, Ausweisung oder Rückführung in ein anderes Land unter Verstoß gegen diesen Grundsatz besteht.

Der Schengener Grenzkodex ([3]) berührt nicht die Rechte der Flüchtlinge und der Personen, die insbesondere hinsichtlich der Nichtzurückweisung um internationalen Schutz ersuchen. Dies bedeutet, dass die Mitgliedstaaten bei der Durchführung von Grenzkontrollen ihren Verpflichtungen aus dem Grundsatz der Nichtzurückweisung gerecht werden und gegebenenfalls Zugang zum Asylverfahren gemäß der Asylverfahrensrichtlinie ([4]) gewährleisten müssen.

Frontex ist an den spanischen Rückführungsmaßnahmen nach Marokko nicht beteiligt.

([1]) www.boe.es/buscar/doc.php?id=BOE-A-1992-8976
([2]) Richtlinie 2008/115/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 16. Dezember 2008 über gemeinsame Normen und Verfahren in den Mitgliedstaaten zur Rückführung illegal aufhältiger Drittstaatsangehöriger; ABl. L 348 vom 24.12.2008.
([3]) Verordnung (EG) Nr. 562/2006 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 15. März 2006 über einen Gemeinschaftskodex für das Überschreiten der Grenzen durch Personen (Schengener Grenzkodex); ABl. L 105 vom 13.4.2006.
([4]) Richtlinie 2005/85/EG des Rates vom 1. Dezember 2005 über Mindestnormen für Verfahren in den Mitgliedstaaten zur Zuerkennung und Aberkennung der Flüchtlingseigenschaft ABl. L 326 vom 13.12.2005.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013301/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE) and Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE)
(22 November 2013)

Subject: Hasty deportation of migrants to Morocco

NGOs and the media have condemned the hasty deportations of migrants undertaken in Melilla.

In 2012, Morocco ratified the 1992 Spanish-Moroccan agreement on the readmission of illegal foreign migrants ([1]), which offers legal protection to the officers of the Spanish Civil Guard who carry out the deportation. However, this bilateral agreement, providing that deportation is carried out without complying with the subsequent procedures in terms of seeking asylum, would breach the Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, signed by Spain and the EU, and the right to seek asylum.

Apparently, night-time deliveries of immigrants by the Civil Guard to the Moroccan security forces are conducted by sea or land in sector A 13, a location where there are no surveillance cameras.

What is the Commission's view regarding the bilateral agreement between Spain and Morocco on the readmission of illegal foreign migrants? Does the new European legislative framework allow for the existence of such bilateral agreements?

Given that Melilla forms part of the external borders of the EU, does Frontex cooperate in carrying out these deportations?

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

The Council adopted the negotiating directives for an EU-Morocco readmission agreement in 2000 and the negotiations are not yet finalised. Spain is entitled to apply its bilateral readmission agreement with Morocco, concluded prior to the issuance of those negotiating directives, until a similar agreement is concluded by the EU.

In any case, Spain must respect the minimum safeguards listed in Article 4(4) of the Return Directive ([2]) 2008/115/EC, including the principle of non-refoulement. According to that principle, a State may not remove, expel or return a person to a territory where there is a serious risk that that person would be subject to persecution, torture or other inhuman or degrading treatment or from which there is a risk of removal, expulsion or return to another country in contravention of that principle.

Also, the Schengen Borders Code ([3]) applies without prejudice to the rights of refugees and persons requesting international protection, in particular as regards non-refoulement. This means that when carrying out border control activities, Member States must respect their obligations under the principle of non-refoulement and, where appropriate, ensure an effective access to the asylum procedure in accordance with the Asylum Procedures Directive ([4]).

Frontex is not involved in forced return operations by Spain to Morocco.

([1]) http://www.boe.es/buscar/doc.php?id=BOE-A-1992-8976
([2]) Directive 2008/115/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 on common standards and procedures in Member States for returning illegally staying third-country nationals; OJ L 348, 24.12.2008.
([3]) Regulation (EC) No 562/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 March 2006 establishing a Community Code on the rules governing the movement of persons across borders (Schengen Borders Code); OJ L 105, 13.4.2006.
([4]) Council Directive 2005/85/EC of 1 December 2005 on minimum standards on procedures in Member States for granting and withdrawing refugee status; OJ L 326, 13.12.2005.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-013302/13
an die Kommission
Michael Theurer (ALDE)
(22. November 2013)

Betrifft: EU-Richtlinie 2006/7/EG

Am 15. Februar 2006 wurde die EU-Richtlinie über die Qualität der Badegewässer und deren Bewirtschaftung (2006/7/EG) verabschiedet.

Der Buchhorner See in Baden-Württemberg (Deutschland) weist eine gute Wasserqualität auf. Das liegt daran, dass man 2004 das Wasser abließ, abfischte und 10 000 m^3 ausbaggerte.

Bei der EU-Richtlinie, wird zur Darstellung der Wasserqualität ein Mittel aus den Werten gebildet, die in den letzten vier Badesaisons gemessen wurden. Das führt dazu, dass die nachweislich gute Wasserqualität des Buchhorner Sees schlechter dargestellt wird als sie derzeit ist.

1. Gibt es laut der EU-Richtlinie eine Möglichkeit zur Neubewertung, damit sich die gute Wasserqualität des Buchhorner Sees auch im Bewertungsschema der EU-Badegewässerverordnung so widerspiegelt?

2. In Artikel 4c wird die Möglichkeit eingeräumt, die Badegewässerqualität auf der Grundlage eines Datensatzes vorzunehmen, der lediglich die drei vorangegangenen Badesaisons umfasst. Bietet dieser Artikel eine Möglichkeit, eine Neubewertung vorzunehmen?

Antwort von Herrn Potočnik im Namen der Kommission
(20. Januar 2014)

Die Einstufung der Badegewässerqualität in der EU gemäß den Anforderungen der Badegewässerrichtlinie ([1]) wird von der Europäischen Umweltagentur auf der Grundlage der von den nationalen Regierungen übermittelten Informationen vorgenommen. Die Methodik ist in der Richtlinie festgelegt, und die Art und Weise, in der sie in der Praxis angewendet wird, ist den Mitgliedstaaten bekannt.

In Artikel 4 Absatz 2 Buchstabe b der Badegewässerrichtlinie ist geregelt, dass die Badegewässerqualität nach dem Ende jeder Badesaison bewertet wird. Die Bewertung erfolgt somit jährlich. Sofern keine sachlichen Fehler vorliegen, sollten die Ergebnisse früherer Bewertungen nicht geändert werden.

Was die Datensätze betrifft, so werden in der Badegewässerrichtlinie unterschiedliche Situationen berücksichtigt, und es gelten unterschiedliche Bestimmungen. Grundlage für die Bewertung der Badegewässerqualität sind in der Regel vier Datensätze (einer für die jeweils aktuelle Badesaison und drei für die vorherigen Saisons). Die Bewertung kann jedoch gemäß Artikel 4 Absatz 2 der Richtlinie auch auf der Grundlage der Datensätze für lediglich die letzten drei Saisons erfolgen. Allerdings kann diese Bestimmung nur dann angewendet werden, wenn der betreffende Mitgliedstaat die Kommission spätestens vor der vierten Bewertung darüber unterrichtet. Neubewertungen sind in Artikel 4 nicht vorgesehen.

Darüber hinaus kann die Badegewässerqualität gemäß Artikel 4 Absatz 4 Buchstabe b der Richtlinie unter bestimmten Bedingungen auf der Grundlage eines Datensatzes bewertet werden, der weniger als vier Badesaisons umfasst, wenn Änderungen eingetreten sind, die voraussichtlich die Einstufung des Badegewässers berühren. Falls eine solche Situation zu berücksichtigen ist, sollte sie von dem betreffenden Mitgliedstaat innerhalb des jeweiligen Berichterstattungszeitraums begründet werden.

([1]) Richtlinie 2006/7/EG, ABl. L 64 vom 4.3.2006, S. 37.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013302/13
to the Commission
Michael Theurer (ALDE)
(22 November 2013)

Subject: EU Directive 2006/7/EC

EU Directive 2006/7/EC concerning the management of bathing water quality was adopted on 15 February 2006.

The lake 'Buchhorner See' in Baden-Württemberg (Germany) has good water quality. This is due to the fact that, in 2004, the water was drained out, it was cleared of fish and 10 000 m^3 were dredged.

In the EU Directive, an average of the values measured in the last four bathing seasons is used to describe the water quality. This results in the demonstrably good water quality of the Buchhorner See being described as poorer than it currently is.

1. Does the EU Directive provide for the possibility of a re-assessment so that the good water quality of the Buchhorner See is also reflected in the assessment table of the EU bathing water quality report?

2. Article 4c allows for the option of assessing the bathing water quality on the basis of a data set encompassing the last three bathing seasons only. Does this Article offer an opportunity to carry out a re-assessment?

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

The classification of the quality of bathing waters at EU level, according to the requirements of the Bathing Water Directive (BWD), ([1]) is carried out by the European Environment Agency, based on the information provided by the national governments. The methodology is established by the directive, and the way in which it is applied in practice is known by Member States.

Article 4 (2) (b) of the BWD establishes that bathing water quality assessments shall be carried out after the end of each bathing season. The assessment cycle is therefore annual. Unless there were factual mistakes the results of past assessments should not be changed.

As regards data sets different situations are considered by the BWD, and different provisions apply. The assessment of bathing water quality is normally based on four datasets (one related to the relevant season) and three previous ones, but can be done on the basis of set of data from the preceding three seasons only, as provided by Article 4 (2) of the directive. This provision, however, can be applied only if the Member State concerned notifies the Commission at the latest before the fourth assessment. Furthermore, Art. 4 makes no mention of any reassessments.

In addition, under certain conditions, a bathing water quality assessment may be carried out on the basis of a dataset relating to fewer than four bathing seasons if any changes have occurred that are likely to affect the classification of the bathing water, as indicated by Article 4 (4) (b) of the directive. If such a situation is to be considered, it should be justified by the Member State concerned within the relevant reporting exercise.

([1]) Directive 2006/7/EC, OJ L 64/37, 4.3.2006.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-013303/13
aan de Commissie
Cornelis de Jong (GUE/NGL)
(22 november 2013)

Betreft: Uitspraak van de Raad van Europa over arrest van het Europese Hof van Justitie in de zaak Laval

Heeft de Commissie kennis genomen van de uitspraak van de Raad van Europa ([1]) waarin het arrest van het Europese Hof van Justitie in de zaak Laval (C-341/05) wordt verworpen als zijnde strijdig met verschillende bepalingen uit het Europees Sociaal Handvest?

Welke consequenties verbindt de Commissie aan deze uitspraak?

Erkent de Commissie nu dat sociale rechten niet ondergeschikt mogen zijn aan de regels van de interne markt?

Is de Commissie het met mij eens dat de Europese Unie nu zo snel mogelijk partij moet worden bij het Europees Sociaal Handvest, mede om te voorkomen dat anders de rechtspraak in belangrijke Europese instituties uit elkaar gaat lopen?

Zo ja, wanneer denkt de Commissie partij te worden van het Europees Sociaal Handvest?

Antwoord van de heer Andor namens de Commissie
(27 januari 2014)

Het besluit van het Europees Comité voor sociale rechten waarnaar het geachte Parlementslid verwijst, is nog steeds onderwerp van besprekingen die in het Comité van Ministers worden gevoerd in het kader van het toezicht waarin de collectieve klachtenprocedure van het Europees Sociaal Handvest voorziet. De Commissie verkiest daarom in dit stadium zich te onthouden van commentaar op de interpretatie van het comité en de mogelijke gevolgen daarvan voor het recht van de Unie, in het bijzonder voor het Handvest van de grondrechten, waarin een groot aantal sociale grondrechten en fundamentele sociale beginselen is neergelegd.

Wat de bescherming van de sociale grondrechten in de EU betreft, wordt in de jurisprudentie van het Hof van Justitie duidelijk erkend dat de vrijheid van vestiging of de vrijheid van dienstverrichting geen voorrang heeft boven de sociale rechten, zoals het recht om te staken, of omgekeerd. Het is evenwel denkbaar dat overeenkomstig het evenredigheidsbeginsel de uitoefening van de sociale grondrechten verzoend moet worden met de eisen en rechten die verband houden met de in het Verdrag verankerde economische vrijheden.

Er moet worden opgemerkt dat het Europees Sociaal Handvest (ESH) door alle lidstaten is geratificeerd (maar dat de lidstaten niet noodzakelijkerwijze gebonden zijn door alle bepalingen daarvan) en dat de bindende bepalingen van dat Handvest reeds in bepaalde uitspraken van het Hof van Justitie van de EU als algemene beginselen van Unierecht in aanmerking zijn genomen. Bovendien bestrijkt het EU-Handvest een aantal sociale grondrechten en fundamentele sociale beginselen, en worden bepaalde kwesties die onder het ESH vallen, ook reeds in verschillende EU-richtlijnen geregeld.

([1]) http://www.coe.int/T/DGHL/Monitoring/SocialCharter/NewsCOEPortal/CC85AdmissMerits_en.asp?utm_source=General+EN&utm_campaign=5c1ca1cbbb-Sweden_s_Laval_legislation_11_21_2013&utm_medium=email & utm_term=0_1e34eb7c1c-5c1ca1cbbb-45134453.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013303/13
to the Commission
Cornelis de Jong (GUE/NGL)
(22 November 2013)

Subject: The ruling of the Council of Europe on the judgment of the European Court of Justice in the Laval case

Has the Commission taken note of the ruling of the Council of Europe [1] which rejects the judgment of the European Court of Justice in the Laval case (C-341/05) as being contrary to various provisions of the European Social Charter?

What consequence does the Commission attach to this ruling?

Does the Commission now recognise that we cannot allow social rights to be subordinate to the rules of the internal market?

Does the Commission agree with me that the European Union now has to become party to the European Social Charter as soon as possible, in order to prevent key European institutions from administering justice differently, alongside many other reasons?

If so, when does to Commission intend to become party to the European Social Charter?

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

The decision of the European Committee of Social Rights to which the Honourable Member refers is still being subject of discussions in the Committee of Ministers under the supervisory process provided for in the European Social Charter's Collective Complaint procedure. The Commission therefore prefers to refrain at this stage from commenting on the Committee's interpretation and its possible impact on Union law, and in particular on the Charter of Fundamental Rights, which sets out a considerable number of fundamental social rights and principles.

As far as the protection of fundamental social rights in the EU is concerned, the case law of the Court of Justice clearly acknowledges that there is no primacy of the freedom of establishment or to provide services over social rights, such as the right to strike, nor the other way around. However, the exercise of fundamental social rights may have to be reconciled with the requirements and rights related to economic freedoms enshrined in the Treaty in accordance with the principle of proportionality.

It is important to note that all MS have ratified the European Social Charter (ESC) (but are not necessarily bound by all its provisions) and its binding provisions are already taken into consideration by the CJEU as general principles of EC law in certain judgments of its case law. Furthermore, the EU Charter comprises several fundamental social rights and principles while several EU Directives also already regulate issues covered by the ESC.

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(1) http://www.coe.int/T/DGHL/Monitoring/SocialCharter/NewsCOEPortal/CC85AdmissMerits_en.asp?utm_source=General+EN&utm_campaign=5c1ca1cbbb-Sweden_s_Laval_legislation_11_21_2013&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_1e34eb7c1c-5c1ca1cbbb-45134453

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-013304/13
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(22 noiembrie 2013)

Subiect: Reglementarea vânzării și cumpărării terenurilor agricole de către persoane fizice în România

Conform Tratatului de Aderare al României la Uniunea Europeană, vânzarea terenurilor agricole din România către persoanele fizice străine (cetățeni ai UE) făcea obiectul unei perioade de tranziție, care urmează a lua sfârșit la 31 decembrie 2013.

De la 1 ianuarie 2014 această exceptare trebuie eliminată, astfel încât fiecare cetățean UE (român sau nu) să aibă drepturi egale la achiziționarea de teren agricol în România. Guvernul României a aprobat recent un proiect de lege, care va intra în dezbatere parlamentară, conform căruia se elimină restricțiile la achiziționarea de terenuri agricole pentru persoanele fizice străine (cetățeni ai UE), introducându-se însă dreptul de preempțiune pentru arendași, vecini, tineri fermieri sub 40 de ani, așa cum sunt definiți ei de către legislația europeană. De asemenea, după cele trei categorii menționate anterior, se introduce un alt preemptor, respectiv statul român, prin Autoritatea pentru Administrarea și Reglementarea Pieței Funciare.

În contextul în care această lege ar putea fi aprobată, poate oferi Comisia informații cu privire la compatibilitatea acestei legi cu Tratatul de Aderare al României la UE? A fost consultată Comisia pe parcursul elaborării acestui proiect de lege?

Răspuns dat de dl Barnier în numele Comisiei
(31 ianuarie 2014)

După cum indică distinsul membru, după încheierea perioadei de tranziție pentru restricțiile privind achiziția de terenuri agricole, Tratatul privind funcționarea Uniunii Europene (TFUE) se aplică în totalitate și, prin urmare, legislația română trebuie să fie în conformitate cu dispozițiile privind libera circulație a capitalurilor și cu jurisprudența relevantă a Curții de Justiție a UE. Prin urmare, libera circulație a capitalurilor poate fi restricționată doar de normele naționale justificate prin motivele invocate la articolul 65 alineatul (1) din TFUE sau de cerințele imperative de interes general, cu condiția ca legislația națională în cauză să fie nediscriminatorie. În ambele cazuri, măsurile naționale de restricționare a mișcărilor de capital trebuie să fie adecvate pentru îndeplinirea obiectivului urmărit și nu trebuie să depășească ceea ce este necesar pentru atingerea acestuia.

Comisia dispune de informații cu privire la proiectul de lege dezbătut în prezent în Parlamentul României. Cu toate acestea, Comisia nu este în măsură să efectueze o evaluare formală a compatibilității unei măsuri naționale cu legislația UE, pe baza unui proiect de act legislativ. Statele membre sunt cele care au responsabilitatea de a garanta că măsurile naționale care conțin restricții justificate, cum ar fi cele menționate mai sus, sunt în conformitate cu legislația UE, inclusiv cu principiul nediscriminării și al proporționalității. Cu toate acestea, serviciile Comisiei au luat deja legătura cu autoritățile naționale și le-au oferit acestora asistență cu privire la problema specifică de interpretare a principiilor generale de drept al Uniunii, facilitând astfel conformitatea măsurilor viitoare cu legislația UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013304/13
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(22 November 2013)

Subject: Regulation of the sale and purchase of agricultural land by natural persons in Romania

According to the Treaty of Accession of Romania to the European Union, the sale of agricultural land in Romania to foreign natural persons (EU citizens) was covered by a transitional period which will end on 31 December 2013.

This exception must be eliminated from 1 January 2014 to ensure that every EU citizen (Romanian or not) has equal rights to purchase agricultural land in Romania. The Romanian Government has recently approved a bill to be debated by Parliament, which eliminates the restrictions on the acquisition of agricultural land by foreign natural persons (EU citizens), but introduces pre-emptive rights for tenants, neighbours and young farmers under the age of 40 years, as defined by European legislation. Similarly, after the three categories mentioned above, another pre-emptor is introduced, namely the Romanian State, through the Authority for Land Market Management and Regulation.

As this law could be approved, can the Commission provide information on the compatibility of this law with the Treaty of Accession of Romania to the EU? Has the Commission been consulted during the drafting of this bill?

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

As the Honourable Member indicates, once the transitional period on restrictions to the acquisition of agricultural real estate expires, the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) fully applies, thus Romanian legislation has to comply with the provisions on free movement of capital and the relevant jurisprudence of the Court of Justice of the EU. Accordingly, the free movement of capital may only be restricted by national rules justified by reasons referred to in Article 65(1) of the TFEU or by overriding requirements of the general interest, provided that the national legislation in question is non-discriminatory. In both cases, national measures restricting capital movements must be suitable for securing the objective which they pursue and must not go beyond what is necessary in order to attain it.

The Commission is aware of the Romanian bill currently debated in the national Parliament. However, the Commission is not in the position to conclude a formal assessment of the compatibility of a national measure with EC law based on a draft piece of legislation. It is for the Member States to ensure that national measures containing justified restrictions such as mentioned above are in line with EC law, including the principle of non-discrimination and proportionality. Nonetheless, the Commission services are already in touch with, and have offered their assistance to the national authorities on the specific issue of the interpretation of the general principles of EC law thus facilitating the compliance of the future measures with EC law.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-013305/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(25. November 2013)

Betrifft: Verschärfung des Waffenrechts

Die deutsche Zeitung „Die Welt" berichtete unlängst, dass die EU-Kommission das Waffenrecht in der EU verschärfen möchte. „Es gibt nach wie vor zu viele Opfer von Gewalttaten, die mit Schusswaffen verübt werden", wird die Behörde in einer Mitteilung über „Schusswaffen und die innere Sicherheit in der EU" zitiert. Cecilia Malmström, Mitglied der Kommission mit Zuständigkeit für Inneres, schreibt in der „Frankfurter Rundschau", dass europaweit jährlich rund 1 000 Personen durch Schusswaffen ums Leben kämen. Rund 80 Millionen Schusswaffen sollen für den zivilen Gebrauch europaweit im Umlauf sein.

1. Gibt es EU-weite Zahlen, die belegen, wie viele Täter registrierte Waffen benutzten?

2. Gibt es EU-weite Zahlen, die belegen, wie viele unregistrierte Waffen bei Gewaltverbrechen zum Einsatz kamen?

3. In wieweit ist das Waffenrecht in der EU überhaupt schon länderübergreifend geregelt?

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

Die Kommission dankt dem Herrn Abgeordneten für seine Fragen.

1. Wir verfügen noch nicht über entsprechende Statistiken.

2. Wir verfügen noch nicht über entsprechende Statistiken. Wie in der Mitteilung „Schusswaffen und die innere Sicherheit der EU" ([1]) angekündigt, haben wir zu den Sicherheitsproblemen aufgrund der missbräuchlichen Verwendung rechtmäßig erlangter Schusswaffen sowie zum Vorhandensein illegaler Schusswaffen, die für Straftaten verwendet werden könnten, Studien in Auftrag gegeben.

3. Für Schusswaffen gelten insbesondere folgende EU-Rechtsvorschriften:

— Richtlinie 2008/51/EG ([2]) zur Änderung der Richtlinie 91/477/EWG des Rates, die die Vorschriften für die Kontrolle des Erwerbs und des Besitzes von Waffen und im Hinblick auf die Verbringung von Waffen innerhalb der Europäischen Union festlegt;

— Richtlinie 2009/43/EG ([3]) des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates, die die Vorschriften und Verfahren für die innergemeinschaftliche Verbringung von Verteidigungsgütern festlegt. Ihr zufolge ist für die Durchfuhr von Verteidigungsgütern durch andere Mitgliedstaaten oder den Zugang zum Hoheitsgebiet des Mitgliedstaats, in dem der Empfänger von Verteidigungsgütern ansässig ist, nur eine einzige Genehmigung erforderlich.

— Die Verordnung Nr. 258/2012 ([4]) des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates zielt darauf ab, unerlaubten Waffenhandel durch verbesserte Rückverfolgung und Kontrolle der Ausfuhr von Schusswaffen für den zivilen Gebrauch aus der Europäischen Union sowie durch Maßnahmen für deren Ein- und Durchfuhr zu bekämpfen. Sie stützt sich auf den Grundsatz, dass Schusswaffen und dazugehörige Teile nicht von einem Staat in einen anderen verbracht werden sollten, ohne dass alle beteiligten Staaten davon Kenntnis haben und der Verbringung zustimmen. Die Verordnung gilt nicht für Schusswaffen für militärische Zwecke. Sie regelt lediglich den Handel mit Schusswaffen und die Verbringung aus Ländern oder in Länder außerhalb der Europäischen Union.

([1]) KOM(2013)716 endg.
([2]) ABl. L 179 vom 8.7.2008. http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32008L0051:de:NOT
([3]) ABl. L 146 vom 10.6.2009. http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32009L0043:DE:NOT
([4]) ABl. L 94 vom 30.3.2012. http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32008L0051:de:NOT

(English version)

Question for written answer P-013305/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(25 November 2013)

Subject: Tightening of firearms legislation

The German newspaper '*Die Welt*' reported recently that the Commission wanted to tighten firearms legislation in the EU. It cites the Commission in a communication on 'Firearms and internal security in the EU': 'There are still too many victims of violent crimes committed with firearms'. Cecilia Malmström, Member of the Commission responsible for Home Affairs, writes in the '*Frankfurter Rundschau*' that every year some 1 000 persons are killed by firearms in Europe. There are apparently some 80 million firearms for civilian use in circulation.

1. Are there any EU-wide figures showing how many offenders used registered firearms?

2. Are there any EU-wide figures showing how many unregistered firearms were used in violent crimes?

3. To what extent are firearms in the EU regulated by cross-border legislation?

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

The Commission thanks the Honourable Member for his questions.

1. We do not have such statistics yet.

2. We do not have such statistics yet. As announced in the communication 'Firearms and Internal security in the EU' ([1]), we have launched studies dealing with the problems caused by misuse of legally obtained firearms in terms of security and the presence of illegal firearms that could be used for criminal activities.

3. Firearms are covered notably by the following EU legislation:

— Directive 2008/51/EC ([2]), amending Council Directive 91/477/EEC, which sets out rules on the control of the acquisition and possession of weapons and as regards intra-European Union transfers of weapons;

— Directive 2009/43/EC ([3]) of the European Parliament and the Council which sets the rules and procedures applicable to intra-community transfers of defence-related products. It provides that that only one authorisation shall be required for passage through Member States or for entry into the territory of the Member State where the recipient of defence-related products is located;

— Regulation 258/2012 ([4]) of the European Parliament and the Council aims to combat illicit arms trafficking through improved tracing and control of exports of civilian firearms from the European Union, including measures for imports and transit. This regulation is based on the principle that firearms and related items should not be transferred between states without the knowledge and consent of all states involved. It does not apply to firearms intended for military purposes. It only addresses trade with and transfers from or to countries outside the European Union.

([1]) COM(2013) 716 final.
([2]) OJ L 179, 8.7.2008, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32008L0051:en:NOT
([3]) OJ L 146, 10.6.2009, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32009L0043:EN:NOT
([4]) OJ L 94, 30.3.2012, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32012R0258:EN:NOT

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013311/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(25 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Reparto de publicidad institucional por parte del Gobierno español

Este año el Gobierno de España ha llevado a cabo campañas de publicidad institucional por valor de 33 millones de euros para promocionar hábitos saludables, derechos sociales y apoyo a las nuevas tecnológicas.

Estas campañas han estado rodeadas de polémica por los dudosos criterios seguidos para cada reparto. Algunas voces avisan de que algunos periódicos con baja circulación pero mayor proximidad política con el Gobierno español son los principales receptores de las mismas ([1]). Además, la Asociación Española de Editoriales de Publicaciones Periódicas (AEEPP) se ha quejado oficialmente al Gobierno por lo que considera «un mal uso de la publicidad institucional por parte de algunos ministerios y organismos públicos» ([2]).

La Directiva 2004/18/CE sobre contratación pública regula ciertos aspectos relacionados con la adjudicación de contratos de publicidad institucional.

A la luz de lo anterior:

¿Cree la Comisión que el Gobierno del Estado español cumple con los requisitos de la Directiva 2004/18/CE en el reparto de su publicidad institucional?

¿Investigará la Comisión el hecho de que periódicos de baja difusión pero políticamente próximos al Gobierno español sean algunos de los mayores receptores de su publicidad internacional? ¿Cree la Comisión que esta práctica puede perjudicar la libre competencia entre periódicos?

¿Cree la Comisión que el Gobierno español debería considerar también como posibles adjudicatarios a aquellos periódicos regionales con un alto grado de difusión?

Respuesta del Sr. Barnier en nombre de la Comisión
(7 de febrero de 2014)

La Comisión no tenía aún conocimiento de la situación a que se refiere Su Señoría. Por tanto, no está en condiciones de proporcionar un análisis jurídico formal.

De manera general, en virtud de la legislación de la UE sobre contratación pública, los poderes adjudicadores seguirán teniendo libertad para definir el ámbito de los contratos de servicio público que decidan someter a concurso. Por consiguiente, no corresponde a la Comisión evaluar la adecuación del alcance del contrato público de servicios de campañas de publicidad institucional a que hace referencia su Señoría.

En principio, todos los requisitos de la Directiva 2004/18/CE sobre contratación pública se aplican a los servicios de publicidad enumerados en su anexo II A. Por lo tanto, los poderes adjudicadores están obligados a respetar, entre otras cosas, los requisitos específicos de la Directiva en relación con la publicación de anuncios y los criterios de adjudicación. La limitada información de que se dispone en esta fase no parece indicar que la adjudicación del contrato incumpla la legislación de la UE sobre contratación pública.

([1]) http://www.elmundo.es/elmundo/2013/09/05/espana/1378381267.html
([2]) http://www.elmundo.es/elmundo/2013/03/16/comunicacion/1363436273.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013311/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(25 November 2013)

Subject: Distribution of institutional advertising by the Spanish Government

This year the Spanish Government has carried out institutional publicity campaigns worth EUR 33 million in order to promote healthy habits, social rights and support for new technology.

These campaigns have been controversial due to the questionable criteria for each distribution. Some warn that some newspapers with low circulation but which are more closely aligned with the Spanish Government in political terms are the main recipients ([1]). In addition, the Spanish Association of Publishers of Periodical Publications (AEEPP) has officially complained to the Government for what it considers a misuse of institutional advertising on the part of some ministries and public bodies ([2]).

Directive 2004/18/EC on public procurement regulates certain aspects relating to the award of institutional advertising contracts.

Does the Commission believe that the Spanish Government is complying with the requirements of Directive 2004/18/EC in the distribution of its institutional advertising?

Will the Commission investigate as to whether newspapers with low circulation but closely aligned with the Spanish Government in political terms are some of the largest recipients of its international publicity campaigns? Does the Commission believe that this practice may adversely affect competition between newspapers?

Does the Commission believe that the Spanish Government should also consider regional newspapers with high circulation as potential tenderers?

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

The situation referred to by the Honourable Member had not yet been brought to the attention of the Commission before. The Commission is therefore not in a position to provide a formal legal analysis.

In a general manner, under EU public procurement law, contracting authorities remain free to define the scope of the public services contracts that they decide to tender out. Therefore, it is not for the Commission to assess the appropriateness of the scope of the public services contract for institutional advertising campaigns to which the Honourable Member refers.

In principle, all the requirements of Directive 2004/18/EC on Public Procurement apply to the advertising services listed in Annex II A of the directive. Therefore, contracting authorities are bound to respect, among others, the specific requirements of the directive concerning the publication of notices and the award criteria. The limited information available at this stage does not seem to indicate that the award of the contract would be in breach of EU public procurement rules.

([1]) http://www.elmundo.es/elmundo/2013/09/05/espana/1378381267.html
([2]) http://www.elmundo.es/elmundo/2013/03/16/comunicacion/1363436273.html

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