Jurnalul Oficial
al Uniunii Europene

C 179

Ediția
în limba română

Comunicări şi informări

Anul 57

12 iunie 2014

Cuprins

IV *Informări*

INFORMĂRI PROVENIND DE LA INSTITUȚIILE, ORGANELE ȘI ORGANISMELE UNIUNII EUROPENE

Parlamentul European

ÎNTREBĂRI SCRISE CU SOLICITARE DE RĂSPUNS

2014/C 179/01 Întrebări scrise adresate de deputații în Parlamentul European și răspunsurile oferite de instituțiile Uniunii Europene 1

(A se vedea Nota în atenția cititorilor)

RO

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.

Toate întrebările și răspunsurile pot fi accesate pe site-ul de internet al Parlamentului European (Europarl) la rubrica „Întrebări parlamentare”:

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)

INFORMĂRI PROVENIND DE LA INSTITUȚIILE, ORGANELE ȘI ORGANISMELE UNIUNII EUROPENE

PARLAMENTUL EUROPEAN

ÎNTREBĂRI SCRISE CU SOLICITARE DE RĂSPUNS

Întrebări scrise adresate de deputații în Parlamentul European și răspunsurile oferite de instituțiile Uniunii Europene

(2014/C 179/01)

Cuprins Pagina

E-009652/13 by Fiona Hall to the Commission
Subject: Research funding for poverty-related and neglected diseases
English version 25

P-009653/13 by Esther Herranz García to the Commission
Subject: Measures to counter China's threat to impose restrictions on European wines
Versión española 26
English version 27

P-009654/13 by Francesco Enrico Speroni to the Commission
Subject: Malta accused of violating international law
Versione italiana 28
English version 29

E-009655/13 by Antigoni Papadopoulou to the Council
Subject: Flow of Russian deposits from Cyprus to other Member States or territories of other EU countries
Ελληνική έκδοση 30
English version 32

E-009656/13 by Antigoni Papadopoulou to the Commission
Subject: Flow of Russian deposits from Cyprus to other Member States or territories of other EU countries
Ελληνική έκδοση 33
English version 34

E-009657/13 by Antigoni Papadopoulou to the Council
Subject: Danger of non-European — in particular Russian — interests controlling the Bank of Cyprus
Ελληνική έκδοση 35
English version 36

E-009658/13 by Antigoni Papadopoulou to the Commission
Subject: Danger of non-European — in particular Russian — interests controlling the Bank of Cyprus
Ελληνική έκδοση ... 37
English version ... 38

E-009659/13 by Antigoni Papadopoulou to the Commission
Subject: Increase in poverty in the EU
Ελληνική έκδοση ... 39
English version ... 41

E-009660/13 by Antigoni Papadopoulou to the Commission
Subject: Forest fires in Mediterranean EU Member States
Ελληνική έκδοση ... 42
English version ... 43

E-009661/13 by Antigoni Papadopoulou to the Commission
Subject: Incorrect reference by the Commission, in the Greek text of its answer to a written question, to the 'Greek Cypriot side' instead of to the official Republic of Cyprus
Ελληνική έκδοση ... 44
English version ... 45

E-009662/13 by Antigoni Papadopoulou to the Commission
Subject: Flights from the UK to the illegal airport of ERCAN, in occupied Cyprus
Ελληνική έκδοση ... 46
English version ... 47

P-009663/13 by Pablo Zalba Bidegain to the Commission
Subject: Parents' and children's rights
Versión española ... 48
English version ... 49

P-009664/13 by Paul Rübig to the Commission
Subject: Review of the directive on the restriction of the use of certain hazardous substances (RoHS Directive)
Deutsche Fassung ... 50
English version ... 52

P-009665/13 by Hans-Peter Martin to the Commission
Subject: Number and cost of translators
Deutsche Fassung ... 53
English version ... 54

E-009666/13 by Christofer Fjellner to the Commission
Subject: Gambling infringements
Svensk version ... 55
English version ... 56

E-009667/13 by Mojca Kleva Kekuš to the Commission
Subject: Women's rights in the Eastern Partnership countries
Slovenska različica ... 57
English version ... 58

E-009668/13 by Antolín Sánchez Presedo to the Commission
Subject: Legal action against the companies whose actions gave rise to the financial crisis
Versión española ... 59
English version ... 60

E-009669/13 by Hans-Peter Martin to the Council
Subject: Number and cost of translators at the Council
Deutsche Fassung ... 61
English version ... 62

E-009670/13 by Hans-Peter Martin to the Commission
Subject: Number and cost of Commission expert groups
Deutsche Fassung ... 63
English version ... 64

E-009672/13 by Marc Tarabella to the Commission
Subject: Buildings
Version française ... 65
English version ... 66

E-009673/13 by Marc Tarabella to the Commission
Subject: Impact of the Commission's air traffic management plan on employment
Version française ... 67
English version ... 68

E-009674/13 by Marc Tarabella to the Commission
Subject: Waste processing
Version française ... 69
English version ... 70

E-009675/13 by Marc Tarabella to the Commission
Subject: Authorisation of eleven GMOs
Version française ... 71
English version ... 72

E-009676/13 by Marc Tarabella to the Commission
Subject: Premises searched at Orange
Version française ... 73
English version ... 74

E-009678/13 by Marc Tarabella to the Commission
Subject: Ridiculous projections
Version française ... 75
English version ... 77

E-009679/13 by Marc Tarabella to the Commission
Subject: EU cost files
Version française ... 78
English version ... 79

E-009680/13 by Marc Tarabella to the Commission
Subject: The electric car market — has it gone flat?
Version française ... 80
English version ... 81

E-009682/13 by Marc Tarabella to the Commission
Subject: Dispute with Latin America
Version française ... 82
English version ... 83

E-009684/13 by Andrea Zanoni to the Commission
Subject: Bird flu in north-eastern Italy, propagation risk at live bird markets and possible infringement of EC law
Versione italiana ... 84
English version ... 85

E-009685/13 by Mario Borghezio to the Commission
Subject: Rapid intervention by Frontex in Italy
Versione italiana ... 86
English version ... 87

E-009686/13 by Mario Borghezio to the Commission
Subject: Turkey's refusal to award study grants to demonstrators
Versione italiana ... 88
English version ... 89

E-009687/13 by Mario Borghezio to the Commission
Subject: Albania — deserving of official EU candidate status?
Versione italiana ... 90
English version ... 91

E-009688/13 by Mario Borghezio to the Commission
Subject: Danger posed by fundamentalists
Versione italiana 92
English version 93

E-009689/13 by Mario Borghezio to the Commission
Subject: Butterfly mortality in Europe
Versione italiana 94
English version 95

E-009690/13 by Mario Borghezio to the Commission
Subject: Establishment and powers of the European Public Prosecutor's Office
Versione italiana 96
English version 97

E-009691/13 by Mario Borghezio to the Commission
Subject: Cost of the European Public Prosecutor's Office
Versione italiana 98
English version 99

E-009692/13 by Mario Borghezio to the Commission
Subject: Exports to Europe of South African citrus fruit contaminated with the plant disease Citrus Black Spot
Versione italiana 100
English version 101

E-009693/13 by Mario Borghezio to the Commission
Subject: Cultivation and trafficking of drugs in Albania and Europe
Versione italiana 102
English version 103

P-009694/13 by Bart Staes to the Commission
Subject: State aid to export credit agencies
Nederlandse versie 104
English version 105

P-009695/13 by Claudio Morganti to the Commission
Subject: Purchase of trains — Region of Tuscany
Versione italiana 106
English version 107

E-009696/13 by Dolores García-Hierro Caraballo to the Commission
Subject: Oil prospecting in the Canary Islands
Versión española 108
English version 109

E-009697/13 by Antigoni Papadopoulou to the Commission
Subject: Questions E-005821/2010 and E-005858/2010
Ελληνική έκδοση 110
English version 111

P-009698/13 by George Lyon to the Commission
Subject: Update: Enforcement of Directive 2008/120/EC on the protection of pigs — ban on individual sow stalls
English version 112

P-009699/13 by Marc Tarabella to the Commission
Subject: PRISM and EU citizens
Version française 113
English version 114

E-009700/13 by Nicole Sinclaire to the Commission
Subject: Ricoh Arena
English version 115

E-009701/13 by Monika Panayotova to the Commission
Subject: Resources allocated to Bulgaria for the new programming period 2014-2020 under the EU's structural and investment funds
българска версия ... 116
English version ... 118

E-009702/13 by Marc Tarabella to the Commission
Subject: Pension reform in France
Version française ... 120
English version ... 121

E-009703/13 by Marc Tarabella to the Council
Subject: Croatia — European arrest warrant
Version française ... 122
English version ... 123

E-009704/13 by Marc Tarabella to the Commission
Subject: Polish publishing industry
Version française ... 124
English version ... 125

E-009705/13 by Marc Tarabella to the Commission
Subject: Collateral (finance)
Version française ... 126
English version ... 127

E-009706/13 by Marc Tarabella to the Commission
Subject: Asset encumbrance
Version française ... 128
English version ... 129

E-009707/13 by Marc Tarabella to the Commission
Subject: 'Anti-Roma' wall in Košice, Slovakia
Version française ... 130
English version ... 131

E-009708/13 by Marc Tarabella to the Commission
Subject: Gibraltar — Spain against the United Kingdom
Version française ... 132
English version ... 133

P-009709/13 by Lara Comi to the Commission
Subject: Immigration crisis — conflict in Syria
Versione italiana ... 134
English version ... 135

P-009710/13 by Elena Băsescu to the Commission
Subject: Impact of the revision of the directive on the manufacture, presentation and sale of tobacco and related products
Versiunea în limba română ... 136
English version ... 137

P-009711/13 by Mikael Gustafsson to the Commission
Subject: The Tigris valley
Svensk version ... 138
English version ... 139

E-009712/13 by Carmen Romero López to the Commission
Subject: VAT exemption
Versión española ... 140
English version ... 141

E-009713/13 by Ingeborg Gräßle to the Commission
Subject: Additional information in connection with OLAF's annual report for 2012
Deutsche Fassung ... 142
English version ... 144

E-009714/13 by Ingeborg Gräßle to the Commission
Subject: Follow-up: Answer relating to removal expenses; Question E-006329/2013
Deutsche Fassung ... 146
English version ... 147

E-009715/13 by Antigoni Papadopoulou to the Commission
Subject: Exploitation of Cypriot hydrocarbon resources
Ελληνική έκδοση ... 148
English version ... 149

E-009716/13 by Antigoni Papadopoulou to the Commission
Subject: The Cyprus problem
Ελληνική έκδοση ... 150
English version ... 151

E-009717/13 by Antigoni Papadopoulou to the Commission
Subject: Tax increases
Ελληνική έκδοση ... 152
English version ... 153

E-009718/13 by Marc Tarabella to the Commission
Subject: Franco-German dispute over car air-conditioning coolant
Version française ... 154
English version ... 155

E-009719/13 by Csaba Sándor Tabajdi, Kinga Göncz, Zita Gurmai and Edit Herczog to the Commission
Subject: Reasons for the suspension of Cohesion Fund payments to Hungary
Magyar változat ... 156
English version ... 158

E-009720/13 by Peter van Dalen to the Commission
Subject: Air quality and harmful fumes on aircraft
Nederlandse versie ... 160
English version ... 161

E-009721/13 by Marta Andreasen to the Commission
Subject: Presentation of budget information in spreadsheet format
English version ... 162

E-009722/13 by Marta Andreasen to the Commission
Subject: Commission's financial transparency system
English version ... 163

E-009723/13 by Franz Obermayr to the Commission
Subject: Follow-up question in connection with Question E-005136/2013
Deutsche Fassung ... 164
English version ... 165

E-009724/13 by Franz Obermayr to the Commission
Subject: Follow-up question in connection with Question E-002690/2013
Deutsche Fassung ... 166
English version ... 167

E-009725/13 by Theodoros Skylakakis to the Commission
Subject: The financing by the NSRF of employment programmes in municipalities in Greece
Ελληνική έκδοση ... 168
English version ... 169

E-009726/13 by Ryszard Antoni Legutko to the Commission
Subject: Discrimination against Poles on EU labour market
Wersja polska ... 170
English version ... 172

E-009848/13 by Adam Bielan to the Commission
Subject: Policy on immigrants in certain EU countries
Wersja polska ... 170
English version ... 172

E-009728/13 by Adam Bielan to the Commission
Subject: Tightening up of Russian controls on food products imported from Poland
Wersja polska ... 174
English version ... 175

E-009729/13 by Adam Bielan to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — Reports of a secret deal between Saudi Arabia and Russia
Wersja polska ... 176
English version ... 177

E-009730/13 by Marc Tarabella to the Commission
Subject: Recovery of agricultural aid by the Commission
Version française ... 178
English version ... 179

E-009731/13 by Marc Tarabella to the Commission
Subject: Fishing quotas for 2013
Version française ... 180
English version ... 181

E-009733/13 by Marc Tarabella to the Commission
Subject: Subsidies paid to Chinese solar manufacturers
Version française ... 182
English version ... 183

E-009734/13 by Marc Tarabella to the Commission
Subject: The European Union endorses dumping by China
Version française ... 184
English version ... 185

E-009735/13 by Marc Tarabella to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — Madagascar: unfreezing of EU aid
Version française ... 186
English version ... 188

E-009736/13 by Marc Tarabella to the Commission
Subject: Madagascar: unfreezing of EU aid
Version française ... 186
English version ... 188

E-009737/13 by Marc Tarabella to the Commission
Subject: Disastrous coal-only energy policy
Version française ... 190
English version ... 191

E-009740/13 by Marc Tarabella to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — Reward for mounting a coup d'état
Version française ... 192
English version ... 193

E-009741/13 by Marc Tarabella to the Commission
Subject: Daimler: air-conditioning coolant
Version française ... 194
English version ... 195

E-009742/13 by Marc Tarabella to the Commission
Subject: 2014 — International Year of Family Farming
Version française ... 196
English version ... 197

E-009743/13 by Marc Tarabella to the Commission
Subject: Costa Concordia in Venice
Version française ... 198
English version ... 199

E-009744/13 by Marc Tarabella to the Commission
Subject: Merger between American Airlines and US Airways
Version française ... 200
English version ... 201

E-009746/13 by Auke Zijlstra to the Commission
Subject: Protection of children's rights and freedoms
Nederlandse versie ... 202
English version ... 203

E-009747/13 by Glenis Willmott to the Commission
Subject: European School Milk Scheme
English version ... 204

E-009748/13 by Raül Romeva i Rueda to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — Extradition trial of political refugee Aleksandr Pavlov
Versión española ... 205
English version ... 206

E-009749/13 by Mojca Kleva Kekuš to the Commission
Subject: Women in top media jobs
Slovenska različica ... 207
English version ... 208

E-009750/13 by Marc Tarabella to the Commission
Subject: Media freedom in danger
Version française ... 209
English version ... 211

E-011758/13 by Monika Flašíková Beňová to the Commission
Subject: UK Government attacks on media freedom
Slovenské znenie ... 210
English version ... 211

E-009751/13 by Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández to the Commission
Subject: Situation in Syria and world war
Versión española ... 212
English version ... 215

E-009752/13 by Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández to the Commission
Subject: Situation in Syria — Commission's position
Versión española ... 212
English version ... 215

E-009760/13 by Hans-Peter Martin to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — Conflict in Syria and EU involvement
Deutsche Fassung ... 214
English version ... 215

P-009753/13 by Dubravka Šuica to the Commission
Subject: Youth unemployment
Hrvatska verzija ... 217
English version ... 218

E-009754/13 by Hans-Peter Martin to the Council
Subject: Document translations at the Council
Deutsche Fassung ... 219
English version ... 220

E-009755/13 by Hans-Peter Martin to the Commission
Subject: Document translations at the Commission
Deutsche Fassung ... 221
English version ... 222

E-009756/13 by Hans-Peter Martin to the Council
Subject: External translations
Deutsche Fassung ... 223
English version ... 224

E-009757/13 by Hans-Peter Martin to the Commission
Subject: External translations
Deutsche Fassung ... 225
English version ... 226

E-009758/13 by Hans-Peter Martin to the Council
Subject: Days lost to strikes by Council officials
Deutsche Fassung ... 227
English version ... 228

E-009759/13 by Hans-Peter Martin to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — Days lost to strikes by European External Action Service (EEAS) officials
Deutsche Fassung ... 229
English version ... 230

E-009761/13 by Hans-Peter Martin to the Commission
Subject: Impact of India's food programme
Deutsche Fassung ... 231
English version ... 232

E-009762/13 by Hans-Peter Martin to the Commission
Subject: Fair distribution of food
Deutsche Fassung ... 233
English version ... 235

E-009763/13 by Hans-Peter Martin to the Commission
Subject: Risk of forest fires in the EU
Deutsche Fassung ... 236
English version ... 237

E-009764/13 by Georgios Papanikolaou to the Commission
Subject: Tax havens
Ελληνική έκδοση ... 238
English version ... 239

E-009765/13 by Antigoni Papadopoulou to the Commission
Subject: Increase in unemployment in Cyprus
Ελληνική έκδοση ... 240
English version ... 241

E-009766/13 by Gaston Franco to the Commission
Subject: Explosion risk on the premises of dry-cleaning firms
Version française ... 242
English version ... 243

E-009767/13 by Marc Tarabella to the Commission
Subject: Weaknesses of development banks
Version française ... 245
English version ... 247

E-009768/13 by Marc Tarabella to the Commission
Subject: Making WiFi more readily available
Version française ... 249
English version ... 250

E-009770/13 by Judith Sargentini to the Commission
Subject: eCall chip in vehicles
Nederlandse versie ... 251
English version ... 252

E-009771/13 by Philippe De Backer to the Commission
Subject: Recommendations concerning Belgium's national reform programme 2013 — broadband
Nederlandse versie ... 253
English version ... 254

P-009772/13 by Gaston Franco to the Commission
Subject: Environment and sustainable development education in the EU
Version française ... 255
English version ... 256

E-009773/13 by Dubravka Šuica to the Commission
Subject: Breaches of EU citizens' privacy
Hrvatska verzija ... 257
English version ... 258

E-009774/13 by Syed Kamall to the Commission
Subject: Alleged ban on Iranian state TV channels
English version ... 259

E-009775/13 by Fiorello Provera and Charles Tannock to the Commission
Subject: EU-wide problem of cyber bullying
Versione italiana ... 260
English version ... 262

E-009776/13 by Fiorello Provera and Charles Tannock to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — Drug trafficking in Algeria
Versione italiana ... 263
English version ... 265

E-009777/13 by Fiorello Provera and Charles Tannock to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — Deliberate targeting of Egyptian Coptic Christians
Versione italiana ... 266
English version ... 267

E-009778/13 by Fiorello Provera and Charles Tannock to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — Assassination of Tunisian secular politician
Versione italiana ... 268
English version ... 269

E-009779/13 by Mario Borghezio to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — Protection of archaeological heritage plundered in Egypt
Versione italiana ... 270
English version ... 271

E-009780/13 by Mojca Kleva Kekuš to the Commission
Subject: E-health services
Slovenska različica ... 272
English version ... 273

P-009781/13 by Oleg Valjalo to the Commission
Subject: Commission dispute with Croatia regarding the European Arrest Warrant
Hrvatska verzija ... 274
English version ... 275

E-009782/13 by Antigoni Papadopoulou to the Commission
Subject: Child abuse and sexual harassment in Turkey
Ελληνική έκδοση ... 276
English version ... 277

E-009783/13 by Antigoni Papadopoulou to the Commission
Subject: Turkey's democratisation package
Ελληνική έκδοση ... 278
English version ... 280

E-011262/13 by Laurence J.A.J. Stassen to the Commission
Subject: 'Democratization and Human Rights Package' from the Turkish Government
Nederlandse versie ... 279
English version ... 280

E-009784/13 by Brian Simpson to the Commission
Subject: Accompanying measures for sugar protocol countries
English version ... 282

E-009785/13 by Dubravka Šuica to the Commission
Subject: Frequency interference problem on the Croatian coast
Hrvatska verzija ... 283
English version ... 284

E-009786/13 by Syed Kamall to the Commission
Subject: South Tyrol transport pass
English version ... 285

E-009787/13 by Marc Tarabella to the Commission
Subject: Are Bayer and Syngenta determined to kill bees?
Version française ... 286
English version ... 287

E-009788/13 by Patrick Le Hyaric to the Commission
Subject: Humanitarian crisis in Syria
Version française ... 288
English version ... 289

E-009789/13 by Oreste Rossi to the Commission
Subject: Artificial sweeteners — new risks to human health compared to natural sugar
Versione italiana ... 290
English version ... 291

E-009790/13 by Oreste Rossi to the Commission
Subject: The thyroid gland: benefits of iodine-rich food and effects of environmental pollution
Versione italiana ... 292
English version ... 293

E-009791/13 by Oreste Rossi to the Commission
Subject: Recovery of assets illegally hidden away by the former regimes in Egypt, Libya and Tunisia
Versione italiana ... 294
English version ... 296

E-009792/13 by Oreste Rossi to the Commission
Subject: Toxic substances in Chinese-made clothing — what are the risks and what legal protection is available?
Versione italiana ... 298
English version ... 300

E-009793/13 by Mara Bizzotto to the Commission
Subject: Protection of legal status of the Free Port of Trieste
Versione italiana ... 302
English version ... 303

E-009794/13 by Franz Obermayr to the Commission
Subject: Missing section of motorway between Koper (Slovenia) and the Croatian border
Deutsche Fassung ... 304
English version ... 305

E-009795/13 by Fiona Hall to the Commission
Subject: Infringement procedures 2003-2013
English version ... 306

E-009796/13 by Fiona Hall to the Commission
Subject: Addax Bioenergy plantation in Sierra Leone
English version ... 307

E-009797/13 by Adam Bielan to the Commission
Subject: Norwegian licences for the extraction of hydrocarbons
Wersja polska ... 308
English version ... 309

E-009798/13 by Adam Bielan to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — Restrictions announced on supplies of Russian oil to Belarus
Wersja polska ... 310
English version ... 311

E-009799/13 by Adam Bielan to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — Widespread persecution of Christians in Egypt
Wersja polska ... 312
English version ... 313

E-009800/13 by Adam Bielan to the Commission
Subject: Consequences of the 'trade war' between Russia and Ukraine
Wersja polska ... 314
English version ... 315

P-009801/13 by Francesco Enrico Speroni to the Commission
Subject: Material for election missions not produced locally or in the Union
Versione italiana ... 316
English version ... 317

P-009802/13 by Anna Záborská to the Commission
Subject: Reconciliation of work, private and family life — definitions of 'family life' and 'private life'
Slovenské znenie ... 318
English version ... 319

E-009803/13 by Anna Záborská to the Council
Subject: Reconciliation of work, private and family life — definitions of 'family life' and 'private life'
Slovenské znenie ... 320
English version ... 321

E-009804/13 by Jutta Steinruck to the Commission
Subject: Difficulty of organising youth exchanges between Germany and France
Deutsche Fassung ... 322
English version ... 323

E-009805/13 by Ramon Tremosa i Balcells, Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, Raül Romeva i Rueda and Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández to the Commission
Subject: Twitter account of language activist Jaume Flor shut down — possible violation of freedom of expression for ideological and political reasons
Versión española ... 324
English version ... 325

E-009806/13 by Lara Comi to the Commission
Subject: Competition in the sale of liquids at airports
Versione italiana ... 326
English version ... 327

E-009807/13 by Franz Obermayr to the Commission
Subject: Persecution of the Coptic community in Egypt
Deutsche Fassung ... 328
English version ... 329

E-009808/13 by Franz Obermayr to the Commission
Subject: Prism/surveillance programmes and EU legislation
Deutsche Fassung ... 330
English version ... 331

E-009810/13 by Franz Obermayr to the Commission
Subject: Processed animal proteins and risks to human health and food safety
Deutsche Fassung ... 332
English version ... 334

E-009811/13 by Charles Tannock to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR- Criminal charges against Andrew Hall in Thailand
English version ... 335

E-009812/13 by Philippe Boulland to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — Organisation by the European Union of a peace conference
Version française ... 336
English version ... 337

E-009813/13 by Philippe Boulland to the Commission
Subject: Use of R1234yf coolant in motor vehicle air-conditioning systems
Version française ... 338
English version ... 339

E-009814/13 by Filip Kaczmarek to the Commission
Subject: Extension of Russian broad-gauge railway
Wersja polska ... 340
English version ... 341

E-009815/13 by Filip Kaczmarek to the Commission
Subject: Compulsory psychiatric treatment in Belarus
Wersja polska ... 342
English version ... 344

E-009831/13 by Marek Henryk Migalski to the Commission
Subject: Sentencing of Belarusian psychiatrist
Wersja polska ... 342
English version ... 344

P-009816/13 by Erminia Mazzoni to the Commission
Subject: Banning of biodegradable bags
Versione italiana ... 345
English version ... 346

E-009818/13 by Jo Leinen to the Commission
Subject: Promoting German-Arabic children's literature
Deutsche Fassung ... 347
English version ... 348

E-009819/13 by Jo Leinen to the Commission
Subject: Funding for a resource recovery facility under Regulation (EC) No 1638/2006
Deutsche Fassung ... 349
English version ... 350

E-009820/13 by Jörg Leichtfried to the Commission
Subject: Direct debiting the deposit on hire cars
Deutsche Fassung ... 351
English version ... 353

E-009821/13 by Gay Mitchell to the Commission
Subject: EU and private sector engagement in development cooperation
English version ... 355

E-009822/13 by George Lyon to the Commission
Subject: Update: Implementation of Council Directive 1999/74/EC of 19 July 1999 laying down minimum standards for the protection of laying hens
English version ... 356

E-009824/13 by Marc Tarabella to the Commission
Subject: Banning IP tracking
Version française ... 357
English version ... 358

E-009825/13 by Marc Tarabella to the Commission
Subject: Aubagio
Version française ... 359
English version ... 360

E-009826/13 by Marc Tarabella to the Commission
Subject: Maintaining roaming
Version française ... 361
English version ... 362

E-009827/13 by Marc Tarabella to the Commission
Subject: Commission sounds the death knell for net neutrality
Version française ... 363
English version ... 364

E-009829/13 by Mario Borghezio to the Commission
Subject: 9% more funding for European political parties
Versione italiana ... 365
English version ... 366

E-009830/13 by Patricia van der Kammen and Lucas Hartong to the Commission
Subject: EU speed limiters
Nederlandse versie ... 367
English version ... 368

P-009832/13 by Salvador Garriga Polledo to the Commission
Subject: Dutch tax lease system — opening of investigation
Versión española ... 369
English version ... 370

P-009833/13 by Cornelia Ernst to the Commission
Subject: Age limit for teachers in ESF-funded projects
Deutsche Fassung ... 371
English version ... 372

P-009834/13 by Wojciech Michał Olejniczak to the Commission
Subject: Labelling of GMO-free food products
Wersja polska ... 373
English version ... 374

E-009835/13 by Ramon Tremosa i Balcells to the Commission
Subject: Independence of the new regulatory body in Spain
Versión española ... 375
English version ... 376

E-009836/13 by Ramon Tremosa i Balcells to the Commission
Subject: Sale of industrial shares to a state body by a bailed-out bank
Versión española ... 377
English version ... 378

E-009837/13 by Ramon Tremosa i Balcells to the Commission
Subject: Funding of purchasing bodies by Sareb
Versión española ... 379
English version ... 380

E-009838/13 by Antolín Sánchez Presedo to the Commission
Subject: Train crash near Santiago de Compostela and rail safety measures in the EU
Versión española ... 381
English version ... 382

E-009839/13 by Willy Meyer to the Commission
Subject: Squandering of public funds in Cantabria
Versión española ... 383
English version ... 384

E-009840/13 by Theodoros Skylakakis to the Commission
Subject: Outstanding pension rights
Ελληνική έκδοση ... 385
English version ... 386

E-009841/13 by Sir Graham Watson to the Commission
Subject: Fourth directive on company accounts
English version ... 387

E-009842/13 by Sir Graham Watson to the Commission
Subject: Airport development fees
English version ... 388

E-009843/13 by Sir Graham Watson to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — Hmong people in Laos
English version ... 389

E-009844/13 by Sir Graham Watson to the Commission
Subject: Social charges and EU regulations
English version ... 390

E-009845/13 by Marina Yannakoudakis to the Commission
Subject: Commission funding for Guinea and the problem of female genital mutilation (FGM)
English version ... 391

E-009846/13 by Georgios Stavrakakis to the Commission
Subject: Level of payments as of 31 July 2013
Ελληνική έκδοση ... 392
English version ... 393

E-009847/13 by Crescenzio Rivellini to the Commission
Subject: Statements by the mafia informer Schiavone — waste in Campania
Versione italiana ... 394
English version ... 395

E-009849/13 by Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă to the Commission
Subject: Wine tourism
Versiunea în limba română ... 396
English version ... 397

E-009850/13 by Mojca Kleva Kekuš to the Commission
Subject: UN Convention on the Rights of Older Persons
Slovenska različica ... 398
English version ... 399

E-009851/13 by Michael Cramer to the Commission
Subject: Compliance with the Århus Convention in Member States
Deutsche Fassung ... 400
English version ... 401

E-009852/13 by Vilija Blinkevičiūtė to the Commission
Subject: Discrimination against the hard-of-hearing as regards access to information
Tekstas lietuvių kalba ... 402
English version ... 403

E-009853/13 by Dolores García-Hierro Caraballo and Antolín Sánchez Presedo to the Commission
Subject: Submersion of concrete blocks in the Bay of Algeciras
Versión española ... 404
English version ... 405

E-009854/13 by Nikolaos Salavrakos to the Commission
Subject: EU compensation to cover the cost of medical care for illegal immigrants in Greece
Ελληνική έκδοση ... 406
English version ... 407

E-009855/13 by Nikolaos Salavrakos to the Commission
Subject: Export subsidies for Turkish aquaculture products
Ελληνική έκδοση ... 408
English version ... 409

E-009856/13 by Fiorello Provera and Charles Tannock to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — Food insecurity in Egypt
Versione italiana ... 410
English version ... 411

E-009857/13 by Fiorello Provera and Charles Tannock to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — Yemeni girl forced into marriage
Versione italiana ... 412
English version ... 413

E-009858/13 by Fiorello Provera and Charles Tannock to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — Situation in Zimbabwe
Versione italiana ... 414
English version ... 415

E-009859/13 by Fiorello Provera and Charles Tannock to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — Moroccan student imprisoned for insulting the king
Versione italiana ... 416
English version ... 417

E-009860/13 by Fiorello Provera to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — al-Nusra's control of Syria's strategic assets
Versione italiana ... 418
English version ... 419

E-009861/13 by Fiorello Provera and Charles Tannock to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — Saharan Jihadist groups form an alliance
Versione italiana ... 420
English version ... 421

E-009862/13 by Fiorello Provera and Charles Tannock to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — Increased Saudi funding to the Egyptian Government
Versione italiana ... 422
English version ... 423

E-009863/13 by Fiorello Provera and Charles Tannock to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — Zimbabwe — alleged plans to export uranium to Iran
Versione italiana ... 424
English version ... 425

E-009864/13 by Fiorello Provera and Charles Tannock to the Council
Subject: Alleged Al-Qaeda plots against Europe's rail networks
Versione italiana ... 426
English version ... 427

E-009865/13 by Fiorello Provera and Charles Tannock to the Council
Subject: Alleged Iranian-backed hit squads operating in the UAE
Versione italiana 428
English version 429

E-009866/13 by Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy, Gaston Franco, Jo Leinen and Margrete Auken to the Commission
Subject: Deforestation and loss of biodiversity
Dansk udgave 430
Deutsche Fassung 431
Version française 433
Nederlandse versie 435
English version 437

E-009867/13 by Hannu Takkula to the Commission
Subject: Blacklisting the military wing of Hezbollah
Suomenkielinen versio 438
English version 439

E-009868/13 by Auke Zijlstra to the Commission
Subject: Follow-up to Written Question E-006902/2013 on the Recovery and Resolution Directive: how to cause a flood of bankruptcies
Nederlandse versie 440
English version 441

E-009869/13 by Gaston Franco to the Commission
Subject: EU-US dialogue on chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) risks
Version française 442
English version 443

E-009870/13 by Mara Bizzotto to the Commission
Subject: 'Empty prisons' decree — legitimacy and alternative measures
Versione italiana 444
English version 445

E-009873/13 by Marco Scurria to the Commission
Subject: Adjustment of directive on water for human consumption
Versione italiana 446
English version 447

E-009874/13 by Csanád Szegedi to the Commission
Subject: Integration of Roma
Magyar változat 448
English version 449

E-009875/13 by João Ferreira to the Commission
Subject: Human right to water and sanitation
Versão portuguesa 450
English version 451

E-009876/13 by Inês Cristina Zuber to the Commission
Subject: Increased drug use in Portugal
Versão portuguesa 452
English version 454

E-009877/13 by João Ferreira and Inês Cristina Zuber to the Commission
Subject: Spate of fires in Portugal
Versão portuguesa 455
English version 456

E-009878/13 by João Ferreira and Inês Cristina Zuber to the Commission
Subject: Dismissals in the Portuguese banking sector, allegedly imposed by the Commission
Versão portuguesa 457
English version 458

E-009879/13 by Sari Essayah to the Commission
Subject: Inclusion of defibrillators in the compulsory first aid equipment carried on aircraft
Suomenkielinen versio ... 459
English version ... 460

E-009880/13 by Izaskun Bilbao Barandica and Ramon Tremosa i Balcells to the Commission
Subject: Competition in the Spanish Professional Football League
Versión española ... 461
English version ... 462

E-009881/13 by Izaskun Bilbao Barandica to the Commission
Subject: Organisational problems concerning the Capital of Culture in 2016
Versión española ... 463
English version ... 464

E-009882/13 by Elisabeth Köstinger and Ingeborg Gräßle to the Commission
Subject: Third parties accompanying Members of the Commission on mission
Deutsche Fassung ... 465
English version ... 466

E-009883/13 by Csanád Szegedi to the Commission
Subject: Spread of infectious diseases in the EU
Magyar változat ... 467
English version ... 468

E-009884/13 by Csanád Szegedi to the Commission
Subject: Building more cycle paths in the EU
Magyar változat ... 469
English version ... 470

E-009885/13 by Csanád Szegedi to the Commission
Subject: Prevention and treatment of chronic respiratory diseases
Magyar változat ... 471
English version ... 473

E-009886/13 by Csanád Szegedi to the Commission
Subject: Survival of Hungarian-language radio in Serbia
Magyar változat ... 475
English version ... 476

P-009887/13 by Czesław Adam Siekierski to the Commission
Subject: EU-US negotiations on free trade agreement
Wersja polska ... 477
English version ... 478

E-009888/13 by Ingeborg Gräßle to the Council
Subject: Follow-up measures: progress in the fight against tax havens — the tax agreement with Liechtenstein
Deutsche Fassung ... 479
English version ... 480

E-009889/13 by Konstantinos Poupakis to the Commission
Subject: The case of LARCO GMMSA
Ελληνική έκδοση ... 481
English version ... 482

E-009890/13 by Andrea Zanoni to the Commission
Subject: Ministerial decree on the application of the formula for calculating the energy efficiency of incineration plants with reference to climatic conditions
Versione italiana ... 483
English version ... 484

E-009891/13 by Kathleen Van Brempt to the Commission
Subject: Record transfer fees for footballers and compliance with rules on state aid
Nederlandse versie ... 485
English version ... 486

E-009892/13 by Inês Cristina Zuber to the Commission
Subject: Registration with general practitioners in more than one Member State
Versão portuguesa ... 487
English version ... 488

E-009893/13 by Inês Cristina Zuber to the Commission
Subject: Support for stockbreeders' organisations
Versão portuguesa ... 489
English version ... 490

E-009895/13 by Małgorzata Handzlik to the Commission
Subject: Regulation on mandatory vehicle equipment — informing the public
Wersja polska ... 491
English version ... 492

P-009896/13 by Georgios Koumoutsakos to the Commission
Subject: Emergency measures to cope with the expected increase in the number of Syrian refugees
Ελληνική έκδοση ... 493
English version ... 494

P-009897/13 by Keith Taylor to the Commission
Subject: Rights of ports regarding trade in live animals
English version ... 495

E-009898/13 by Antolín Sánchez Presedo, Alejandro Cercas and Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto to the Commission
Subject: Unfair labour practices in internship contracts in the financial services sector
Versión española ... 496
English version ... 497

E-009899/13 by Antolín Sánchez Presedo, Luis Yáñez-Barnuevo García, Alejandro Cercas and Cristina Gutiérrez-Cortines to the Commission
Subject: Sustainability of football in the European Union
Versión española ... 498
English version ... 499

E-009900/13 by Andrés Perelló Rodríguez to the Commission
Subject: Extraction of hydrocarbons in Valencia
Versión española ... 500
English version ... 501

E-009901/13 by Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto and María Muñiz De Urquiza to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — Protecting the rights of the LGBT community in Russia
Versión española ... 502
English version ... 503

E-009902/13 by Bernd Lange to the Commission
Subject: Effects of exposure to power lines in the EU
Deutsche Fassung ... 504
English version ... 505

E-009903/13 by Nicole Sinclaire to the Commission
Subject: Reclassification of electronic cigarettes as medicinal products
English version ... 506

E-009904/13 by Gaston Franco to the Commission
Subject: VAT rates on large recreational vessels distorting competition between France and Italy
Version française ... 507
English version ... 508

E-009905/13 by Gaston Franco to the Commission
Subject: Interference between terrestrial digital television and 4G signals
Version française ... 509
English version ... 510

E-009907/13 by Lambert van Nistelrooij and Esther de Lange to the Commission
Subject: Waste in the health service: combating needlessly large packaging
Nederlandse versie ... 511
English version ... 512

E-009909/13 by Nuno Teixeira to the Commission
Subject: Dispute over the Ilhas Selvagens exclusive economic zone — 2
Versão portuguesa ... 513
English version ... 515

E-009917/13 by Nuno Teixeira to the Commission
Subject: Dispute over the Selvagens Islands EEZ — 1
Versão portuguesa ... 513
English version ... 515

P-009910/13 by Liam Aylward to the Commission
Subject: Legality of low user standing changes in the energy market
English version ... 517

P-009911/13 by Romana Jordan to the Commission
Subject: Guaranteeing energy feed-in tariffs in Croatia
Slovenska različica ... 518
English version ... 519

E-009912/13 by Auke Zijlstra to the Commission
Subject: Illegal subsidies for renewable energies (follow-up question)
Nederlandse versie ... 520
English version ... 522

E-009913/13 by Tonino Picula and Davor Ivo Stier to the Commission
Subject: Institutional equality of Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina
Hrvatska verzija ... 524
English version ... 525

E-009914/13 by Matteo Salvini to the Commission
Subject: Clarification requested regarding the postponement of the EU goal to abolish roaming charges
Versione italiana ... 526
English version ... 527

E-009915/13 by Cristiana Muscardini to the Commission
Subject: Consequences of the Federal Reserve's quantitative easing policy
Versione italiana ... 528
English version ... 529

P-009918/13 by Tarja Cronberg to the Commission
Subject: The EU's common forestry strategy
Suomenkielinen versio ... 530
English version ... 531

E-009919/13 by Salvador Sedó i Alabart to the Commission
Subject: The link between religion and culture in Europe
Versión española ... 532
English version ... 533

E-009920/13 by Salvador Sedó i Alabart to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — Situation of the Uyghur people
Versión española ... 534
English version ... 535

E-009921/13 by Antolín Sánchez Presedo, Alejandro Cercas, Ricardo Cortés Lastra, Luis Yáñez-Barnuevo García, Carmen Romero López, Antonio Masip Hidalgo and María Muñiz De Urquiza to the Commission
Subject: Social welfare benefits and tax obligations of emigrants in the EU
Versión española ... 536
English version ... 538

E-009922/13 by Burkhard Balz and Peter Simon to the Commission
Subject: SEPA online direct debit mandate
Deutsche Fassung ... 539
English version ... 540

E-009923/13 by Auke Zijlstra to the Commission
Subject: Fickle interpretation of the Treaty by European Central Bank
Nederlandse versie ... 541
English version ... 542

E-009924/13 by Auke Zijlstra to the Commission
Subject: European Commission — saviour of human rights
Nederlandse versie ... 543
English version ... 544

E-009925/13 by Alyn Smith to the Commission
Subject: Buyer's premium
English version ... 545

E-009926/13 by François Alfonsi and Michèle Rivasi to the Commission
Subject: Combating the dumping of oil in the Mediterranean Sea
Version française ... 546
English version ... 548

E-009927/13 by Philip Claeys to the Commission
Subject: Turkish Prime Minister maintains that use of teargas is in line with the EU *acquis*
Nederlandse versie ... 549
English version ... 550

E-009928/13 by Lucas Hartong and Laurence J.A.J. Stassen to the Commission
Subject: Follow-up questions concerning subsidies granted to Egypt (3)
Nederlandse versie ... 551
English version ... 553

E-009929/13 by Laurence J.A.J. Stassen to the Commission
Subject: Erdoğan angry with EU
Nederlandse versie ... 555
English version ... 556

E-009930/13 by Lucas Hartong to the Commission
Subject: Providing assistance to the Committee on Cultural Heritage in Cyprus
Nederlandse versie ... 557
English version ... 559

E-009931/13 by Adam Bielan to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — increase in the activities of the Russian army
Wersja polska ... 560
English version ... 561

E-009932/13 by Marek Józef Gróbarczyk to the Commission
Subject: Question to the European Commission regarding the fulfilment of its obligation to report to Parliament and the Council
Wersja polska ... 562
English version ... 563

E-009933/13 by João Ferreira and Inês Cristina Zuber to the Commission
Subject: Exclusion of homeless people and discrimination against them by the EU
Versão portuguesa ... 564
English version ... 565

E-009934/13 by João Ferreira to the Commission
Subject: EU funding of international gas pipeline construction projects
Versão portuguesa ... 566
English version ... 567

E-009936/13 by Paweł Robert Kowal to the Commission
Subject: Problems encountered by Polish citizens working in the Netherlands
Wersja polska ... 568
English version ... 569

P-009937/13 by Hermann Winkler to the Commission
Subject: VAT on passenger transport
Deutsche Fassung ... 570
English version ... 571

P-009938/13 by Konstantinos Poupakis to the Commission
Subject: Implementation in Greece of legislation regarding the sale of food past its expiration date
Ελληνική έκδοση ... 572
English version ... 574

P-009939/13 by Corien Wortmann-Kool to the Commission
Subject: Strike by German lock-keepers
Nederlandse versie ... 576
English version ... 577

E-009940/13 by Mariya Gabriel to the Commission
Subject: Non-absorption of Rural Development Programme funds in Bulgaria
българска версия ... 578
English version ... 579

E-009942/13 by Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández to the Commission
Subject: Drones and EU legislation
Versión española ... 580
English version ... 581

E-009943/13 by Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández to the Commission
Subject: Dam in the Bergantes River basin
Versión española ... 582
English version ... 583

E-009944/13 by Elena Băsescu to the Commission
Subject: Directive on improving the gender balance among non-executive directors of companies listed on stock exchanges and related measures
Versiunea în limba română ... 584
English version ... 585

E-009945/13 by José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra to the Commission
Subject: EU-Mercosur Association Agreement
Versión española ... 586
English version ... 587

E-009946/13 by Ingeborg Gräßle to the Commission
Subject: Work and costs involved in administering the tobacco agreements
Deutsche Fassung ... 588
English version ... 589

E-009947/13 by Maria Eleni Koppa to the Commission
Subject: National tensions in Croatia
Ελληνική έκδοση ... 590
English version ... 591

E-009948/13 by Amelia Andersdotter to the Commission
Subject: 'Meeting of minds' of undertakings restrict competition of streaming services
Svensk version ... 592
English version ... 593

E-009949/13 by Brian Simpson to the Commission
Subject: Animal welfare — exemption from cross-compliance rules
English version ... 594

E-009950/13 by Romana Jordan, Ivo Belet and Pilar del Castillo Vera to the Commission
Subject: Financing of patents in the European Union
Versión española ... 595
Nederlandse versie ... 596
Slovenska različica ... 597
English version ... 598

E-009951/13 by Catherine Stihler to the Council
Subject: Syria
English version ... 599

E-009952/13 by Catherine Stihler to the Commission
Subject: Syria
English version ... 600

E-009953/13 by Catherine Stihler to the Commission
Subject: Gibraltar
English version ... 601

E-009954/13 by Catherine Stihler to the Commission
Subject: Neonicotinoids
English version ... 602

E-009955/13 by Catherine Stihler to the Commission
Subject: Toddler milk
English version ... 603

E-009958/13 by Michel Dantin to the Commission
Subject: VP/HR — Democratic elections in Haiti
Version française ... 604
English version ... 605

E-009959/13 by Jean Louis Cottigny to the Commission
Subject: Diane 35® contraceptive pill
Version française ... 606
English version ... 607

E-009960/13 by Jean Louis Cottigny and Gilles Pargneaux to the Commission
Subject: Contamination of the Japanese marine food chain
Version française ... 608
English version ... 609

E-009961/13 by Andrea Zanoni to the Commission
Subject: Planning of safety works and a new road system along the length of the River Entella and reclamation of an area of land along the river mouth
Versione italiana ... 610
English version ... 611

E-009962/13 by Mara Bizzotto to the Commission
Subject: Parent 1 and Parent 2 on Italian school forms — Gender equality policies and Community policies
Versione italiana ... 612
English version ... 613

E-009963/13 by Mara Bizzotto to the Commission
Subject: Request for EU and EGF intervention to support cement company workers in the Province of Padua
Versione italiana ... 614
English version ... 616

E-009964/13 by Raül Romeva i Rueda to the Commission
Subject: China: Anti-dumping
Versión española ... 618
English version ... 619

E-009965/13 by Raül Romeva i Rueda to the Commission
Subject: National heritage
Versión española 620
English version 621

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009652/13
to the Commission
Fiona Hall (ALDE)
(27 August 2013)

Subject: Research funding for poverty-related and neglected diseases

The recently published report *Priority Medicines for Europe and the World 2013 Update* states that for neglected tropical diseases 'new mechanisms to promote the translation of basic research into clinically important products remain a priority'. The report also identifies research gaps in the field of poverty-related diseases such as malaria, tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS, and explains that since 2004 public-private partnerships such as the Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI) and product development partnerships have played an increasing role in early, translational and product development research.

The Commission has stated that in future the bulk of clinical research for product development will be funded through the European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership EDCTP2 programme and that additional research on poverty-related and neglected diseases (PRNDs) could also be addressed under IMI2.

It has also been noted that a memorandum of understanding has been signed with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

— Can the Commission explain how much of the budget for PRNDs will be allocated in the coming years to the various mechanisms, such as EDCTP2, IMI2 and Horizon 2020 calls?

— How will the Commission ensure that the IMI's Strategic Research Agenda addresses PRNDs as a research priority, taking into consideration the persistent market failure for many of these diseases and the governance of the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA)?

— How will the Commission promote collaboration between the IMI and product development partnerships?

— Could the Commission further explain the specific actions that will be developed with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and how these will be financed?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(9 October 2013)

1. The Commission provided substantial financial support to research on poverty-related and neglected diseases (PRND) through the European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP, 2003-2012) ([1]) and under the Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7, 2007-2013), mainly through the Health Cooperation theme, the Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI) ([2]), the European Research Council (ERC) ([3]) and Marie Curie Actions ([4]). Since 2007, EUR 810 million of EU funding was invested through EDCTP (EUR 184 million) and under FP7 (EUR 626 million).

2. For Horizon 2020, the Commission will continue to support research on PRND by taking into account recent research developments for setting funding priorities in the annual work programmes. The Strategic Research Agenda of IMI2 refers to support the development of vaccines against PRND and addresses the global emergence of antimicrobial resistances.

3. Any legal entity regardless of its place of establishment and international organisations may participate in activities funded under Horizon 2020. However, like any other legal entity, Product Development Partnerships have to comply with the rules set for Horizon 2020 and the conditions laid down in the annual work programme.

4. The Commission will cooperate with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation mainly through open coordination approaches and by pooling resources for commonly agreed funding priorities or jointly-funded activities, in particular through the EDCTP2 programme.

([1]) http://www.edctp.org/
([2]) http://www.imi.europa.eu/
([3]) http://erc.europa.eu/
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/mariecurieactions/

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-009653/13
a la Comisión
Esther Herranz García (PPE)
(28 de agosto de 2013)

Asunto: Medidas contra la amenaza china de restricción de vino europeo

De acuerdo con la respuesta recibida por la Comisión Europea, en la que expone que es consciente de la importancia que reviste la amenaza china de restricción de vino europeo y en la que hace hincapié en que ayudará al sector vitivinícola de la UE a que defienda sus intereses, ¿cuáles son las medidas concretas en las que está trabajando la Comisión para proteger al sector vitivinícola europeo a las que se refiere en su respuesta a la pregunta P-006601/2013 del pasado 12 de julio de 2013?

¿Ha calculado la Comisión las consecuencias exactas y ha cuantificado económicamente los daños ya causados al sector desde el anuncio de las restricciones, así como la amenaza que ello supone para el futuro de este sector, que se sitúa como el tercer mercado más importante en China después de los EE.UU. y Rusia?

Respuesta del Sr. De Gucht en nombre de la Comisión
(18 de septiembre de 2013)

La Comisión ya ha adoptado una serie de medidas concretas para ayudar al sector vitivinícola europeo en el marco de las investigaciones de defensa comercial efectuadas por China. En primer lugar, ya intervino activamente en las consultas previas con China, con el resultado de que este país redujo el número de presuntos sistemas de subvenciones objeto de la investigación. Además, la Comisión presentó observaciones formales a China subrayando las deficiencias observadas en la solicitud presentada por la industria vitivinícola china que puso en marcha la investigación. Asimismo, la Comisión apoyó activamente a las empresas vitivinícolas de la UE en el proceso de registro, vital para ejercer sus derechos de defensa en el procedimiento pendiente, y también cooperó estrechamente con las autoridades chinas en el muestreo para seleccionar las empresas de la UE que serán investigadas individualmente. La Comisión seguirá ayudando a las empresas seleccionadas a responder a los cuestionarios recibidos de China.

Es imposible cuantificar con precisión los efectos negativos que el simple inicio de investigaciones de defensa comercial puede, sin duda, tener en el comercio. Las investigaciones antidumping y antisubvenciones se encuentran actualmente en su fase inicial y todavía no se han adoptado medidas. Por todo ello es prematuro calcular los posibles daños que pueden sufrir los exportadores de vino de la UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009653/13
to the Commission
Esther Herranz García (PPE)
(28 August 2013)

Subject: Measures to counter China's threat to impose restrictions on European wines

In light of the Commission's reply to Written Question P-006601/2013 of 12 July 2013, in which it states that it is aware of the importance of China's threat to restrict imports of European wine and stresses that it will assist the EU's wine industry in defending its interests, what concrete steps does the Commission plan to take in order to protect the European wine sector?

Has the Commission calculated the precise impact and established the extent of the economic damage already suffered by the wine industry since the restrictions were announced, as well as quantifying the threat posed to the future of this sector, which has China is its third largest market, after the US and Russia?

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

The Commission has already taken a number of concrete steps in order to assist the European wine sector in the context of the ongoing trade defence investigations carried out by China. First, the Commission already actively intervened in the pre-initiation consultations with China as a result of which China narrowed down the number of alleged subsidy schemes targeted by the investigation. Furthermore, the Commission submitted formal comments to China in order to highlight the weaknesses identified in the application made by the Chinese wine industry which triggered the investigation concerned. The Commission also actively assisted the EU wine companies in the registration procedure, the completion of which is vital for the exercise of their rights of defence in the pending proceedings, and also closely cooperated with the Chinese authorities in the context of the sampling procedure in order to select the EU companies that will be individually investigated. The Commission will continue in the future to assist those selected companies in answering the questionnaires they received from China.

Even if the mere initiation of Trade Defence investigations may indeed have some negative effects on trade, it is impossible to precisely establish their impact. The anti-dumping and anti-subsidy investigations are currently in their initial phases and no measures have been taken so far. The calculation of any potential damage which could be suffered by the EU wine exporters is therefore currently premature.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-009654/13
alla Commissione
Francesco Enrico Speroni (EFD)
(28 agosto 2013)

Oggetto: Accuse di violazione di norme da parte della Repubblica maltese

La Commissaria agli Affari interni avrebbe accusato Malta di violazione di norme per il divieto di attracco della nave Salamis.

Può dire la Commissione quali sarebbero le norme violate e se, conseguentemente, è stata avviata la procedura di infrazione? In caso di risposta negativa, può precisare per quale ragione?

Risposta di Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(23 settembre 2013)

Il 6 agosto 2013 la commissaria responsabile per gli Affari interni ha dichiarato che, dopo le operazioni di soccorso dei migranti ad opera dalla petroliera M/T Salamis, la cosa più importante era fornire assistenza alle persone tratte in salvo e garantire la loro sicurezza. La commissaria ha sollevato la questione di una possibile violazione del diritto internazionale, tenendo conto della protezione dei migranti. Conformemente al trattato, la Commissione può avviare procedimenti d'infrazione in casi di violazione del diritto dell'Unione. Il trattato non conferisce alla Commissione il potere di avviare procedure d'infrazione unicamente sulla base del diritto internazionale.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009654/13
to the Commission
Francesco Enrico Speroni (EFD)
(28 August 2013)

Subject: Malta accused of violating international law

The Commissioner for Home Affairs has apparently accused Malta of violating international law by preventing the tanker, *Salamis* from docking.

Which international laws were breached and have infringement proceedings been opened as a result? If not, why not?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(23 September 2013)

In her statement of 6 August 2013, the Member of the Commission responsible for Home Affairs considered that after the tanker M/T Salamis had come to the rescue of the migrants, the most important thing was to assist the rescued persons and to ensure their safety. The Commissioner cautioned against a possible violation of international law, having in mind the protection of these migrants. According to the Treaty, the Commission may launch infringement proceedings in case of violation of Union law. The Treaty does not give the Commission the competence to launch infringement proceedings solely on the basis of international law.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-009655/13
προς το Συμβούλιο
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(28 Αυγούστου 2013)

Θέμα: Διαρροή ρωσικών καταθέσεων από την Κύπρο προς άλλα κράτη μέλη ή επικράτειες άλλων ευρωπαϊκών κρατών

Σύμφωνα με στοιχεία της Ρωσικής Κεντρικής Τράπεζας, κατά την περίοδο της τραπεζικής κρίσης στην Κύπρο και μετά την απόφαση για κούρεμα των καταθέσεων παρατηρήθηκε τεράστια διαορροή ρωσικών καταθέσεων από τις τράπεζες της Κύπρου προς τις τράπεζες άλλων κρατών μελών ή σε φορολογικούς παραδείσους που ανήκουν σε κράτη μέλη. Συγκεκριμένα, Ρώσοι καταθέτες διοχέτευσαν, κατά το πρώτο τρίμηνο του 2013, μέσα σε τόσο σύντομο χρονικό διάστημα 31,6 δις δολάρια προς τις Βρετανικές Παρθένες Νήσους, σε σύγκριση με μόλις 6,7 δις δολάρια κατα το ίδιο τρίμηνο του 2012. Διοχέτευσαν επίσης 13,9 δις δολάρια σε τράπεζες του Λουξεμβούργου, σε σύγκριση με μόλις 0,26 δις δολάρια το αντίστοιχο τρίμηνο του 2012. Αντίθετα, οι ρωσικές καταθέσεις στην Κύπρο μειώθηκαν από 21,13 δις δολάρια τον Δεκέμβριο του 2012 σε μόλις 2,72 δις δολάρια το τέλος Μαρτίου 2013.

Ερωτάται το Συμβούλιο.

1. Είναι ενήμερο σχετικά με τις εξελίξεις αυτές και πώς ερμηνεύει τις τεράστιες αυτές ροές κεφαλαίων μέσα σε τόσο σύντομο χρονικό διάστημα;

2. Θεωρεί ότι μπορεί να σχετίζονται με την κρίση στο τραπεζικό σύστημα της Κύπρου και τις αποφάσεις για το κούρεμα των καταθέσεων;

3. Μπορεί να διαβεβαιώσει ότι όλες οι μεταφορές κεφαλαίων έγιναν νόμιμα και ότι δεν υπάρχουν θέματα ξεπλύματος χρήματος ή άλλες παράνομες πράξεις;

4. Γιατί τα ρωσικά κεφάλαια που στην Κύπρο θεωρούνταν ανεπιθύμητα και βλαπτικά από την Ένωση, γίνονται τόσο ευπρόσδεκτα σε άλλα κράτη μέλη, χωρίς η Ένωση να αντιδρά όπως έπραξε στην Κύπρο;

5. Προτίθεται να διερευνήσει το σοβαρό αυτό θέμα και να φερθεί ακριβοδίκαια ή θα συνεχίσει να εφαρμόζει δύο μέτρα και δύο σταθμά στις σχέσεις του με τα κράτη μέλη;

Απάντηση
(5 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Στις 25 Μαρτίου 2013, η Ευρωομάδα εξέφρασε ικανοποίηση για τα σχέδια πολιτικής που παρουσίασαν οι κυπριακές αρχές και συμφώνησε με τα μέτρα για την αναδιάρθρωση του χρηματοπιστωτικού τομέα όπως αναφέρονται στο παράρτημα της δήλωσης της Ευρωομάδας της 25ης Μαρτίου 2013 ([1]). Τα μέτρα αυτά θέτουν τη βάση για την αποκατάσταση της βιωσιμότητας του χρηματοπιστωτικού τομέα. Πιο συγκεκριμένα, διασφαλίζουν όλες τις καταθέσεις κάτω των 100 000 ευρώ, σύμφωνα με τις αρχές της ΕΕ.

Η απόφαση 2013/236/ΕΕ του Συμβουλίου της 25ης Απριλίου 2013 που απευθύνεται στην Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία σχετικά με ειδικά μέτρα για την αποκατάσταση της χρηματοπιστωτικής σταθερότητας και της βιώσιμης ανάπτυξης ([2]) θέτει τα στοιχεία ενός τριετούς προγράμματος μακροοικονομικής προσαρμογής που αποσκοπεί στην αποκατάσταση της ευρωστίας του τραπεζικού τομέα, στη συνέχιση της διαδικασίας δημοσιονομικής εξυγίανσης και στη στήριξη της ανταγωνιστικότητας και της βιώσιμης και ισόρροπης ανάπτυξης.

Στις 13 Μαΐου 2013, η Ευρωομάδα χαιρέτισε την ολοκλήρωση των ανεξάρτητων αξιολογήσεων συμμόρφωσης με το πλαίσιο καταπολέμησης της νομιμοποίησης προσόδων από παράνομες δραστηριότητες στην Κύπρο. Τα θεσμικά όργανα της τρόικας υπέβαλαν τα κυριότερα πορίσματά τους στην Ευρωομάδα, ενώ συστάσεις για τη διόρθωση των αδυναμιών περιλήφθηκαν στο σχέδιο δράσης κατά της νομιμοποίησης προσόδων από παράνομες δραστηριότητες, το οποίο συμφωνήθηκε μεταξύ της τρόικας και των κυπριακών αρχών κατά την πρώτη αναθεώρηση που πραγματοποιήθηκε δυνάμει του άρθρου 1 παράγραφος 2 της απόφασης του Συμβουλίου 2013/236/ΕΕ.

([1]) Οι δηλώσεις της Ευρωομάδας είναι διαθέσιμες στην ηλεκτρονική διεύθυνση: http://www.eurozone.europa.eu/eurogroup
([2]) ΕΕ L 141 της 28.5.2013, σ. 32.

Στην ανακοίνωσή της στις 13 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013, η Ευρωομάδα εξέφρασε ικανοποίηση για τη συνέχιση της σταδιακής χαλάρωσης των διοικητικών μέτρων που είχαν ληφθεί από τις κυπριακές αρχές λόγω της μοναδικής και εξαιρετικής κατάστασης που αντιμετωπίζει ο χρηματοπιστωτικός τομέας της Κύπρου, έκρινε ότι οποιαδήποτε περαιτέρω χαλάρωση των μέτρων πρέπει να συμμορφώνεται προς τον οδικό χάρτη της 8ης Αυγούστου 2013 και δήλωσε ότι αναμένει την ταχεία υλοποίηση του σχεδίου δράσης κατά της νομιμοποίησης προσόδων από παράνομες δραστηριότητες.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009655/13
to the Council
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(28 August 2013)

Subject: Flow of Russian deposits from Cyprus to other Member States or territories of other EU countries

According to the Russian Central Bank, during the banking crisis in Cyprus and after the decision to perform a haircut on deposits, there was a huge exodus of Russian deposits from banks in Cyprus to banks in other Member States or in tax havens belonging to Member States. More specifically, Russian depositors transferred during the first quarter of 2013 — a very short period of time for such a large sum — USD 31.6 billion to the British Virgin Islands, compared with just USD 6.7 billion in the same quarter of 2012. In addition USD 13.9 billion was channelled into Luxembourg banks, compared with just USD 0.26 billion in the same quarter of 2012. By contrast, Russian deposits in Cyprus fell from USD 21.13 billion in December 2012 to just USD 2.72 billion at the end of March 2013.

In view of the above, will the Council say:

1. Is it aware of these developments and how does it interpret these huge capital flows in such a short space of time?

2. Does it take the view that they may be related to the crisis in the banking system in Cyprus and the decision to perform a haircut on deposits?

3. Can it confirm that all the capital transfers were legitimate and that there are no issues of money laundering or other illegal acts?

4. Why is Russian capital, which the Union considered undesirable and harmful in Cyprus, so welcome in other Member States, without the Union reacting as it did in Cyprus?

5. Will it investigate this serious matter and behave even-handedly, or will it continue to apply double standards in its relations with the Member States?

Reply
(5 November 2013)

On 25 March 2013, the Eurogroup welcomed the policy plans presented by the Cyprus authorities and agreed to the measures for restructuring the financial sector as specified in the annex to its statement of 25 March 2013 ([1]). These measures form the basis for restoring the viability of the financial sector. In particular, they safeguard all deposits below EUR 100 000 in accordance with EU principles.

Council Decision 2013/236/EU of 25 April 2013 addressed to Cyprus on specific measures to restore financial stability and sustainable growth ([2]) set out the elements of a three-year macroeconomic adjustment programme aimed at restoring the soundness of Cyprus' banking industry, continuing the process of fiscal consolidation and supporting competitiveness and sustainable and balanced growth.

On 13 May 2013, the Eurogroup welcomed the completion of the independent assessments of compliance with the anti-money laundering framework in Cyprus. The Troika institutions have reported the key findings to the Eurogroup, and recommendations to rectify deficiencies were integrated in the anti-money laundering action plan agreed between the Troika institutions and the Cypriot authorities at the time of the first review carried out in accordance with Article 1(2) of Council Decision 2013/236/EU.

In its statement of 13 September 2013, the Eurogroup welcomed the fact that the Cypriot authorities would continue to gradually relax administrative measures that the Cyprus authorities had decided to introduce in view of the unique and exceptional situation of Cyprus' financial sector, considered that further relaxation would be in line with the roadmap of 8 August 2013 and looked forward to the swift implementation of the anti-money laundering action plan.

([1]) Eurogroup statements can be found at http://www.eurozone.europa.eu/eurogroup
([2]) OJ L 141, 28.5.2013, p. 32.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-009656/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(28 Αυγούστου 2013)

Θέμα: Διαρροή ρωσικών καταθέσεων από την Κύπρο προς άλλα κράτη μέλη ή επικράτειες άλλων ευρωπαϊκών κρατών

Σύμφωνα με στοιχεία της Ρωσικής Κεντρικής Τράπεζας κατά την περίοδο της τραπεζικής κρίσης στην Κύπρο και μετά την απόφαση για κούρεμα των καταθέσεων, παρατηρήθηκε τεράστια διαρροή ρωσικών καταθέσεων από τις τράπεζες της Κύπρου προς τράπεζες άλλων κρατών μελών ή σε φορολογικούς παραδείσους που ανήκουν σε κράτη μέλη. Συγκεκριμένα, Ρώσοι καταθέτες διοχέτευσαν, κατά το πρώτο τρίμηνο του 2013, μέσα σε τόσο σύντομο χρονικό διάστημα 31,6 δις δολάρια προς τις Βρετανικές Παρθένες Νήσους, σε σύγκριση με μόλις 6,7 δις δολάρια κατά το ίδιο τρίμηνο του 2012. Διοχέτευσαν επίσης 13,9 δις δολάρια σε τράπεζες του Λουξεμβούργου, σε σύγκριση με μόλις 0,26 δις δολάρια το αντίστοιχο τρίμηνο του 2012. Αντίθετα, οι ρωσικές καταθέσεις στην Κύπρο μειώθηκαν από 21,13 δις δολάρια τον Δεκέμβριο του 2012 σε μόλις 2,72 δις δολάρια το τέλος Μαρτίου 2013.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή.

1. Είναι ενήμερη σχετικά με τις εξελίξεις αυτές και πως ερμηνεύει τις τεράστιες αυτές ροές κεφαλαίων μέσα σε τόσο σύντομο χρονικό διάστημα;

2. Θεωρεί ότι μπορεί να σχετίζονται με την κρίση στο τραπεζικό σύστημα της Κύπρου και τις αποφάσεις για το κούρεμα των καταθέσεων;

3. Μπορεί να διαβεβαιώσει ότι όλες οι μεταφορές κεφαλαίων έγιναν νόμιμα και ότι δεν υπάρχουν θέματα ξεπλύματος χρήματος ή άλλες παράνομες πράξεις;

4. Γιατί τα ρωσικά κεφάλαια που στην Κύπρο θεωρούνταν ανεπιθύμητα και βλαπτικά από την ΕΕ, γίνονται τόσο ευπρόσδεκτα σε άλλα κράτη μέλη, χωρίς η ΕΕ να αντιδρά όπως έπραξε στην Κύπρο;

5. Προτίθεται να διερευνήσει το σοβαρό αυτό θέμα και να φερθεί ακριβοδίκαια ή θα συνεχίσει να εφαρμόζει δύο μέτρα και δύο σταθμά στις σχέσεις της με τα κράτη μέλη;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(5 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει σε τι ύψος ανέρχονται οι εκροές των ρωσικών άμεσων ξένων επενδύσεων (ΑΞΕ) του πρώτου τριμήνου του 2013, όπως αναφέρεται στην ερώτηση. Το ποσό των ρωσικών ΑΞΕ που διοχετεύθηκε σε αυτό το διάστημα προς την Κύπρο ανερχόταν σε 2,7 δισεκατομμύρια δολάρια, δηλαδή κάτω από το μέσο όρο που ήταν περίπου 5 δισ. δολάρια ανά τρίμηνο τα τελευταία έτη.

Το άρθρο 63 της ΣΛΕΕ απαγορεύει τους περιορισμούς στις κινήσεις κεφαλαίων μεταξύ κρατών μελών και τρίτων χωρών. Εφόσον οι επενδύσεις βασίζονται σε υγιή οικονομικά κριτήρια, είναι ευπρόσδεκτες και μπορεί να έχουν επωφελές αποτέλεσμα για όλους, ήτοι για τις αποδέκτριες χώρες και τους επενδυτές

Η Επιτροπή δεν είναι ενήμερη για τυχόν παράνομες μεταφορές κεφαλαίων και είναι βέβαιη ότι οι κυπριακές αρχές θα διερευνήσουν οποιεσδήποτε ύποπτες περιπτώσεις. Σε ευρύτερο επίπεδο, η Επιτροπή συνεργάζεται με τους εταίρους της Κύπρου και της Τρόικας με στόχο την τυχόν αναγκαία βελτίωση του καθεστώτος που αφορά την καταπολέμηση της νομιμοποίησης εσόδων από παράνομες δραστηριότητες στην Κύπρο.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009656/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(28 August 2013)

Subject: Flow of Russian deposits from Cyprus to other Member States or territories of other EU countries

According to the Russian Central Bank, during the banking crisis in Cyprus and after the decision to perform a haircut on deposits, there was a huge exodus of Russian deposits from banks in Cyprus to banks in other Member States or in tax havens belonging to Member States. More specifically, Russian depositors transferred during the first quarter of 2013 — a very short period of time for such a large sum — USD 31.6 billion to the British Virgin Islands, compared with just USD 6.7 billion in the same quarter of 2012. In addition USD 13.9 billion was channelled into Luxembourg banks, compared with just USD 0.26 billion in the same quarter of 2012. By contrast, Russian deposits in Cyprus fell from USD 21.13 billion in December 2012 to just USD 2.72 billion at the end of March 2013.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Is it aware of these developments and how does it interpret these huge capital flows in such a short space of time?

2. Does it take the view that they may be related to the crisis in the banking system in Cyprus and the decision to perform a haircut on deposits?

3. Can it confirm that all the capital transfers were legitimate and that there are no issues of money laundering or other illegal acts?

4. Why is Russian capital, which the Union considered undesirable and harmful in Cyprus, so welcome in other Member States, without the Union reacting as it did in Cyprus?

5. Will it investigate this serious matter and behave even-handedly, or will it continue to apply double standards in its relations with the Member States?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(5 November 2013)

The Commission is aware of the amounts of Russian outward foreign direct investment (FDI) in the first quarter of 2013 referred to in the question. The amount of Russian FDI directed to Cyprus in that time was USD 2.7 billion, below the average of around USD 5 billion per quarter in recent years.

Article 63 TFEU prohibits restrictions on the movement of capital between Member States and third countries. As long as investments are based on sound economic criteria, they are welcomed and can provide a win-win outcome for recipient countries and investors.

The Commission is not aware of any illegality in the capital transfers and is confident that the Cypriot authorities would investigate any areas of suspicion. At a wider level, the Commission is working with Cyprus and the Troika partners to make any necessary improvement in the anti-money laundering regime in Cyprus.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-009657/13
προς το Συμβούλιο
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(28 Αυγούστου 2013)

Θέμα: Κίνδυνος ελέγχου της Τράπεζας Κύπρου από εξωευρωπαϊκά, ρωσικά συμφέροντα

Μια παράπλευρη συνέπεια των εντελώς λανθασμένων, κατά την άποψή μου, αποφάσεων του Eurogroup και του κουρέματος των καταθέσεων που επιβλήθηκε στην Κύπρο είναι και ο διαφαινόμενος κίνδυνος η κύρια συστημική τράπεζα του νησιού να περιέλθει στα χέρια ξένων, εξωευρωπαϊκών συμφερόντων, και δη ρωσικών.

Τον κίνδυνο η Τράπεζα Κύπρου να καταλήξει τελικά σε ρωσικά χέρια επισημαίνει σε άρθρο της και η New York Times. Όπως αναφέρει χαρακτηριστικά, «όταν οι Ευρωπαίοι ηγέτες σχεδίαζαν το σκληρό πακέτο διάσωσης της Κύπρου τον Μάρτιο, επευφημούσαν το τέλος ενός οικονομικού μοντέλου που στηρίχθηκε στο ρωσικό χρήμα. Οι πλούσιοι Ρώσοι που είχαν χρήματα στις προβληματικές τράπεζες της Κύπρου έχασαν δισεκατομμύρια. Όμως, παρά το άσχημο πλήγμα που δέχθηκαν, οι Ρώσοι είναι πλέον σε θέση να πάρουν κάτι που μέχρι προ τινος είχε ξεφύγει ακόμα και από τους πιο θρασείς ολιγάρχες της Μόσχας: τον έλεγχο ενός συστημικού τραπεζικού ιδρύματος στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση».

Στην περίπτωση της Κύπρου, όπως αναφέρει η εφημερίδα, δημιουργήθηκαν «ακούσιες συνέπειες», αφού ενώ ο δεδηλωμένος στόχος της ΕΕ ήταν να «εξαλείψουν» το «βρόμικο» ρωσικό χρήμα από τις προβληματικές τράπεζες της μεγαλονήσου, τελικά έβαλαν τους Ρώσους ακόμα βαθύτερα στο χρηματοοικονομικό σύστημα της Ευρώπης, δίνοντάς τους πλειοψηφικό μερίδιο — στα χαρτιά τουλάχιστον — της Τράπεζας Κύπρου.

Οικονομικοί και νομικοί κύκλοι της Κύπρου εκτιμούν ότι το ποσοστό που θα κατέχουν οι Ρώσοι μεγαλομέτοχοι στην Τράπεζα Κύπρου θα κυμαίνεται μεταξύ 53% και 60%.

Ερωτάται το Συμβούλιο:

1. Ήταν ενήμερο του πιο πάνω κινδύνου όταν λαμβάνονταν οι αποφάσεις για κούρεμα των κυπριακών καταθέσεων;

2. Θεωρεί ότι όντως δημιουργούνται κίνδυνοι για την κυπριακή και την ευρωπαϊκή οικονομία από τον ενδεχόμενο έλεγχο της κύριας συστημικής τράπεζας της Κύπρου από τους λεγόμενους Ρώσους ολιγάρχες;

3. Αν η απάντηση στο ερώτημα 2 είναι θετική, μπορεί να κατονομάσει ποιοι είναι οι κίνδυνοι αυτοί και να εξηγήσει γιατί αγνοήθηκαν κατά τη λήψη των σχετικών αποφάσεων;

4. Μετά την εξέλιξη αυτή συνειδητοποιεί πλέον το Συμβούλιο ότι οι αποφάσεις για την Κύπρο ήταν πρόχειρες και λανθασμένες και ότι είχαν καταστροφικά αποτελέσματα ή μήπως εξακολουθεί ακόμη να πιστεύει στην ορθότητα των αποφάσεων;

Απάντηση
(5 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Στις 25 Μαρτίου 2013, η Ευρωομάδα εξέφρασε ικανοποίηση για τα σχέδια πολιτικής που παρουσίασαν οι κυπριακές αρχές και συμφώνησε με τα μέτρα για την αναδιάρθρωση του χρηματοπιστωτικού τομέα όπως αναφέρονται στο παράρτημα της δήλωσης της Ευρωομάδας της 25ης Μαρτίου 2013 ([1]). Τα μέτρα αυτά θέτουν τη βάση για την αποκατάσταση της βιωσιμότητας του χρηματοπιστωτικού τομέα. Πιο συγκεκριμένα, διασφαλίζουν όλες τις καταθέσεις κάτω των 100 000 ευρώ, σύμφωνα με τις αρχές της ΕΕ.

Η απόφαση 2013/236/ΕΕ του Συμβουλίου της 25ης Απριλίου 2013 που απευθύνεται στην Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία σχετικά με ειδικά μέτρα για την αποκατάσταση της χρηματοπιστωτικής σταθερότητας και της βιώσιμης ανάπτυξης ([2]) θέτει τα στοιχεία ενός τριετούς προγράμματος μακροοικονομικής προσαρμογής που αποσκοπεί στην αποκατάσταση της ευρωστίας του τραπεζικού τομέα, στη συνέχιση της διαδικασίας δημοσιονομικής εξυγίανσης και στη στήριξη της ανταγωνιστικότητας και της βιώσιμης και ισόρροπης ανάπτυξης.

Στις 13 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013, η Ευρωομάδα σημείωσε με ικανοποίηση ότι η Τράπεζα Κύπρου εξήλθε από το καθεστώς εξυγίανσης στις 30 Ιουλίου. Το γεγονός αυτό αποτελεί ορόσημο για την αποκατάσταση της εμπιστοσύνης στον κυπριακό χρηματοπιστωτικό τομέα.

([1]) Οι δηλώσεις της Ευρωομάδας είναι διαθέσιμες στην ηλεκτρονική διεύθυνση: http://www.eurozone.europa.eu/eurogroup
([2]) ΕΕ L 141 της 28.5.2013, σ. 32.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009657/13
to the Council
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(28 August 2013)

Subject: Danger of non-European — in particular Russian — interests controlling the Bank of Cyprus

One side effect of the Eurogroup's — in my view, completely misguided — decisions and the haircut on deposits imposed in Cyprus is the risk that the main systemic bank on the island may fall into the hands of foreign, non-European, especially Russian, interests.

The New York Times has also published an article pointing out the risk that the Bank of Cyprus may finally end up in Russian hands. As it tellingly notes: 'When European leaders engineered a harsh bailout deal for this tiny Mediterranean nation in March, they cheered the end of an economic model fueled by a flood of cash from Russia. Wealthy Russians with money in Cyprus's sickly banks lost billions. But the Russians, though badly bruised, are now in a position to get something that has previously eluded even Moscow's most audacious oligarchs: control of a so-called systemic financial institution in the European Union.'

In the case of Cyprus, as the newspaper states, this strategy has generated 'unintended consequences', since, while the EU's declared objective was to 'banish…dirty Russian money' from Cyprus's troubled banks, it has pulled Russians even deeper into Europe's financial system by giving them majority ownership, at least on paper, of the Bank of Cyprus

Financial and legal circles in Cyprus estimate the stake held by major Russian shareholders in the Bank of Cyprus at between 53% and 60%.

In view of the above, will the Council say:

1. Was it aware of the above risk when the decisions were taken to perform a haircut on Cypriot deposits?

2. Does it believe that the possible control of the main systemic bank in Cyprus by the so-called Russian oligarchs really represents a danger for the economy of Cyprus and the EU?

3. If the answer to question 2 is in the affirmative, can it identify what these risks are and explain why they were ignored when the relevant decisions were taken?

4. In the light of this development, does the Council now realise that the decisions on Cyprus were mistaken and not sufficiently thought through and that they have had disastrous consequences, or does it still believe that they were the right decisions to take?

Reply
(5 November 2013)

On 25 March 2013, the Eurogroup welcomed the policy plans presented by the Cyprus authorities and agreed to the measures for restructuring the financial sector as specified in the annex to its statement of 25 March 2013 ([1]). These measures form the basis for restoring the viability of the financial sector. In particular, they safeguard all deposits below EUR 100 000 in accordance with EU principles.

Council Decision 2013/236/EU of 25 April 2013 addressed to Cyprus on specific measures to restore financial stability and sustainable growth ([2]) set out the elements of a three-year macroeconomic adjustment programme aimed at restoring the soundness of Cyprus' banking industry, continuing the process of fiscal consolidation and supporting competitiveness and sustainable and balanced growth.

On 13 September 2013 the Eurogroup noted with satisfaction that the Bank of Cyprus had been taken out of resolution on 30 July. That marked an important milestone for restoring confidence in the Cypriot financial sector.

([1]) Eurogroup statements can be found at http://www.eurozone.europa.eu/eurogroup
([2]) OJ L 141, 28.5.2013, p. 32.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-009658/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(28 Αυγούστου 2013)

Θέμα: Κίνδυνος ελέγχου της Τράπεζας Κύπρου από εξωευρωπαϊκά, ρωσικά συμφέροντα

Μια παράπλευρη συνέπεια των εντελώς λανθασμένων, κατά την άποψή μου, αποφάσεων του Eurogroup και του κουρέματος των καταθέσεων που επιβλήθηκε στην Κύπρο είναι και ο διαφαινόμενος κίνδυνος η κύρια συστημική τράπεζα του νησιού να περιέλθει στα χέρια ξένων, εξωευρωπαϊκών συμφερόντων, και δη ρωσικών.

Τον κίνδυνο η Τράπεζα Κύπρου να καταλήξει τελικά σε ρωσικά χέρια επισημαίνει σε άρθρο της και η New York Times. Όπως αναφέρει χαρακτηριστικά, «όταν οι Ευρωπαίοι ηγέτες σχεδίαζαν το σκληρό πακέτο διάσωσης της Κύπρου τον Μάρτιο, επευφημούσαν το τέλος ενός οικονομικού μοντέλου που στηρίχθηκε στο ρωσικό χρήμα. Οι πλούσιοι Ρώσοι που είχαν χρήματα στις προβληματικές τράπεζες της Κύπρου έχασαν δισεκατομμύρια. Όμως, παρά το άσχημο πλήγμα που δέχθηκαν, οι Ρώσοι είναι πλέον σε θέση να πάρουν κάτι που μέχρι προ τινος είχε ξεφύγει ακόμα και από τους πιο θρασείς ολιγάρχες της Μόσχας: τον έλεγχο ενός συστημικού τραπεζικού ιδρύματος στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση».

Στην περίπτωση της Κύπρου, όπως αναφέρει η εφημερίδα, δημιουργήθηκαν «ακούσιες συνέπειες», αφού ενώ ο δεδηλωμένος στόχος της ΕΕ ήταν να «εξαλείψουν» το «βρόμικο» ρωσικό χρήμα από τις προβληματικές τράπεζες της μεγαλονήσου, τελικά έβαλαν τους Ρώσους ακόμα βαθύτερα στο χρηματοοικονομικό σύστημα της Ευρώπης, δίνοντάς τους πλειοψηφικό μερίδιο — στα χαρτιά τουλάχιστον — της Τράπεζας Κύπρου.

Οικονομικοί και νομικοί κύκλοι της Κύπρου εκτιμούν ότι το ποσοστό που θα κατέχουν οι Ρώσοι μεγαλομέτοχοι στην Τράπεζα Κύπρου θα κυμαίνεται μεταξύ 53% και 60%.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή.

1. Ήταν ενήμερη του πιο πάνω κινδύνου όταν λαμβάνονταν οι αποφάσεις για κούρεμα των κυπριακών καταθέσεων;

2. Θεωρεί ότι όντως δημιουργούνται κίνδυνοι για την κυπριακή και την ευρωπαϊκή οικονομία από τον ενδεχόμενο έλεγχο της κύριας συστημικής τράπεζας της Κύπρου από τους λεγόμενους Ρώσους ολιγάρχες;

3. Αν η απάντηση στο ερώτημα 2 είναι θετική, μπορεί να κατονομάσει ποιοι είναι οι κίνδυνοι αυτοί και να εξηγήσει γιατί αγνοήθηκαν κατά τη λήψη των σχετικών αποφάσεων;

4. Μετά την εξέλιξη αυτή συνειδητοποιεί πλέον η Επιτροπή ότι οι αποφάσεις για την Κύπρο ήταν πρόχειρες και λανθασμένες και ότι είχαν καταστροφικά αποτελέσματα ή μήπως εξακολουθεί ακόμη να πιστεύει στην ορθότητα των αποφάσεων;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(25 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Οι κυπριακές αρχές είναι αυτές που αποφασίζουν σχετικά με την οργάνωση της εκπροσώπησης των μετόχων στην Τράπεζα Κύπρου και θα πρέπει να εξασφαλίζουν την κατάλληλη ισορροπία μεταξύ των δικαιωμάτων των μετόχων αφενός και πιθανών θεμάτων διακυβέρνησης αφετέρου, ιδίως από τη στιγμή που, μετά την αναδιάρθρωση, πολλοί καταθέτες είναι πλέον μέτοχοι.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009658/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(28 August 2013)

Subject: Danger of non-European — in particular Russian — interests controlling the Bank of Cyprus

One side effect of the Eurogroup's — in my view, completely misguided — decisions and the haircut on deposits imposed in Cyprus is the risk that the main systemic bank on the island may fall into the hands of foreign, non-European, especially Russian, interests.

The New York Times has also published an article pointing out the risk that the Bank of Cyprus may finally end up in Russian hands. As it tellingly notes: 'When European leaders engineered a harsh bailout deal for this tiny Mediterranean nation in March, they cheered the end of an economic model fueled by a flood of cash from Russia. Wealthy Russians with money in Cyprus's sickly banks lost billions. But the Russians, though badly bruised, are now in a position to get something that has previously eluded even Moscow's most audacious oligarchs: control of a so-called systemic financial institution in the European Union.'

In the case of Cyprus, as the newspaper states, this strategy has generated 'unintended consequences', since, while the EU's declared objective was to 'banish…dirty Russian money' from Cyprus's troubled banks, it has pulled Russians even deeper into Europe's financial system by giving them majority ownership, at least on paper, of the Bank of Cyprus

Financial and legal circles in Cyprus estimate the stake held by major Russian shareholders in the Bank of Cyprus at between 53% and 60%.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Was it aware of the above risk when the decisions were taken to perform a haircut on Cypriot deposits?

2. Does it believe that the possible control of the main systemic bank in Cyprus by the so-called Russian oligarchs really represents a danger for the economy of Cyprus and the EU?

3. If the answer to question 2 is in the affirmative, can it identify what these risks are and explain why they were ignored when the relevant decisions were taken?

4. In the light of this development, does the Commission now realise that the decisions on Cyprus were mistaken and not sufficiently thought through and that they have had disastrous consequences, or does it still believe that they were the right decisions to take?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(25 October 2013)

It is for the Cypriot authorities to decide on the organisation of the representation of shareholders in Bank of Cyprus and to strike the appropriate balance between shareholders rights and the potential governance issues, especially as a lot of depositors are now shareholders further to the restructuration.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-009659/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(28 Αυγούστου 2013)

Θέμα: Αύξηση της φτώχειας στην ΕΕ

Είναι κοινή πεποίθηση ότι, λόγω της συνεχιζόμενης οικονομικής κρίσης, το φαινόμενο της φτώχειας σημειώνει ραγδαία αύξηση σε πολλά κράτη μέλη της Ένωσης. Στις αρχές του 2012, η Επιτροπή ανακοίνωσε την πρόθεσή της να διεξαγάγει έρευνα για χαρτογράφηση της φτώχειας στην ΕΕ, με στόχο την καλύτερη κατανόηση και αποτελεσματικότερη αντιμετώπιση του φαινομένου.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Έχει ολοκληρωθεί η έρευνα αυτή; Αν ναι, είναι σε θέση, με βαση τα ευρήματα της έρευνας, να παράσχει συγκριτικά στοιχεία για τη φτώχεια στα κράτη μέλη;

2. Πώς εξελίσσεται διαχρονικά το επίπεδο της φτώχειας στην ΕΕ τα τελευταία χρόνια, ιδιαίτερα μετά την εκδήλωση της οικονομικής κρίσης το 2008;

3. Η Κύπρος, χώρα με παραδοσιακά υψηλό ποσοστό ατόμων κάτω από το όριο της φτώχειας, ιδιαίτερα μεταξύ των ατόμων τρίτης ηλικίας, αντιμετωπίζει σήμερα δραματική αύξηση του επιπέδου φτώχειας. Τι προτίθεται να πράξει η Επιτροπή για απάμβλυνση του φαινομένου, το οποίο δημιουργεί αφόρητες συνθήκες για μεγάλο μέρος του πληθυσμού;

4. Κατά τη διαμόρφωση του πακέτου μέτρων για διάσωση της κυπριακής οικονομίας, λήφθηκαν καθόλου υπόψη οι αναμενόμενες επιπτώσεις των μέτρων στο επίπεδο της φτώχειας στη χώρα; Αν ναι, πώς εξηγεί η Επιτροπή τη συνεχιζόμενη ραγδαία αύξηση του επιπέδου της φτώχειας στη χώρα;

5. Υπάρχουν παραδείγματα καλών πρακτικών σε κράτη μέλη, τα οποία θα μπορούσαν να αξιοποιηθούν και σε άλλα κράτη μέλη;

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(23 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

1. Το τρέχον σχέδιο χαρτογράφησης της φτώχειας αφορά τη χωροταξική κατανομή του κινδύνου φτώχειας σε αναλυτικότερο επίπεδο, δηλαδή (NUTS3 και LAU1) σε σχέση με το επίπεδο για το οποίο υπάρχουν στοιχεία της ESTAT σχετικά με το εισόδημα. Το έργο αυτό δεν έχει ολοκληρωθεί και δεν παρέχει συγκριτικά στοιχεία σχετικά με τη φτώχεια στα κράτη μέλη.

2. Η ΕΕ και τα κράτη μέλη έχουν αναπτύξει μια ολοκληρωμένη στρατηγική τόσο σε ευρωπαϊκό όσο και σε εθνικό επίπεδο, ώστε να διασφαλιστεί η άμεση μείωση της φτώχειας και του κοινωνικού αποκλεισμού. Η κρίση και οι μεγάλες προσπάθειες δημοσιονομικής εξυγίανσης σε πολλά κράτη μέλη δημιούργησαν ανησυχίες σχετικά με την αύξηση της φτώχειας. Το 2011, τέσσερα εκατομμύρια περισσότερα άτομα βρέθηκαν αντιμέτωπα με τον κίνδυνο της φτώχειας ή του κοινωνικού αποκλεισμού στην ΕΕ σε σύγκριση με το 2008.

3. Όσον αφορά τη φτώχεια και ιδίως τη φτώχεια των ηλικιωμένων, το μνημόνιο συνεννόησης για τους ειδικούς όρους της οικονομικής πολιτικής, προβλέπει ότι η Κύπρος θα κάνει μεταρρυθμίσεις στις υφιστάμενες κοινωνικές παροχές και θα βελτιώσει τους στόχους της. Το νέο σύστημα ελάχιστου εγγυημένου εισοδήματος ([1]), το οποίο θα αντικαταστήσει το υπάρχον σύστημα δημοσίων βοηθημάτων, αναμένεται να έχει θετικό αντίκτυπο στην άμβλυνση της ακραίας φτώχειας.

4. Οι στατιστικές για τη φτώχεια και τον κοινωνικό αποκλεισμό μετά το 2011 δεν είναι ακόμη διαθέσιμες για την Κύπρο, ωστόσο τα επίπεδα της φτώχειας ενδέχεται να επηρεάζονται. Όσον αφορά το σύστημα κοινωνικής πρόνοιας, το πρόγραμμα δίνει έμφαση στο ζωτικής σημασίας ρόλο του ως διχτυού ασφαλείας, προωθώντας την αποτελεσματικότητά του μέσω του εξορθολογισμού, της βελτιωμένης διοικητικής ικανότητας και της καλύτερης στόχευσης των παροχών.

([1]) GMI.

5. Η δέσμη μέτρων για τις κοινωνικές επενδύσεις της Επιτροπής ([2]) παρουσιάζει μια νέα ατζέντα για την κοινωνική πολιτική που θα βοηθήσει τα κράτη μέλη να ολοκληρώσουν τις διαρθρωτικές μεταρρυθμίσεις που απαιτούνται για να διασφαλιστεί ότι η ΕΕ θα εξέλθει από την κρίση ισχυρότερη, πιο συνεκτική και πιο ανταγωνιστική. Χαρακτηριστικά παραδείγματα προσέγγισης κοινωνικών επενδύσεων αναπτύσσονται στο σχετικό φυλλάδιο ([3]).

([2]) Δέσμη μέτρων για τις κοινωνικές επενδύσεις — 2013.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=7515&type=2&furtherPubs=yes

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009659/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(28 August 2013)

Subject: Increase in poverty in the EU

It is widely accepted that there has been a big increase in poverty in many EU Member States due to the ongoing economic crisis. At the beginning of 2012, the Commission had announced its intention of conducting a survey to map poverty in the EU in order to better understand the phenomenon and combat it more effectively.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Has this survey been completed? If so, can it use the findings of this survey to provide comparative data on poverty in the Member States?

2. How has the level of poverty in the EU increased in recent years, particularly since the onset of the financial crisis in 2008?

3. Cyprus, a country which has traditionally had a high proportion of persons living below the poverty line, particularly among the elderly, is currently facing a dramatic increase in poverty levels. What will it do to mitigate this phenomenon, which is making life extremely difficult for a large part of the population?

4. When the rescue package was being put together to save the economy of Cyprus, was any account taken of the likely impact of the measures on the level of poverty in the country? If so, how can the Commission explain the fact that poverty levels in the country are continuing to soar?

5. Do any examples exist of good practices in some Member States which could be applied in other Member States?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(23 October 2013)

1. The current project on poverty mapping is about tracking spatial distribution of at-risk-of-poverty at a more detailed level, i.e. (NUTS3 and LAU1) than the level for which ESTAT data on income exist. The maps will be finished by the end of 2013. Dissemination activities will start in 2014. However, the maps are not intended to compare data on poverty.

2. An integrated strategy to fight poverty and social exclusion has been developed at both European and national level. The crisis and the large fiscal consolidation efforts have led to growing inequalities. In 2011, there were four million more people at risk of poverty or social exclusion in the EU compared to 2008.

3. Concerning poverty and especially poverty among the elderly, the memorandum of understanding on Specific Economic Policy Conditionality foresees that Cyprus will reform the existing social benefits, also improving their targeting. The new guaranteed minimum income scheme ([1]) replacing the existing public assistance scheme is expected to have a positive impact on mitigating extreme poverty.

4. Poverty and social exclusion statistics after 2011 are not yet available for Cyprus, but poverty levels are likely to be affected. With respect to the welfare system, the programme puts emphasis on its crucial role as safety net, promoting its efficiency via streamlining, improved administrative capacity and better targeting.

5. The Commission's Social Investment Package ([2]) outlines a new social policy direction helping the Member States to carry out the structural reforms needed to ensure that the EU comes out of the crisis stronger, more cohesive and more competitive. Examples of the social investment approach are explained in the relevant brochure ([3]).

([1]) GMI.
([2]) COM(2013) 83 final.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=7515&type=2&furtherPubs=yes

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-009660/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(28 Αυγούστου 2013)

Θέμα: Δασικές πυρκαγιές σε Μεσογειακά κράτη μέλη της Ένωσης

Η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση διατηρεί Ταμείο Αλληλεγγύης, προκειμένου να ανταποκρίνεται σε περιπτώσεις φυσικών καταστροφών σε κράτη μέλη.

Στο παρελθόν, το ταμείο αυτό ενεργοποιήθηκε σε κάποιες περιπτώσεις για την αντιμετώπιση των συνεπειών, μεταξύ άλλων, και μεγάλων πυρκαγιών.

Επειδή στα μεσογειακά κράτη μέλη της Ένωσης, το φαινόμενο των δασικών πυρκαγιών είναι πολύ διαδεδομένο, ιδιαίτερα κατά την καλοκαιρινή περίοδο λόγω της ξηρασίας και των υψηλών θερμοκρασιών, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Ποιο το ύψος των διαθέσιμων πόρων του Ταμείου για το υπόλοιπο του 2013 και κατά πόσο αυτό κρίνεται ικανοποιητικό για αντιμετώπιση της κατάστασης;

2. Υπο ποίες προϋποθέσεις ένα κράτος μέλος μπορεί να επωφεληθεί από τους πόρους του Ταμείου;

3. Είναι δυνατή η αξιοποίηση πόρων του Ταμείου για αποκατάσταση ζημιών εξαιτίας των πυρκαγιών, καθώς και για την αναδάσωση καμένων δασικών εκτάσεων;

4. Τι προτίθεται να πράξει η Επιτροπή ώστε να υπάρξει μια αποτελεσματική πολιτική αντιμετώπισης του φαινομένου των καταστροφικών δασικών πυρκαγιών;

5. Η Κύπρος, η οποία υπέστη αριθμό μεγάλων πυρκαγιών το φετινό καλοκαίρι, μπορεί να ζητήσει οικονομική βοήθεια από το Ταμείο, υπό ποίες προϋποθέσεις και μέχρι ποίου ποσού;

Απάντηση του κ. Hahn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(21 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Καμία αίτηση δεν έχει παραληφθεί σχετικά με τις δασικές πυρκαγιές ή την ξηρασία κατά τη διάρκεια αυτού του έτους. Ο μέγιστος ετήσιος προϋπολογισμός του Ταμείου Αλληλεγγύης το 2013 ανέρχεται σε 1 δισεκατομμύριο ευρώ από τον οποίο προς το παρόν, περισσότερο από το 50% είναι ακόμη διαθέσιμο. Κατά πόσον αυτό θα είναι επαρκές για να αντιμετωπιστούν οι φετινές πυρκαγιές των δασών, αυτό θα μπορούσε μόνο να ειπωθεί εάν και όταν οι πληγείσες χώρες υποβάλουν αιτήσεις ενίσχυσης. Η Επιτροπή δεν μπορεί να ενεργοποιήσει το Ταμείο Αλληλεγγύης με δική της πρωτοβουλία.

Το Ταμείο μπορεί να ενεργοποιηθεί σε περίπτωση μείζονος φυσικής καταστροφής σε ένα κράτος μέλος ή μια χώρα που βρίσκεται σε διαδικασία διαπραγμάτευσης της προσχώρησής της στην Ένωση, ύστερα από αίτηση της ενδιαφερόμενης χώρας. «Μείζων» θεωρείται η συνολική άμεση ζημία άνω του 0,6% του ακαθάριστου εθνικού εισοδήματος της πληγείσας χώρας ή 3 δισεκατομμύρια ευρώ σε τιμές 2002. Σε πολύ εξαιρετικές περιπτώσεις, υπό συγκεκριμένους όρους, το Ταμείο μπορεί να ενεργοποιηθεί για καταστροφές για ζημίες κάτω από το όριο. Η ενίσχυση από το Ταμείο Αλληλεγγύης μπορεί να χρησιμοποιηθεί για τις δημόσιες ενέργειες έκτακτης ανάγκης, όπως η αποκατάσταση βασικών υποδομών. Η αναδάσωση δεν συμπεριλαμβάνεται.

Οι κυπριακές αρχές μπορεί να υποβάλουν αίτηση ενίσχυσης εντός της προθεσμίας των 10 εβδομάδων από την έναρξη της καταστροφής. Τα ποσά της ενίσχυσης καθορίζονται βάσει της ζημίας που προκλήθηκε. Η Επιτροπή είναι πρόθυμη να παράσχει καθοδήγηση.

Το ΕΓΤΑΑ ([1]) παρέχει υποστήριξη για την πρόληψη των δασικών πυρκαγιών και την αποκατάσταση. Στο πλαίσιο της κοινής διαχείρισης, τα κράτη μέλη και οι περιφέρειες αποφασίζουν τον τρόπο που θα χρησιμοποιούν το ΕΓΤΑΑ και την προτεραιότητα που θα δώσουν στην πρόληψη των δασικών πυρκαγιών και ενεργειών αποκατάστασης. Ο κανονισμός της Επιτροπής για την αγροτική ανάπτυξη για την περίοδο 2014-2020 ([2]) προβλέπει τη συνέχιση της χρηματοδότησης για τις δραστηριότητες πρόληψης και αποκατάστασης ζημίας στα δάση που καταστράφηκαν από πυρκαγιές και άλλες φυσικές καταστροφές.

([1]) Ευρωπαϊκό Γεωργικό Ταμείο Αγροτικής Ανάπτυξης.
([2]) COM(2011)627/3.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009660/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(28 August 2013)

Subject: Forest fires in Mediterranean EU Member States

The European Union maintains a Solidarity Fund to respond to natural disasters in Member States.

In the past, this Fund has been used in some cases to address the consequences of major fires, *inter alia*.

Given that forest fires are very common in the Mediterranean Member States of the Union, especially during the summer due to the drought and high temperatures, will the Commission say:

1. What amount of funding is still available from the Fund for the remainder of 2013, and will this be sufficient to deal with the situation?

2. Under what conditions may a Member State receive resources from the Fund?

3. It is possible to use Fund resources to repair damage caused by fires, and for the reforestation of forestry land affected by fires?

4. What measures will it take to ensure that there is an effective policy in place to tackle the phenomenon of catastrophic forest fires?

5. Can Cyprus, which has suffered a number of major fires this summer, apply for assistance from the Fund? If so, under what conditions and what amount can it seek?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(21 October 2013)

No application relating to forest fires or drought has been received during this year. The maximum annual allocation of the Solidarity Fund in 2013 is EUR 1 billion of which more than half is still available at this moment. Whether this will be sufficient to deal with this year's forest fires could only be said if and when the affected countries have presented applications for aid. The Commission may not activate the Solidarity Fund upon is own initiative.

The Fund can be activated if a major natural disaster occurs in a Member State or country in the process of negotiating its accession to the Union following an application by the country concerned. 'Major' meaning total direct damage in excess of 0.6% of the affected country's gross national income or 3 EUR billion in 2002 prices. Very exceptionally, under specific conditions, the Fund can be mobilised for disasters with damage below the threshold. Aid from the Solidarity Fund may be used for public emergency operations such as the restoration of essential infrastructure. Reforestation is not eligible.

The Cypriot authorities may apply for aid within the deadline of 10 weeks of the start of the disaster. Amounts of aid are determined on the basis of the damage caused. The Commission stands ready to provide guidance.

The EAFRD ([1]) provides support for forest fire prevention and restoration. In the framework of shared management, it is the Member States and regions that decide how to use the EAFRD and the priority they give to forest fire prevention and restoration actions. The Commission's Rural Development Regulation proposal for 2014-2020 ([2]) proposes continued funding for activities preventing and restoring forest damage from fires and other natural disasters.

([1]) European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development.
([2]) COM(2011) 627/3.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-009661/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(28 Αυγούστου 2013)

Θέμα: Λανθασμένη αναφορά Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής σε ελληνοκυπριακή πλευρά αντί στην επίσημη Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία

Σε απάντηση στη γραπτή ερώτησή μου αρ. E-006481/2013 με θέμα: «Πώληση υποκαταστημάτων κυπριακών τραπεζών στην Τράπεζα Πειραιώς», η Επιτροπή αναφέρει μεταξύ άλλων, επί λέξει, τα ακόλουθα:

«η Τρόικα ενθάρρυνε την ελληνική και την ελληνοκυπριακή πλευρά να διαπραγματευθούν την πώληση των εν λόγω υποκαταστημάτων».

Θεωρώ την αναφορά σε «ελληνοκυπριακή πλευρά» ως εξαιρετικά ατυχή και δυνάμενη να δημιουργήσει λανθασμένες εντυπώσεις, με σοβαρές πολιτικές παρενέργειες, τόσο για την Κύπρο όσο και για την ίδια την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση. Όπως γνωρίζετε, η Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία, χώρα — ισότιμο μέλος της ΕΕ, δέχεται αφόρητες πιέσεις και απειλές από μια υποψήφια για ένταξη χώρα, την Τουρκία. Η αναφορά σε ελληνοκυπριακή πλευρά και η αμφισβήτηση της οντότητας της Κυπριακής Δημοκρατίας σε επίσημα έγγραφα της ΕΕ πλήττει τα συμφέροντα της Κύπρου και εξυπηρετεί τα επεκτατικά και διχοτομικά σχέδια της Τουρκίας σε βάρος ενός κράτους μέλους.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή.

1. Θεωρεί πολιτικά θεμιτή τη χρήση του όρου «ελληνοκυπριακή πλευρά» σε ένα επίσημο κείμενο στο οποίο σαφώς θα έπρεπε να γίνεται αναφορά στην Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία;

2. Αν η συμπερίληψη του όρου έγινε από λάθος, είναι έτοιμη η Επιτροπή να απολογηθεί και να επανορθώσει το σφάλμα της;

3. Τι προτίθεται να πράξει ώστε μελλοντικά να αποφεύγονται τέτοια σοβαρά λάθη που θα μπορούσαν να διασαλεύσουν τις σχέσεις μεταξύ της Ένωσης και ενός κράτους μέλους;

Απάντηση της κ. Βασιλείου εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(15 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή εκφράζει τη βαθύτατη λύπη της για την εσφαλμένη χρήση του όρου «η ελληνοκυπριακή πλευρά» αντί του όρου «η κυπριακή πλευρά» στη μετάφραση προς την ελληνική γλώσσα, της απάντησής της στη γραπτή ερώτηση E-006481/2013 και επιβεβαιώνει ότι επρόκειτο για καθαρά μεταφραστικό σφάλμα.

Μια διορθωμένη έκδοση του κειμένου έχει ήδη αποσταλεί στο Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο.

Οι υπηρεσίες της Επιτροπής καταβάλλουν κάθε δυνατή προσπάθεια για να διασφαλίσουν την ποιότητα των κειμένων τους και σφάλματα όπως αυτά που εντόπισε η κυρία Βουλευτής, είναι πράγματι πολύ σπάνια. Παρ' όλα αυτά, η Επιτροπή συνεχώς προσπαθεί να παράγει έγγραφα υψίστης ποιότητας.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009661/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(28 August 2013)

Subject: Incorrect reference by the Commission, in the Greek text of its answer to a written question, to the 'Greek Cypriot side' instead of to the official Republic of Cyprus

In the Greek-language version of its answer to my written question No. E-006481/2013 on the 'Sale of Cypriot bank branches to Piraeus Bank' the Commission stated inter alia, verbatim: '… the Troika encouraged the Greek side and the Greek Cypriot side to negotiate a sale of these branches.'

The reference in the Greek version to the '*Greek Cypriot side*' is extremely unfortunate and liable to create a false impression, with serious political repercussions, both for Cyprus and for the European Union itself. As you will be aware, the Republic of Cyprus — a full member of the EU — is being subjected to unacceptable pressure and threats from a candidate country, namely Turkey. The reference to the '*Greek Cypriot side*' and the calling into question of the existence of the Republic of Cyprus in official EU documents affects the interests of Cyprus and serves Turkey's expansionist and partitionist plans against a Member State.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Does it consider politically legitimate the use of the term '*Greek Cypriot side*' in an official document which should clearly refer to the Republic of Cyprus?

2. If the inclusion of the term was an error, is the Commission prepared to apologise and rectify its error?

3. What will it do to prevent in future serious errors of this kind that could undermine relations between the Union and a Member State?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(15 October 2013)

The Commission deeply regrets the erroneous use of the term 'the Greek Cypriot side' instead of 'the Cypriot side' in the translation into Greek of its answer to Written Question E-006481/2013 and confirms that this was a purely linguistic error.

A corrected version of the text has already been sent to the European Parliament.

The Commission services strive to ensure the quality of their texts, and errors such as that identified by the Honourable Member are very rare indeed. Nevertheless, the Commission is constantly intensifying its efforts to produce documents of the highest quality.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-009662/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(28 Αυγούστου 2013)

Θέμα: Πτήσεις αεροσκαφών από Ηνωμένο Βασίλειο προς παράνομο αεροδρόμιο ERCAN, στην κατεχόμενη Κύπρο

Δημοσιογραφικές πληροφορίες αναφέρουν ότι από βρετανικά αεροδρόμια (Stansted, Manchester, Glasgow) πραγματοποιούνται πτήσεις της τουρκικής αεροπορικής εταιρείας PEGASUS προς το παράνομο αεροδρόμιο ERCAN, στο κατεχόμενο από τουρκικά στρατεύματα τμήμα της Κύπρου. Οι πτήσεις αυτές, εκτός του ότι είναι παράνομες, θέτουν και σε κίνδυνο την ασφάλεια της αεροναυσιπλοΐας στην περιοχή, αφού παραβιάζουν το FIR Λευκωσίας και άλλα δικαιώματα της Κυπριακής Δημοκρατίας.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Είναι σε γνώση της οι πληροφορίες αυτές;

2. Ποιες οι ευθύνες της Τουρκίας, μιας υπό ένταξη χώρας, που επιτρέπει τις παράνομες δραστηριότητες της εταιρείας PEGASUS, μεταξύ Ηνωμένου Βασιλείου και Κύπρου;

3. Ποιος θα φέρει την ευθύνη σε περίπτωση που η απαράδεκτη αυτή κατάσταση οδηγήσει σε αεροπορικό δυστύχημα στην περιοχή;

4. Τι προτίθεται να πράξει η Επιτροπή για τερματισμό της απαράδεκτης αυτής κατάστασης;

5. Τι προνοεί ο Διεθνής Νόμος και κανονισμοί σε τέτοιες περιπτώσεις;

Απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(5 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου στην απάντησή της στη γραπτή ερώτηση E-005383/2013 και στη γραπτή ερώτηση E-005343/2013 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009662/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(28 August 2013)

Subject: Flights from the UK to the illegal airport of ERCAN, in occupied Cyprus

It has been reported in the press that the Turkish airline PEGASUS is operating flights from UK airports (Stansted, Manchester, Glasgow) to the illegal airport of ERCAN, in the part of Cyprus occupied by Turkish troops. These flights are not only illegal, they also pose a threat to air traffic in the region, since they violate Nicosia FIR and other rights of the Republic of Cyprus.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Is it aware of this information?

2. What share of the responsibility lies with Turkey, a candidate country, which allows the illegal operations of PEGASUS airlines between the UK and Cyprus?

3. Who will be responsible in the event that this unacceptable situation results in a plane crash in the region?

4. What will the Commission do to end this unacceptable situation?

5. What is stipulated by international laws and regulations in such cases?

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

The Commission would kindly refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-005383/2013 and to Written Question E-005343/2013 ([1]).

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

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-009663/13
a la Comisión
Pablo Zalba Bidegain (PPE)
(28 de agosto de 2013)

Asunto: Derechos de los menores

Cada vez se dan más situaciones de parejas o matrimonios entre europeos y japoneses con hijos comunes que, cuando se da el caso de la ruptura de la pareja o del matrimonio por cualquier causa, los derechos tanto de los progenitores como de los hijos se ven seriamente mermados o incluso anulados, debido a que la legislación japonesa prevé que, en tal caso, solo uno de los progenitores ostente en exclusiva la patria potestad sobre los menores, privando incluso al otro progenitor del más mínimo derecho de visita a menos que el otro progenitor lo consienta voluntariamente.

Al parecer, el Parlamento japonés aprobó el pasado mes de mayo la ratificación por su parte de la Convención de la Haya contra el Secuestro Infantil Parental, suscrito ya por un centenar de países, si bien no entrará en vigor hasta 2014. No tiene carácter retroactivo y tampoco supone ningún cambio en la legislación nipona relativa al Derecho Civil de Familia que contemple de alguna forma algún tipo de régimen de visitas en estos casos por parte del progenitor no custodio.

En un caso concreto, por ejemplo, el Juzgado de Primera Instancia 8 de Pamplona (Navarra, España) ha dictado un auto por el que exige a un padre español entregar a sus hijos menores a su ex mujer nipona para que ostente ella la guardia y custodia en exclusiva sobre los hijos menores comunes con su consiguiente traslado a Japón y sin que quede amparado estrictamente el posible derecho de visitas del padre, al no estar contemplado tal derecho en la legislación japonesa y al no poder hacer ejecutar el padre las resoluciones judiciales europeas en materia de familia en Japón.

En el marco de las negociaciones UE-Japón sobre el nuevo Tratado de Libre Comercio, que como sabemos, puede y debe recoger aspectos relacionados con el respeto a los derechos humanos y asuntos relativos al Derecho Internacional Civil, ¿tiene intención la UE de exigir a Japón un cambio en su legislación civil interna que proteja los derechos tanto de los hijos menores como de los progenitores no custodios, en cuanto al régimen de visitas del progenitor no custodio se refiere, en los casos de ruptura matrimonial o de pareja entre un nacional japonés y un europeo con hijos comunes entre ellos?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(1 de octubre de 2013)

La Comisión acoge favorablemente la decisión de Japón de suscribir el Convenio sobre los aspectos civiles de la sustracción internacional de menores. Este hecho, largamente esperado, reforzará el marco jurídico internacional destinado a proteger los derechos del niño en las disputas transfronterizas. La UE participó en algunas de las gestiones diplomáticas para incitar a Japón a suscribir el Convenio como continuación de iniciativas anteriores.

No obstante, el objetivo del Convenio es garantizar la rápida devolución de niños retenidos o separados de sus padres indebidamente mediante un sistema de cooperación entre autoridades centrales; no aborda la concesión de regímenes de visitas. Por tanto, sin perjuicio de los efectos positivos que se prevén de esta suscripción, esta no eliminará todas las fuentes de dificultades de los matrimonios mixtos. A tenor del Derecho Civil de Familia nipón, en los procedimientos de divorcio solo se concede la custodia a uno de los progenitores y el otro no tiene derecho a que se le fije un régimen de visitas. Así, cabe la posibilidad real de que uno de los progenitores separe indefinidamente al hijo del otro progenitor como resultado de un divorcio.

Informamos a Su Señoría que, no obstante, tampoco a nivel de la UE existe una normativa que rija la concesión de la custodia y regule el régimen de visitas, que están aún reglamentados por la legislación nacional de los Estados miembros. El llamado «Reglamento Bruselas II bis ([1])» establece reglas para forzar la aplicación de los regímenes de visitas en los procedimientos transfronterizos entre Estados miembros, pero solo cuando ya los hayan establecido los órganos judiciales nacionales.

Por la misma razón, y dado que este asunto no está relacionado con cuestiones comerciales, la Comisión no tiene intención de abordar esta cuestión en las negociaciones de un Acuerdo de Libre Comercio con Japón.

([1]) Reglamento (CE) n° 2201/2003 del Consejo, de 27 de noviembre de 2003, DO L 338 de 23.12.2003, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009663/13
to the Commission
Pablo Zalba Bidegain (PPE)
(28 August 2013)

Subject: Parents' and children's rights

An increasing number of Europeans who have children with Japanese nationals are seeing both their own and their children's rights severely curtailed or even denied when their partnership or marriage breaks down for whatever reason. That is because Japanese law stipulates that, in such cases, parental responsibility will be granted to only one of the parents, thereby denying the other parent visitation rights unless the custodial parent decides otherwise.

It would seem that in May the Japanese Parliament joined some one hundred other countries in ratifying the Hague Convention against Parental Child Abduction, though it will only come into force in 2014. However, the Convention has no retroactive effect and does not alter Japanese family law in any way that would provide for some kind of visitation rights for non-custodial parents in these cases.

In one such case, for example, the Pamplona Court of First Instance No 8 (Navarre, Spain) issued an order requiring a Spanish father to hand over his children to his Japanese ex-wife, thereby giving her sole guardianship and custody over the children. The children went to live in Japan and the father was granted no visitation rights, as no such right is provided for in Japanese law and as European court decisions cannot be enforced on family matters in Japan.

The EU-Japan negotiations on the new free trade agreement can and must address issues relating to human rights and international civil law. In that context, will the EU urge Japan to change its civil law in order to ensure that the rights of children born to mixed European-Japanese couples are safeguarded if their parents' partnership or marriage breaks down and that non-custodial parents are granted visitation rights?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(1 October 2013)

The Commission welcomes Japan's decision to accede to the 1980 Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction. This long-awaited development will strengthen the international legal framework aimed at protecting child's rights in cross-border disputes. The EU participated in some of the diplomatic demarches to encourage Japan to accede to the Convention as a follow-up of previous initiatives.

However, the aim of the Convention is to ensure the prompt return of wrongfully removed or retained children through a system of cooperation among central authorities; it does not deal with the granting of visiting rights. Therefore, notwithstanding the foreseeable positive effects of this accession, it will not remove all sources of difficulties for mixed marriages. Pursuant to Japanese family law, in divorce proceedings, only one parent will have parental authority and no visiting rights are granted to the other. Thus, it may indeed happen that the child is indefinitely separated by one of the parents as a result of a divorce.

We would like to inform the Honourable Member that, however, even at EU level, no legislation covers the granting of custody and the exercise of visiting rights, which are still governed by national law of the Member States. The so-called 'Brussels IIa regulation' ([1]) sets out rules to enforce visiting rights in cross-border procedures between Member States, but only when they are already granted by national judicial authorities.

For the same reason and since this matter is not trade related, the Commission does not intend to address this issue in the Free Trade Agreement negotiations with Japan.

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 2201/2003 of 27 November 2003, OJ L 338, 23.12.2003, p. 1.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-009664/13
an die Kommission
Paul Rübig (PPE)
(28. August 2013)

Betrifft: Überprüfung der Richtlinie zur Beschränkung der Verwendung bestimmter gefährlicher Stoffe (Restriction of Hazardous Substances-Richtlinie-RoHS)

Im Dezember 2010 einigten sich das Europäische Parlament und der Ministerrat auf eine Änderung der RoHS-Richtlinie 2002/95/EG in Bezug auf die Verordnung über gefährliche Stoffe in Elektro- und Elektronikgeräten (RoHS-Recast). Das Europäische Parlament einigte sich gemeinsam mit dem Ministerrat darauf, den Geltungsbereich der Richtlinie bis zum 22. Juli 2014 (Art. 24) einer Überprüfung zu unterziehen. Um die in Artikel 1 festgelegten Ziele zu erreichen, soll gemäß Artikel 6 der Richtlinie die Liste der Stoffe, insbesondere die Liste der Stoffe in Erwägungsgrund 10, einer eingehenden Bewertung unterzogen werden. Berater der Kommission schlagen in diesem Kontext zum wiederholten Male eine lange Liste von Stoffen für eine neuerliche Überprüfung vor, obwohl letztere bei der Annahme der Richtlinie vom Parlament entschieden abgelehnt wurde.

Kann die Kommission in diesem Zusammenhang die folgenden Fragen beantworten:

1. Was gedenkt die Europäische Kommission zu tun, um das Ergebnis der lang und gründlich geführten Diskussion über die Neufassung der RoHS-Richtlinie zu respektieren und insbesondere dem Wunsch des Europäischen Parlaments, keine lange Liste vorzulegen, nachzukommen?

2. Wie gedenkt die Kommission, im Rahmen der RoHS-Richtlinie — zum Beispiel durch die Schaffung einer langen Liste von Stoffen — unnötige wirtschaftliche Schäden zu vermeiden? Hat die Kommission im Zusammenhang mit der RoHS-Richtlinie oder anderen Teilen der Gesetzgebung eine Untersuchung unter den Stakeholdern vorgenommen, die die wirtschaftlichen Auswirkungen der zu überprüfenden aufgelisteten Stoffe darlegt.

3. Haben die Kommission oder die Berater der Kommission berücksichtigt oder in ihre Überprüfung miteinbezogen, welche Auswirkung der angedachte Ansatz einer langen Liste auf den transatlantischen Handel hat?

4. Wie steht die Europäische Kommission zu der Forderung des Europäischen Parlaments nach einer Vereinfachung der Umsetzung der RoHS-Richtlinie und der Vermeidung von Doppelgleisigkeiten im Hinblick auf REACH?

5. Aus welchem Grund wurden die Stakeholder nicht von Beginn an in die Entwicklung der Methodik der Berater miteinbezogen? Beschäftigt die Kommission ihre Berater mit dem gleichen Grad an Transparenz, welcher auch seitens des Parlamentes und Rates erwartet wird?

Antwort von Herrn Potočnik im Namen der Kommission
(1. Oktober 2013)

Bei der von dem Herrn Abgeordneten angesprochenen Liste handelt es sich um ein Inventar von Stoffen in elektrischen und elektronischen Geräten (EEG), das nur den Ausgangspunkt des Überprüfungsprozesses bildet. Es handelt sich nicht um eine lange Liste von Stoffen, die einer Neubewertung unterzogen werden.

Die Arbeit der Kommission zur Überprüfung des Geltungsbereichs der Richtlinie erfolgt in drei Stufen: Erstellung eines Inventars, Bestimmung der vorrangig zu berücksichtigenden Stoffe durch eine Vorbewertung und Bewertung nur derjenigen Stoffe, die sich als vorrangig herausgestellt haben.

Alle Legislativvorschläge der Kommission werden vor der Annahme und der Weiterleitung an die Mitgesetzgeber einer strengen Folgenabschätzung unterzogen.

Das Inventar der chemischen Stoffe in elektrischen und elektronischen Geräten ist ein erster Schritt in diesem Prozess. Die Vorgehensweise ist mit den Interessenträgern, die von Beginn an in das Projekt eingebunden waren, eingehend erörtert worden. Die Durchführung des Projekts ist transparent, und alle diesbezüglichen Informationen sind allgemein zugänglich ([1]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/rohs_eee/review/index_en.htm

Bei der Vorbewertung werden alle verfügbaren REACH-Informationen berücksichtigt, wobei insbesondere auf die Kriterien für Altgeräte gemäß Artikel 6 Absatz 1 eingegangen wird; insofern wird eine Doppelgleisigkeit im Hinblick auf REACH vermieden.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009664/13
to the Commission
Paul Rübig (PPE)
(28 August 2013)

Subject: Review of the directive on the restriction of the use of certain hazardous substances (RoHS Directive)

In December 2010 the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers agreed on an amendment to the Restriction of Hazardous Substances Directive 2002/95/EC with respect to the use of hazardous substances in electrical and electronic equipment (RoHS recast). The European Parliament agreed with the Council to subject the scope of the directive to review by 22 July 2014 (Article 24). With a view to achieving the objectives set out in Article 1 of the directive, Article 6 lays down that the list of substances, in particular the list of substances in recital 10, shall be subject to a thorough assessment. The Commission's advisers are once again proposing, in this context, a long list of substances for re-evaluation, although this was decisively rejected by Parliament when the directive was adopted.

The Commission is requested to answer the following questions in this connection:

1. What action does the European Commission intend to take in order to respect the outcome of the long and thorough discussion of the recast of the RoHS Directive and in particular to comply with the European Parliament's wish that a long list of substances should not be presented?

2. How does the Commission intend to prevent unnecessary economic damage arising in the context of the RoHS Directive — for example as a result of drawing up a long list of substances? Has the Commission conducted an assessment amongst stakeholders, in the context of the RoHS Directive or other sections of the legislation, to show the economic impact of the substances listed for review?

3. Has the Commission or its advisers considered or included in their review the impact which the proposed approach of a long list will have on transatlantic trade?

4. What is the Commission's position on Parliament's demands for the implementation of the RoHS Directive to be simplified and for duplication with regard to REACH to be avoided?

5. Why were stakeholders not brought in from the beginning in developing the methodology used by the advisers? Does the Commission insist on the same degree of transparency with its advisers as is expected from the Parliament and Council?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(1 October 2013)

The list referred to by the Honourable Member is an inventory of substances in electrical and electronic equipment (EEE) and only the starting point for the review process. It does not constitute a long list of substances for re-evaluation.

The Commission's work on the review of the scope of the directive is based on a three-step approach; producing an inventory, prioritising the substances through a pre-assessment and assessing only those substances that score high in the prioritisation.

All Commission legislative proposals are subject to rigorous impact assessment before adoption and dispatch to the co-legislators.

The inventory of chemical substances in EEE is the first step in its process. The approach has been discussed in great detail with stakeholders, which have been involved in the project from the very beginning. The project handling is transparent and all project information is publicly available. ([1])

The pre-assessment step in the process takes all available REACH information into account and focuses on the waste related criteria listed in Article 6 (1), and therefore avoids any duplication with REACH.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/rohs_eee/review/index_en.htm

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-009665/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(28. August 2013)

Betrifft: Anzahl und Kosten von Übersetzern

Im Jahr 2012 arbeiteten 1 474 Übersetzer im Übersetzungsdienst der Europäischen Kommission ([1]).

1. Wie viele verbeamtete und zeitbedienstete Übersetzer beschäftigte der Dienst jeweils in den Jahren 2009, 2010 und 2011?

2. Welche Kosten fielen jeweils in den Jahren 2009, 2010, 2011 und 2012 für die Übersetzung von Dokumenten durch den Dienst der Kommission an?

Antwort von Frau Vassiliou im Namen der Kommission
(17. September 2013)

Die Zahl der im Übersetzungsdienst der Kommission beschäftigten Übersetzer betrug 1 512 im Jahr 2009, 1 533 im Jahr 2010 und 1 494 im Jahr 2011.

Die Gesamtkosten der Übersetzung der Kommission in den Jahren 2009, 2010, 2011 und 2012 betrugen jeweils etwa 330 Mio. EUR. Darin enthalten sind die Kosten für Übersetzer, Support/Verwaltungsaufgaben (wie Koordinierung, Fortbildung, Ressourcenmanagement, Informationstechnologie und Kommunikation) sowie Infrastruktur (Gebäude, Strom, Wasser usw.). Sie umfassen außerdem die Kosten für externe Übersetzung und externe Mitarbeiter.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/translation/whoweare/translation_figures_de.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009665/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(28 August 2013)

Subject: Number and cost of translators

In 2012, 1 474 translators worked in the Commission's translation service ([1]).

1. How many officials and temporary staff were employed as translators in the service in 2009, 2010 and 2011?

2. What was the cost of document translation by the Commission service in 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(17 September 2013)

The number of translators employed in the Commission's translation service was 1512 in 2009, 1533 in 2010, and 1494 in 2011.

The overall cost of translation in the Commission in each of the years 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 was approximately EUR 330 million. This figure includes the cost of translators, support/administrative services (such as coordination, training, resource management, information technology and communication), and infrastructure (buildings, electricity, water etc.). It also includes the cost of external translation services and external staff.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/translation/whoweare/translation_figures_en.pdf

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-009666/13
till kommissionen
Christofer Fjellner (PPE)
(28 augusti 2013)

Angående: Brott mot lagstiftningen om hasardspel

Kommissionen har meddelat att den kommer att se över alla pågående förfaranden avseende överträdelser av lagstiftningen om hasardspel. Överträdelseförfaranden har pågått mot ett antal medlemsstater, bl.a. Sverige och Tyskland, sedan 2008.

För hasardspel på nätet och tekniska föreskrifter för spelautomater måste medlemsstaterna i enlighet med direktiv 98/34/EG meddela vilken nationell lagstiftning som gäller. Enligt detta förfarande granskar kommissionen sedan huruvida de nationella lagarna är förenliga med EU-lagstiftningen.

För att man ska kunna garantera en effektiv tillämpning av EU:s lagstiftning måste överträdelseförfaranden leda till sanktioner mot medlemsstater vars nationella lagstiftning om hasardspel står i strid med EU-lagstiftningen eller som inte i vederbörlig ordning underrättar kommissionen om sina respektive lagar.

1. Håller kommissionen för närvarande på att se över alla pågående överträdelseförfaranden, inbegripet de mot Sverige och Tyskland?

2. Om inte, planerar kommissionen att göra så under 2013, i enlighet med vad som meddelats av ansvarig kommissionsledamot?

Svar från Michel Barnier på kommissionens vägnar
(30 oktober 2013)

Kommissionen håller för närvarande på att se över alla pågående överträdelseförfaranden och klagomål inom området för speltjänster. I sitt meddelande En övergripande europeisk ram för onlinespel ([1]), som antogs den 23 oktober 2012, tillkännagav kommissionen att den kommer att påskynda slutförandet av sin bedömning av nationella bestämmelser i de pågående överträdelseärendena och klagomålen och vidta åtgärder där så är nödvändigt. Efter antagandet av meddelandet kontaktade kommissionen medlemsstaterna mot vilka det finns pågående överträdelseförfaranden och klagomål ([2]) och begärde de rättsliga och (uppdaterade) faktauppgifterna som är nödvändiga för bedömning av om nationella bestämmelser om hasardspel är förenliga med EU-lagstiftningen. Kommissionen håller på att färdigställa sin bedömning och kommer att vidta nödvändiga åtgärder i rätt tid.

([1]) KOM(2012) 596 slutlig.
([2]) Totalt utreder kommissionen mer än 75 registrerade fall av klagomål och överträdelseförfaranden mot 20 medlemsstater, de flesta i samband med onlinespel.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009666/13
to the Commission
Christofer Fjellner (PPE)
(28 August 2013)

Subject: Gambling infringements

The Commission has announced a review of all pending infringement proceedings concerning gambling law. Infringement proceedings against a number of Member States, including Sweden and Germany, have been open since 2008.

With regard to online gambling and technical provisions for gambling machines, Member States have to notify their gambling laws in accordance with Directive 98/34/EC. Under this procedure, the Commission then scrutinises their conformity with EC law.

For the purposes of effective EC law enforcement, infringement proceedings must lead to sanctions against Member States whose national gambling provisions are in breach of EC law or which fail to notify the Commission of their respective laws as required.

1. Is the Commission currently reviewing all pending infringement proceedings, including those against Sweden and Germany?

2. If not, is the Commission planning to do so in 2013, as announced by the Commissioner?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(30 October 2013)

The Commission is currently reviewing all pending infringement proceedings and complaints in the area of gambling services. In its communication 'Towards a comprehensive European framework for online gambling' ([1]), adopted on 23 October 2012, the Commission announced that it will accelerate the completion of its assessment of national provisions in the pending infringement cases and complaints and take enforcement action wherever necessary. Following the adoption of the communication, the Commission services contacted the Member States against whom infringement cases and complaints are open ([2]) and requested the legal and (updated) factual information necessary for the assessment of compatibility of national gambling rules with EC law. The Commission is now finalising its assessment and will take necessary action in due time.

([1]) COM(2012) 596 final.
([2]) In total, the Commission is investigating more than 75 registered complaints and infringement cases against 20 Member States, most of them in the area of online gambling.

(Slovenska različica)

Vprašanje za pisni odgovor E-009667/13
za Komisijo
Mojca Kleva Kekuš (S&D)
(28. avgust 2013)

Zadeva: Pravice žensk v državah vzhodnega partnerstva

Prihodnja ekonomska konkurenčnost in blaginja držav vzhodnega partnerstva sta močno odvisni od sposobnosti teh držav, da uporabijo svojo delovno silo, kar naj bi vključevalo povečano udeležbo žensk na trgu dela.

Podjetništvo med ženskami predstavlja dragocen vir rasti in novih delovnih mest. Zaradi tega je pomembno, da države vzhodnega partnerstva investirajo v podjetništvo med ženskami in omogočijo enostaven dostop do financiranja in večjo razpoložljivost programov mentorstva, usposabljanja in izobraževanja.

Kako Komisija prispeva k zagotavljanju ugodnejših pogojev za podjetnice?

Ali je Komisija v državah vzhodnega partnerstva sprožila posebne programe, ki bi bili namenjeni večanju števila žensk na trgu dela?

Odgovor g. Füleja v imenu Komisije
(23. oktober 2013)

Leta 2012 so bile v okviru indeksa politik za MSP ([1]) („SME Policy Index“), ki poroča o napredku pri izvajanju akta za mala podjetja za Evropo v regiji vzhodnega partnerstva, partnerske države pozvane, naj razvijejo usmerjene politike in konkretne pobude v podporo podjetništvu med ženskami. Poleg tega je bila poudarjena potreba po izboljšanju statistike v podporo ustreznemu odločanju.

Sodelovanje med partnerskimi državami in državami članicami poteka v okviru posebnega odbora za MSP v okviru platforme vzhodnega partnerstva za gospodarsko povezovanje in zbliževanje s politikami EU. Poleg tega Komisija upravlja več projektov, katerih cilj sta izboljšanje enakosti spolov in krepitev vloge žensk, med drugim z izboljšanjem dostopa do poslovnih priložnosti in znanj.

V Armeniji na primer EU podpira t. i. klub oziroma omrežje poslovnih žensk. V Azerbajdžanu je podjetnicam na voljo usposabljanje o upravljanju manjših kreditov. V Gruziji je revnim kmetovalkam v gorski regiji Lentekhi zagotovljena podpora za izboljšanje kakovosti in trženja tradicionalnih ekološko pridelanih živil ter za ustanovitev lastnega malega podjetja. V Ukrajini sodelujemo z nacionalnim združenjem delodajalcev in zvezo sindikatov, da bi zagotovili ustrezno podporo materam, ki so se po starševskem dopustu pripravljene vrniti na delo.

Poleg tega sta programa Erasmus Mundus in Tempus velikemu številu žensk iz regije vzhodnega partnerstva omogočila študij in pridobivanje izkušenj na področju raziskav v EU ter tako izboljšala njihove poklicne možnosti.

([1]) Mala in srednje velika podjetja.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009667/13
to the Commission
Mojca Kleva Kekuš (S&D)
(28 August 2013)

Subject: Women's rights in the Eastern Partnership countries

The future economic competitiveness and prosperity of the Eastern Partnership countries depend crucially on their ability to utilise fully their labour resources, which would involve the increased participation of women in the labour market.

Entrepreneurship among women represents a valuable source of growth and job creation. It is therefore important that the Eastern Partnership countries invest in entrepreneurship among women, as well as facilitate access to finance and ensure greater availability of mentorship schemes, training and education.

How is the Commission contributing to the creation of more favourable conditions for female entrepreneurs?

Has the Commission launched any specific programmes in Eastern Partnership countries which focus on increasing the number of women in the labour market?

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

In 2012, the 'SME ([1]) Policy Index' — reporting on progress in the implementation of the Small Business Act for Europe in the Eastern Partnership region — urged partner countries to develop focused policies and concrete initiatives in support of women's entrepreneurship. It also stressed the need for improved statistics to underpin corresponding decision making.

Cooperation among partner countries and Members States takes place within the framework of a dedicated SME Panel under the EaP Platform on 'Economic integration and convergence with EU policies'. The Commission also runs several projects aimed at improving gender equality and women's empowerment, including by improved access to business opportunities and skills.

In Armenia, for example, the EU supports the 'business women club/network'. In Azerbaijan, training is offered to women entrepreneurs on small credit management. In Georgia, poor women farmers in the mountain region of Lentekhi receive support to improve the quality and marketing of traditional organic food and start their own small business. In Ukraine, we work with the national Confederation of Employers and the Federation of Trade Unions to support mothers willing to go back to work after parental leave.

In addition, the Erasmus Mundus and Tempus programmes allowed a significant number of women from the Eastern Partnership region to improve their career perspectives thanks to study and research experience in the EU.

([1]) Small and medium-sized enterprise.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009668/13
a la Comisión
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(28 de agosto de 2013)

Asunto: Acciones legales contra las compañías responsables del origen de la crisis financiera

El Fiscal General de los Estados Unidos, Eric Holder, aseguró en una entrevista concedida al diario *The Wall Street Journal* el pasado 20 de agosto que el Departamento de Justicia está ultimando la presentación de nuevas acciones legales contra las empresas del sector financiero que tuvieron responsabilidades en el origen de la crisis financiera.

Como ya pregunté cuando la fiscalía de Estados Unidos decidió presentar cargos contra determinadas agencias de calificación de crédito por la negligente calificación de bonos hipotecarios (cfr. pregunta E-001316/2013 de 7 de febrero), ¿va a promover la Comisión alguna iniciativa a nivel europeo en esta materia?

Respuesta del Sr. Barnier en nombre de la Comisión
(25 de octubre de 2013)

En su respuesta a la pregunta E-001316/2013, la Comisión describió la Autoridad Europea de Valores y Mercados (en lo sucesivo, «AEVM») como la entidad supervisora de las agencias de calificación crediticia que desarrollan su actividad en la EU. La AEVM tiene todos los poderes de supervisión respecto de las agencias de calificación crediticia ([1]). Por lo tanto, teniendo en cuenta las competencias que le han sido atribuidas, la AEVM es la autoridad competente que puede adoptar las medidas oportunas en materia de supervisión. Hasta la fecha, la Comisión no ha recibido información específica por lo que se refiere a la posible infracción del Reglamento ACC.

Además, el artículo 31 del Reglamento ACC prevé que la autoridad competente de un Estado miembro que considere que una agencia de calificación crediticia incumple el Reglamento y que esas infracciones son lo suficientemente graves y persistentes como para incidir de forma significativa en la protección de los inversores o en la estabilidad del sistema financiero de ese Estado miembro pueda solicitar que la AEVM suspenda el uso, con fines reglamentarios, de las calificaciones crediticias por las instituciones financieras. A la Comisión no le consta ninguna solicitud de este tipo hasta ahora.

([1]) Reglamento (UE) n° 513/2011 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 11 de mayo de 2011, por el que se modifica el Reglamento (CE) n° 1060/2009 sobre las agencias de calificación crediticia (DO L 145 de 31.5.2011).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009668/13
to the Commission
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(28 August 2013)

Subject: Legal action against the companies whose actions gave rise to the financial crisis

In an interview with *The Wall Street Journal* on 20 August 2013, the United States Attorney General, Eric Holder, stated that the Department of Justice was putting the finishing touches to lawsuits against financial sector companies which played a role in bringing about the financial crisis.

As per my question of 7 February 2013 (E-001316/2013), drafted when the United States Department of Justice announced its intention to file lawsuits against certain credit rating agencies on the grounds of negligence concerning mortgage bond ratings, does the Commission intend to take any similar action in Europe?

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

In its reply to E-001316/2013, the Commission described the role of the European Securities and Markets Authority (hereafter referred to as ESMA), as the supervisor of credit rating agencies operating within the EU. ESMA has all supervisory powers towards credit rating agencies ([1]). Therefore, in view of its attributed competences, ESMA is the competent authority that can take supervisory action as appropriate. The Commission has to date not received specific information as regards potential violations of the CRA regulation.

Moreover, Article 31 of the CRA regulation provides for the possibility for a competent authority of a Member State to request ESMA to suspend the use of credit ratings for regulatory purpose by financial institutions, where it considers that there have been important breaches of the regulation and that these breaches have had a significant impact on the protection of investors or on the stability of the financial system in that Member State. To date, the Commission is not aware of any such requests.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 513/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 May 2011 amending Regulation (EC) No 1060/2009 on credit rating agencies, OJ L 145, 31.5.2011.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009669/13
an den Rat
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(28. August 2013)

Betrifft: Anzahl und Kosten von Übersetzern im Rat

Der Sprachendienst des Rates beschäftigte Ende 2009 mehr als 650 Übersetzer ([1]).

1. Wie viele verbeamtete und zeitbedienstete Übersetzer beschäftigte der Dienst jeweils in den Jahren 2010, 2011 und 2012?

2. Welche Kosten fielen jeweils in den Jahren 2009, 2010, 2011 und 2012 für die Übersetzung von Dokumenten durch den internen Übersetzungsdienst des Rates an?

Antwort
(25. November 2013)

Die Zahl der Übersetzer in der Direktion Übersetzung des Rates ist leicht gesunken und belief sich im Jahr 2012 auf ungefähr 630.

Die Kosten für die Übersetzung von Dokumenten durch die Direktion Übersetzung des Rates betrugen in jedem der genannten Jahre ungefähr 130 Mio. EUR. In diesem Betrag sind die Kosten für die Übersetzer, die Unterstützungs-/Verwaltungsdienste (wie Koordination, Schulungen, Ressourcenverwaltung, Informationstechnologie und Kommunikation) und die Infrastruktur (Gebäude, Elektrizität, Wasser usw.) enthalten.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/contacts/languages-%281%29/the-language-service-of-the-council-general-secretariat.aspx?lang=de

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009669/13
to the Council
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(28 August 2013)

Subject: Number and cost of translators at the Council

At the end of 2009, the Council's language service employed more than 650 translators ([1]).

1. How many officials and temporary staff were employed as translators in the service in 2010, 2011 and 2012?

2. What was the cost of document translation by the Council's in-house translation service in 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012?

Reply
(25 November 2013)

The number of translators in the Translation Directorate of the Council has decreased slightly to reach approximately 630 in 2012.

The cost of document translation by the Translation Directorate of the Council in each of these years was approximately EUR 130 million. This figure includes the cost of translators, support/administrative services (such as coordination, training, resource management, information technology and communication), and infrastructure (buildings, electricity, water etc.).

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/contacts/languages-%281%29/the-language-service-of-the-council-general-secretariat.aspx?lang=en

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009670/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(28. August 2013)

Betrifft: Anzahl und Kosten von Expertengruppen der Kommission

Im „Register der Expertengruppen der Kommission und anderer ähnlicher Einrichtungen“ ([1]) werden gegenwärtig 787 aktive Expertengruppen geführt .

1. Wie viele aktive Expertengruppen gab es jeweils in den Jahren 2009, 2010, 2011 und 2012?

2. Welche Kosten fielen in den Jahren 2009, 2010, 2011 und 2012 durchschnittlich für die Einsetzung und laufenden Kosten einer Expertengruppe an?

3. Was waren die höchsten und die niedrigsten Kosten, die in den Jahren 2009, 2010, 2011 und 2012 für die Einsetzung und laufenden Kosten einer Expertengruppe anfielen?

Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(8. Oktober 2013)

Das Register der Expertengruppen der Kommission und anderer ähnlicher Einrichtungen unterliegt ständigen Veränderungen; jede Woche werden Gruppen eingerichtet, aufgehoben, geändert, vorübergehend ausgesetzt oder reaktiviert. Die Anzahl der Gruppensitzungen sowie die laufenden Kosten der Gruppen hängen von verschiedenen Faktoren ab und variieren jährlich von Gruppe zu Gruppe.

In Anbetracht der vorstehenden Ausführungen ist die Kommission außerstande, für die Beantwortung einer schriftlichen Anfrage die langwierigen und kostspieligen Recherchen anzustellen, die erforderlich wären, um dem Herrn Abgeordneten die erbetenen Informationen über die Anzahl und die durchschnittlichen laufenden Kosten der aktiven Expertengruppen in den Jahren 2009, 2010, 2011 und 2012 bereitzustellen.

Die Einsetzung einer Expertengruppe gehört zu den Verwaltungsaufgaben der Kommission und geht mit keinen zusätzlichen Kosten einher.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regexpert/index.cfm?Lang=DE

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009670/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(28 August 2013)

Subject: Number and cost of Commission expert groups

The 'Register of Commission Expert Groups and Other Similar Entities' ([1]) currently lists 787 active expert groups.

1. How many active expert groups were there in 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012?

2. In 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012, on average, what was the cost of setting up an expert group and what were the running costs?

3. In 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012, what was the highest and lowest cost of setting up an expert group and what were the highest and lowest running costs?

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

The Register of Commission Expert Groups and Other Similar Entities undergoes constant changes; every week groups are created, removed, modified, put on hold or reactivated. The numbers of groups' meetings, as well as their running costs depend on different factors and vary greatly from one group to another and from one year to another.

In light of the above, the Commission cannot undertake, for the purpose of answering a written question, the lengthy and costly research that would be required to provide the Honourable Member with the information requested on the number and average running costs of active groups in 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012.

Setting up an expert group is part of the Commission's administrative work and, as such, it does not entail additional costs.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regexpert/index.cfm?Lang=EN

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009672/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(28 août 2013)

Objet: Bâtiments

La Commission européenne recueille les avis des citoyens, des entreprises, des ONG et des autorités publiques sur la manière de réduire l'incidence des bâtiments sur l'environnement et d'utiliser plus efficacement les ressources.

Les participants sont invités à s'exprimer sur les problématiques du secteur: rendre les bâtiments plus durables, créer des débouchés écologiques pour les entreprises, stimuler la demande, utiliser plus efficacement les matériaux, mesurer la performance environnementale des bâtiments via l'instauration de critères communs, l'accès aux données, etc. Ces avis devront tenir compte des différents impacts environnementaux de ce secteur en termes, par exemple, de consommation d'eau ou de production de déchets.

1. La Commission pourrait-elle indiquer quel est le calendrier prévu?

2. Quelles sont les pistes de la Commission en la matière?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(16 octobre 2013)

La consultation publique s'est achevée le 1er octobre. La Commission va maintenant analyser les résultats, traiter d'autres informations et préparer la communication qui devrait être adoptée au printemps 2014.

Les domaines examinés et faisant l'objet de la consultation publique sont disponibles à l'adresse suivante:
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/consultations/buildings_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009672/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(28 August 2013)

Subject: Buildings

The Commission is seeking the views of members of the public, companies, NGOs and public authorities on ways of reducing the environmental impact of buildings and making more efficient use of resources.

Participants are being asked to express their views on problems facing the construction industry, for example how to make buildings more sustainable, create green markets for businesses, drum up demand, use materials more efficiently and measure the environmental performance of buildings by laying down common criteria, providing access to data, etc. They will have to take account of the ways in which buildings have an impact on the environment, for example through water consumption or the production of waste.

1. Can the Commission say when the public consultation will be completed?

2. What approach is it taking to these matters?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(16 October 2013)

The public consultation on Sustainable Buildings closed on the 1st of October. The Commission will now analyse the results as well as process other information and prepare the communication, as announced in the Resource Efficiency Roadmap ([1]), which should be adopted in spring 2014.

The consultation seeks to gather views and additional information on the possible introduction of EU wide measures to achieve better environmental performance of buildings. This includes topics such as resource use and related environmental impacts all along the life-cycle of buildings. Further information may be found on the Commission's website: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/consultations/buildings_en.htm

([1]) COM(2011) 0571.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009673/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(28 août 2013)

Objet: Conséquences sur l'emploi du plan aérien

Mercredi 10 juillet 2013, la Commission européenne a annoncé un investissement de 600 millions d'euros destiné à désencombrer l'espace aérien européen.

1. Quel est l'objectif de l'opération?

2. Quelles sont les prévisions?

3. La Commission confirme-t-elle vouloir tripler la capacité et réduire de moitié les coûts de gestion du trafic aérien?

4. La Commission a-t-elle effectué une analyse sur les conséquences socio-économiques et plus précisément sur les pertes d'emplois?

Réponse donnée par M. Kallas au nom de la Commission
(22 octobre 2013)

1. SESAR est un projet qui vise à moderniser et à améliorer les performances du système de gestion du trafic aérien (ATM) de l'UE. Il forme le pilier technologique du ciel unique européen. SESAR comprend trois phases pour définir, développer et diffuser des technologies et des procédures ATM innovantes et harmonisées. Le plan directeur ATM européen ([1]) constitue la feuille de route pour la réalisation de ces trois phases.

2. La mise en œuvre du plan directeur va permettre le déploiement de technologies et de procédures ATM innovantes et harmonisées destinées à améliorer les performances du système ATM européen. La contribution financière proposée (600 millions d'euros) pour les activités de développement menées par l'entreprise commune SESAR va permettre de poursuivre le projet SESAR durant la période 2014-2020 et de mettre en œuvre le plan directeur dans les délais.

3. Le ciel unique européen a pour objectif, avec l'aide de SESAR, de tripler la capacité aérienne, de diminuer de moitié les coûts de gestion du trafic aérien, d'améliorer la sécurité dans un rapport de 1 à 10 et de réduire de 10 % les incidences de chaque vol sur l'environnement.

4. Selon de récentes estimations, la mise en œuvre en temps voulu du plan directeur devrait apporter 419 milliards d'euros au PIB de l'UE et créer quelque 328 000 emplois: 42 000 emplois dans le secteur du transport aérien, 116 000 emplois indirects et 170 000 emplois induits ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/air/sesar/european_atm_en.htm
([2]) Étude de l'entreprise commune SESAR sur ses retombées macroéconomiques: http://www.sesarju.eu/news-press/news/new-macroeconomic-study-sesar-mckinsey-873 (en anglais).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009673/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(28 August 2013)

Subject: Impact of the Commission's air traffic management plan on employment

On Wednesday, 10 July 2013, the Commission announced a EUR 600 million investment to decongest European airspace.

1. What is the aim of the plan?

2. What is its expected outcome?

3. Can the Commission confirm that it wishes to triple airspace capacity and halve air traffic management costs?

4. Has the Commission analysed the socioeconomic implications, particularly with regard to job losses?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(22 October 2013)

1. SESAR is the EU's air traffic management (ATM) modernisation project and the EU's Single European Sky's (SES) technological pillar contributing to a better performing ATM system. It comprises a cycle of three processes that define, develop and deploy innovative and harmonised ATM technologies and procedures. The common roadmap for these processes is the European ATM Master plan ([1]).

2. The implementation of the Master Plan will lead to the deployment of innovative and harmonised ATM technologies and procedures aiming at improving the performance of the European ATM system. The proposed financial contribution (EUR 600 million) to the SESAR development activities carried out by the SESAR Joint Undertaking will ensure the continuation of the SESAR cycle in the period 2014-2020 and the timely implementation of the Master Plan.

3. SES, with SESAR's contribution, aims to increase the current ATM systems' ability to handle three times more flights at half the current ATM costs, but also to increase safety by a factor of 10 and reduce by 10% each flight's impact on the environment.

4. Based on recent estimates, the timely implementation of the Master Plan is expected to contribute EUR 419 billion to the EU GDP generating some 328 000 jobs: 42 000 additional jobs in the air transport industries; 116 000 by indirect impacts and 170 000 by induced impacts ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/air/sesar/european_atm_en.htm
([2]) SJU study on the macroeconomic impact of SESAR, http://www.sesarju.eu/news-press/news/new-macroeconomic-study-sesar-mckinsey-873

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009674/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(28 août 2013)

Objet: Traitement des déchets

La Commission européenne a annoncé hier de nouvelles mesures visant à lutter contre les transferts illicites de déchets des pays de l'Union européenne vers des pays en développement africains ou asiatiques. Ces mesures sont le résultat d'une consultation publique durant laquelle les parties intéressées se sont déclarées largement favorables à une législation plus stricte, notamment concernant les inspections des transferts.

1. Quel est le pourcentage et le nombre de tonnes des transferts de déchets effectués par les États membres à destination des pays en développement qui seraient contraires à la réglementation internationale?

2. Ces transferts sont-ils liés aux coûts de traitement et d'élimination pratiqués dans ces pays, nettement plus faibles que ceux pratiqués au sein de l'Union?

3. À quelles cadences se feront les inspections périodiques par les États membres, fondées sur les risques, couplées à un renforcement de la coopération entre les différentes autorités compétentes et une meilleure formation des inspecteurs?

4. Quels sont les avantages économiques directs escomptés par la Commission pour les États membres et les industriels, notamment par la suppression des coûts d'assainissement et de rapatriement des déchets illicites?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(15 octobre 2013)

La proposition législative de la Commission visant à renforcer les inspections et l'application du règlement (CE) n° 1013/2006 concernant les transferts de déchets ([1]) a été adoptée le 11 juillet 2013 et est actuellement examinée par les colégislateurs (le rapporteur du PE, le député européen Bart Staes).

1. Selon des estimations reposant sur une étude menée dans la majorité des États membres de l'UE par l'IMPEL (réseau de l'Union européenne pour l'application et le respect du droit de l'environnement), 20 % à 25 % des transports de déchets contrôlés sur la période 2008-2011 étaient illicites. En 2012, ce pourcentage a dépassé les 25 % ([2]). En 2011, une étude a estimé le tonnage des transferts illicites à plus de 2,8 millions de tonnes par an ([3]).

2. L'analyse d'impact de la Commission publiée avec cette proposition a établi que les différences très importantes de coûts font partie des principaux facteurs incitant au transfert illicite de déchets ([4]).

3. L'objectif de cette proposition est de renforcer la planification des inspections fondées sur les risques, en s'appuyant sur des dispositions spécifiques relatives à la coopération entre les différentes autorités, à la formation des inspecteurs et à la possibilité d'exiger des justificatifs auprès des exportateurs suspectés de transferts illicites de déchets. La fréquence des inspections fondées sur les risques devrait varier selon les États membres. Toutefois, dans l'ensemble de l'UE, les contrôles devraient augmenter. L'analyse d'impact de la Commission accompagnant cette proposition envisage un scénario prévoyant environ 20 000 inspections par an dans l'ensemble de l'UE.

4. Une réponse a été donnée par la Commission à la dernière question de l'Honorable Parlementaire dans la réponse à la question E-9004/2013.

([1]) JO L 190 du 12.7.2006.
([2]) Pour de plus amples informations, veuillez consulter la page http://impel.eu/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/impel-enforcement-actions-iii-year-1-final-report-amended-mn-080713.pdf
([3]) Assessment and guidance for the implementation of EU waste legislation in Member States, BiPRO, 16 novembre 2011, http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/shipments/reports.htm
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/shipments/news.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009674/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(28 August 2013)

Subject: Waste processing

The Commission has announced measures to combat illegal waste shipments from EU Member States to developing countries in Africa and Asia. These measures reflect the outcome of a public consultation procedure during which stakeholders expressed broad support for stricter EU legislation, in particular on waste shipment inspections.

1. What percentage of waste shipments from Member States to developing countries contravene international rules and what is the total volume (in tonnes) of waste involved?

2. Are these shipments being made in order to take advantage of the significantly lower costs of waste processing and disposal in developing countries as compared to the EU?

3. How frequently will Member States carry out risk-based inspections, and will these inspections be backed by closer cooperation between competent authorities and better training of inspectors?

4. In the Commission's view, what direct economic benefits will accrue to Member States and industry, in particular through the avoidance of clean-up and repatriation costs?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(15 October 2013)

The Commission's legislative proposal to strengthen the inspections and enforcement of Regulation (EC) No 1013/2006 on shipments of waste ([1]) was adopted on 11 July 2013 and is now under consideration by the co-legislators (EP rapporteur, Bart Staes, MEP).

1. According to estimates based on a study carried out in the majority of EU MS by IMPEL, the European Union Network for the Implementation and Enforcement of Environmental Law, between 20-25% of transports containing waste that were inspected during 2008-2011 were illegal. During 2012, this rate increased to above 25%. ([2]) In 2011, a study estimated the tonnage of illegal shipments to more than 2,8 million tonnes per year. ([3])

2. The Commission's impact assessment published with the proposal found that such cost differences are among the most important drivers for illegal waste shipments. ([4])

3. The aim of the proposal is to increase risk-based inspection planning, backed up by specific provisions relating to cooperation between different authorities, training of inspectors and possibilities to require evidence from suspected illegal waste exporters. The frequency of risk-based inspections is expected to vary between Member States, however, in the EU as a whole these inspections are expected to increase. The Commission's impact assessment for the proposal mentions as a possible scenario around 20,000 inspections per year throughout the EU.

4. The Honourable Member's final question was answered by the Commission in its reply to Question E-9004/2013.

([1]) OJ L 190, 12.7.2006.
([2]) See http://impel.eu/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/IMPEL-Enforcement-Actions-III-Year-1-FINAL-Report-amended-MN-080713.pdf for more information.
([3]) Assessment and guidance for the implementation of EU waste legislation in Member States, BiPRO, 16 November 2011. http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/shipments/reports.htm
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/shipments/news.htm

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009675/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(28 août 2013)

Objet: Autorisation de onze OGM

Selon l'association Inf'OGM, les États membres, réunis le jeudi 11 juillet 2013 au sein du Comité d'appel, n'ont à nouveau pas atteint de majorité qualifiée pour accepter ou rejeter trois propositions d'autorisation d'OGM présentées par la Commission européenne.

La réunion du Comité permanent de la chaîne alimentaire et de la santé animale n'avait en effet pas permis de trancher lors d'un précédent vote qui avait eu lieu le 10 juin. La France, notamment, avait voté contre ces autorisations. Suivant la procédure, les trois propositions avaient donc été présentées au Comité d'appel.

Ces demandes d'autorisation concernent plusieurs groupes de plantes génétiquement modifiées de Monsanto et destinées à être importées, transformées et utilisées pour l'alimentation humaine et animale, dont le maïs SmartStax et le pollen issu du maïs MON810 ([1]). Inf'OGM souligne que «si la Commission européenne venait à autoriser ce pollen cet été, la question du miel contaminé ([2]) par du pollen issu de maïs MON810 serait — légalement du moins — réglée, sous couvert de respecter les règles d'étiquetage».

1. Quand la Commission arbitrera-t-elle ce dossier?

2. Où en sont les analyses et les conclusions provisoires?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(17 octobre 2013)

1. Après le vote du Comité permanent de la chaîne alimentaire et de la santé animale (CPCASA), les trois décisions ont été soumises à la commission de recours le 11 juillet 2013, qui n'a pas donné d'avis. Conformément au règlement n° 182/2011 ([3]), il appartient maintenant à la Commission de décider d'accorder l'autorisation.

2. Les organismes génétiquement modifiés (OGM) couverts par les trois décisions ont reçu un avis favorable de l'Autorité européenne de sécurité des aliments (EFSA) ([4]).

De plus, la Commission a consulté l'EFSA à plusieurs reprises sur la pertinence des nouveaux arguments scientifiques portés à son attention au sujet de ces OGM et sur de nouvelles publications scientifiques. L'EFSA a conclu que ces données n'apportaient aucun élément scientifique nouveau qui n'ait pas été déjà pris en considération par le groupe OGM de l'EFSA, ou qui invalide les conclusions de son évaluation des risques précédente.

([1]) http://www.actu-environnement.com/ae/news/OGM-mais-MON810-Monsanto-moratoire-arrete-16-mars-2012-Conseil-Etat-AGPM-UFS-Unaf-Greenpeace-18974.php4

([2]) http://www.actu-environnement.com/ae/news/etiquetage-pollen-miel-ogm-constituant-commission-europeenne-16626.php4

([3]) Règlement (UE) n° 182/2011 établissant les règles et principes généraux relatifs aux modalités de contrôle par les États membres de l'exercice des compétences d'exécution par la Commission, JO L 55 du 28.2.2011, p. 13.

([4]) http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2010-00928.
(http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2012-00988).
(http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2011-01130).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009675/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(28 August 2013)

Subject: Authorisation of eleven GMOs

According to the association Inf'OGM, the Member States, meeting on Thursday, 11 July 2013 in the Appeal Committee, again failed to achieve the qualified majority needed to approve or reject three proposals for the authorisation of GMOs which had been brought forward by the Commission.

No decision had been reached either in the vote at the previous meeting of the standing committee on the food chain and animal health, held on 10 June. France, in particular, had voted against the authorisations. In line with procedure, the three proposals had thus been submitted to the Appeal Committee.

The requests for authorisation relate to several groups of Monsanto genetically modified plants intended for importation, processing and use in human foodstuffs and animal feeds, including SmartStax maize and the pollen from MON810 maize([1]). Inf'OGM has stressed that if the Commission were to grant authorisation for that pollen this summer, the issue of honey being contaminated with pollen from MON810 maize([2]) would not arise — at least in legal terms — on the supposition that the rules on labelling had been respected.

1. When will the Commission reach a decision on this matter?

2. What is the state of play as regards the analyses and provisional conclusions?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(17 October 2013)

1. After the vote in the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health (SCFCAH), the 3 decisions were submitted to the Appeal Committee on 11 July 2013, where no opinion was delivered. In accordance with the regulation (EU) No 182/2011([3]), it is now for the Commission to decide on the authorisation.

2. The Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) covered by the 3 decisions have received a favourable opinion from the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)([4]).

In addition, the Commission has consulted EFSA at different occasions on the relevance of new scientific arguments brought to its attention as regards these GMOs, and on new scientific publications. EFSA concluded that these do not bring any new scientific elements not having already been considered by the EFSA GMO panel, or that would invalidate the conclusions of its previous risk assessment.

([1]) http://www.actu-environnement.com/ae/news/OGM-mais-MON810-Monsanto-moratoire-arrete-16-mars-2012-Conseil-Etat-AGPM-UFS-Unaf-Greenpeace-18974.php4

([2]) http://www.actu-environnement.com/ae/news/etiquetage-pollen-miel-ogm-constituant-commission-europeenne-16626.php4

([3]) Regulation (EU) No 182/2011 laying down the rules and general principles concerning mechanisms for control by Member States of the Commission's exercise of implementing powers; L 55/13. 28.2.2011.

([4]) http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2010-00928
http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2012-00988
http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2011-01130

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009676/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(28 août 2013)

Objet: Perquisition Orange

La Commission européenne confirme avoir entamé le 9 juillet dernier des perquisitions chez certains opérateurs de services Internet, les soupçonnant d'abus de position dominante sur le marché de gros de la fourniture d'accès à Internet. Ce marché de l'interconnexion permet à des opérateurs de s'échanger du trafic pour maintenir notamment leur qualité de service auprès des internautes. On parle de peering.

1. Les perquisitions surprises portent-elles sur ce point?

2. Ces perquisitions sont-elles une étape préliminaire qui vise à recueillir des éléments dans le cadre d'une suspicion de pratiques anti-concurrentielles?

Réponse donnée par M. Almunia au nom de la Commission
(25 octobre 2013)

La Commission est en mesure de confirmer que le 9 juillet 2013, elle a procédé à des inspections inopinées dans les locaux de plusieurs entreprises de télécommunications fournissant des services d'accès à Internet dans plusieurs États membres. Elle craint que les entreprises concernées n'aient enfreint les règles de l'UE interdisant les abus de position dominante ([1]).

Les acteurs d'Internet établissent entre eux des interconnexions au moyen d'un ensemble de services de gros afin de couvrir toutes les destinations possibles sur Internet. La connectivité Internet permet à des acteurs du marché (p. ex. des fournisseurs de contenus) de se connecter à Internet pour pouvoir fournir leurs services et produits au détail. Ce service est essentiel au fonctionnement d'Internet et pour permettre à l'utilisateur final d'accéder à des contenus en ligne indépendamment de la localisation du fournisseur et avec la qualité de service requise.

Les inspections inopinées constituent une étape préliminaire dans les procédures portant sur des pratiques anticoncurrentielles présumées. Le fait que la Commission organise ces inspections ne signifie pas que les entreprises sont coupables d'un comportement anticoncurrentiel et ne préjuge pas de l'issue de l'enquête proprement dite. Orange, l'une des entreprises concernées, a décidé de contester la légalité de l'inspection dans l'affaire T-402/13, qui est actuellement pendante devant la Cour.

([1]) Voir http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-13-681_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009676/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(28 August 2013)

Subject: Premises searched at Orange

The Commission has confirmed it carried out searches on 9 July 2013 on the premises of certain Internet service operators suspected of abuse of dominant position on the wholesale Internet access market. The connectivity market allows operators to exchange traffic in order to maintain the quality of their service to Internet users. This is known as peering.

1. Was this the motive for these surprise searches?

2. Were these searches a preliminary step in order to collect information in regard to suspected anti-competitive practices?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(25 October 2013)

The Commission can confirm that on 9 July 2013, it carried out unannounced inspections at the premises of a number of telecommunications companies active in the provision of Internet connectivity in several Member States. The Commission has concerns that the companies concerned may have violated EU antitrust rules that prohibit the abuse of a dominant market position ([1]).

Internet players interconnect with each other through a combination of wholesale services to cover all possible Internet destinations. Internet connectivity allows market players (e.g. content providers) to connect to the Internet so as to be able to provide their services or products at the retail level. This service is crucial for the functioning of the Internet and for end users' ability to access Internet content irrespective of the location of the provider and with the necessary quality of service.

Unannounced inspections are a preliminary step into suspected anticompetitive practices. The fact that the Commission carries out unannounced inspections does not mean that the companies are guilty of anti-competitive behaviour nor does it prejudge the outcome of the investigation itself. Orange, one of the companies concerned, decided to challenge the legality of the inspection in Case T-402/13 which is currently pending before the Court.

([1]) See http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-13-681_en.htm

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009678/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(28 août 2013)

Objet: Prévisions farfelues

La Cour des comptes européenne a passé au peigne fin les projets de construction et de rénovation de routes réalisés entre 2000 et 2013 dans certains pays d'Europe avec un soutien financier communautaire. Et les conclusions sont assez alarmantes sur l'utilisation des fonds européens.

Sur la période concernée, le Fonds européen de développement régional (FEDER) et le Fonds de cohésion ont mobilisé 65 milliards d'euros en cofinancement pour soutenir des projets d'infrastructures routières. La Cour s'est penchée sur une petite fraction d'entre eux, soit 24 chantiers d'envergure, plus de 3 milliards d'euros, en Allemagne, Grèce, Espagne et Pologne, pour déterminer si leurs objectifs avaient été atteints à un prix raisonnable. Il faut noter que ces quatre pays ont été retenus car ils ont drainé environ 62 % des fonds de l'Union alloués au cofinancement des routes entre 2000 et 2013.

Le principal point positif est que ces projets ont tous entraîné une réduction des temps de parcours et un renforcement de la sécurité routière. Mais tous n'ont pas la même légitimité économique. En moyenne, les coûts totaux par millier de mètre carré atteignaient 287 043 euros en Allemagne, mais 496 208 euros en Espagne, alors que rien n'indique que les coûts de main-d'œuvre puissent expliquer cette différence. En outre, les prévisions de trafic de la plupart des projets étaient loin de la réalité, ce qui a conduit à plusieurs options inappropriées, comme le choix d'une autoroute, bien plus coûteuse, à la place d'une voie express. Sur dix-neuf projets bénéficiant de données suffisantes pour effectuer des projections de trafic, les différences étaient inférieures de moins de 20 % par rapport aux prévisions pour cinq d'entre eux, de 21 à 50 % pour onze autres et de plus de 51 % dans les trois derniers cas! Il faut cependant noter que les plus gros écarts avec la réalité ont été constatés en Allemagne, et non en Europe du Sud ou en Pologne.

1. Quelle est la réaction de la Commission?

2. Par rapport au plan initial, l'augmentation des coûts a été de 23 % en moyenne: comment la Commission l'explique-t-elle?

3. Sur les vingt-quatre projets contrôlés, seuls sept ont été réalisés au prix initial, ou presque: comment expliquer ces écarts de coût incompréhensibles?

4. Comment expliquer des prévisions aussi farfelues? Comment éviter de tels écueils?

Réponse donnée par M. Hahn au nom de la Commission
(18 octobre 2013)

1. La conclusion générale de la Cour est que «les projets de construction routière contrôlés ont tous entraîné une réduction des temps de parcours et un renforcement de la sécurité routière», ce qui est l'objectif majeur des projets de construction routière cofinancés par l'UE et le rapport montre que cet objectif a largement été atteint.

2. Des projets complexes peuvent connaître des dépassements de coûts et des retards car les routes construites présentent des caractéristiques différentes. Les conditions géomorphologiques difficiles, la complexité de la conception et de la réalisation des projets, les aspects environnementaux, etc. doivent également être pris en considération dans l'évaluation de l'exécution des projets. L'Honorable Parlementaire est invité à consulter la Cour des comptes pour plus de détails sur les dépassements de coûts.

3. L'Honorable Parlementaire est invité à s'adresser directement à la Cour des comptes, dans la mesure où c'est la Cour qui a contrôlé ces projets spécifiques.

4. Selon la Commission, le rapport de la Cour ne conclut pas que les prévisions sont farfelues. Les transports sont une demande induite et dépendent fortement de la situation économique. Il se peut que la récession économique ait eu une incidence sur le niveau et la composition des flux de trafic qui devraient être soigneusement évalués, notamment le pourcentage de camions, d'autobus, de motocyclettes etc. Des facteurs externes, tels que le prix du pétrole, pourraient influencer le choix du mode de transport et le «trafic moyen journalier annuel» du projet. Les pics saisonniers pourraient également faire l'objet d'une évaluation. En outre, les projets d'infrastructure routière ont une durée de vie prévue d'environ 30 ans. Ainsi, les flux de trafic devraient idéalement être évalués sur l'ensemble de la durée de vie, et pas seulement sur les premières années d'utilisation. Les prévisions de trafic reposent sur cette perspective à long terme. Le rapport de la Cour présente les prévisions calculées sur une moyenne annuelle, tandis que les pics saisonniers pourraient être considérablement plus élevés.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009678/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(28 August 2013)

Subject: Ridiculous projections

The European Court of Auditors has taken a fine toothcomb to road building and renovation projects carried out between 2000 and 2013 in selected countries in Europe with the aid of subventions from the European Union. The conclusions reached about use of EU funds are fairly alarming.

During this period, the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the Cohesion Fund paid out EUR 65 billion in co-financing for road infrastructure projects. The Court has examined just a small fraction of these projects, namely 24 major — over EUR 3 billion — roadwork sites in Germany, Greece, Spain and Poland, to determine whether they had been successfully completed at a reasonable price. These four countries were chosen because between 2000 and 2013 they drained off approximately 62% of the EU's co-financing funds for roads.

The main positive point is that all these road projects have resulted in shorter driving times and enhanced road safety. But the same cannot be said of them all in financial terms. While total costs per 1 000 square metres averaged out at EUR 287 043 in Germany, they came to EUR 496 208 in Spain, with nothing to suggest that labour costs might account for this difference. Moreover, traffic projections for most of the projects were far from accurate, which led to inappropriate choices being made on several occasions, such as opting for a motorway, which is much more expensive, instead of an express way. Out of 19 projects where there was sufficient data for traffic projections, in only 5 cases were actual traffic figures less than 20% below the projected figures. In 11 cases the difference was 21% to 50% below the projected figures and in the last three cases the difference was more than 51% below projections! However it should be noted that the biggest discrepancies were found in Germany, not in southern Europe or Poland.

1. What is the Commission's reaction to this?

2. Costs rose by 23% on average above the original plans: how does the Commission explain this?

3. Only 7 of the 24 projects examined were completed at or near to their original cost: what is the explanation for these incomprehensible differences?

4. How can such ridiculous projections be explained? How can pitfalls like this be avoided?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(18 October 2013)

1. The Court's overall conclusion is that 'All audited road projects provided travelling time savings and improved road safety.' This is the major objective of EU co-financed road construction projects and the report shows that this objective has been largely achieved.

2. Complex projects may face cost and time overruns because the roads built have different characteristics. Difficult geomorphological conditions, complexity of project design and construction, environmental aspects etc. have to be taken into account when assessing the delivery of projects. The Honourable Member is invited to consult the Court of Auditors for more details about the cost overruns.

3. The Honourable Member is invited to address this question to the Court of Auditors, since the Court audited the specific projects.

4. The Commission does not consider that the Court's report concludes that projections are ridiculous. Transport is a derived demand and has a strong link with the economic situation. The economic slowdown may have affected both the level and the composition of traffic flows, which should be carefully assessed (percentage of lorries, buses, motorbikes, etc). External factors such as the fuel price may have an influence on transport choices and on the 'annual average daily traffic' of the project. Seasonal peaks should also be evaluated. In addition, road infrastructure projects have an expected lifetime of some 30 years. Thus, traffic flows should ideally be evaluated over the whole lifetime, and not only on the first few years of usage. Traffic forecasts take this longer perspective into consideration. The Court's report presents the forecasts measured on an annual average, while seasonal peaks may be significantly higher.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009679/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(28 août 2013)

Objet: Fichiers européens des coûts

Le censeur des comptes européens a procédé à plusieurs recommandations à la Commission pour mieux contrôler, à l'avenir, l'utilisation des fonds alloués.

1. Que pense la Commission de la proposition qui consiste à ce que l'exécutif communautaire comprenne pourquoi il existe de telles différences de coûts de construction entre États membres.

2. Ensuite, il est préconisé de subordonner les aides à l'existence d'objectifs clairs, mais aussi de mettre en œuvre les solutions techniques optimales, ce qui est loin d'être le cas. Quelle est votre réaction?

3. La Commission compte-t-elle examiner la possibilité de créer, à l'échelle de l'Union européenne, une base de données contenant des informations sur les prix unitaires à l'intention des ingénieurs chargés d'estimer le coût de nouveaux projets, afin d'aider les bénéficiaires à baisser le prix de leurs offres?

Réponse donnée par M. Hahn au nom de la Commission
(15 octobre 2013)

1. La Commission approuve cette recommandation. Elle a déjà lancé plusieurs études des coûts unitaires ces dernières années et continuera à le faire.

2. Les aides financières sont déjà subordonnées à l'existence d'objectifs précis et de solutions techniques optimales. Les projets routiers (comme tous les autres projets) doivent avoir des objectifs clairs s'accompagnant d'indicateurs appropriés, ce qui est déjà le cas pour les grands projets. De fait, pendant la période en cours, ces informations sont demandées dans la description des grands projets ainsi que dans l'analyse coûts/avantages. De plus, la sélection de solutions techniques efficaces par rapport au coût fait partie intégrante de l'étude de faisabilité de chaque grand projet, ce qui devrait aboutir au choix des meilleures solutions. Les propositions de la Commission relatives aux fonds structurels et d'investissement européens pour la prochaine période prévoient un cadre de performance global et une conditionnalité qui contribueront à ce que les futurs projets routiers soient subordonnés à des objectifs clairs accompagnés d'indicateurs.

3. La Commission examinera la question de la mise à disposition d'informations plus détaillées sur les coûts unitaires dans la mise à jour du guide de la Commission sur l'analyse coûts/avantages. Elle fait cependant remarquer que l'existence d'une telle base de données n'est pas un élément suffisant en soi pour réduire les prix des offres. Les coûts de construction dépendent de différents facteurs, tels que le profil de la route, les spécifications techniques et les normes, les pratiques en matière de passation de marchés et le mode de gestion de projet. En outre, les directives européennes concernant les marchés publics visent à garantir le respect du principe de concurrence loyale et ouverte dans l'ensemble de l'UE, tout en assurant le meilleur rapport qualité/prix.

La Commission renvoie également aux réponses pertinentes données par le rapport spécial de la Cour des comptes européenne concernant les routes. ([1])

([1]) (Rapport spécial n° 5/2013 http://www.eca.europa.eu/Lists/ECADocuments/SR13_05/SR13_05_FR.PDF).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009679/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(28 August 2013)

Subject: EU cost files

The European Court of Auditors has made several recommendations to the Commission on how to improve monitoring in the future of how funds are used.

1. What does the Commission think of the suggestion that it should know why construction costs differ so much from one Member State to another?

2. Next, it recommends making financial aid dependent upon the existence of clear goals, and that optimal technical solutions should be implemented, which is far from being the case at present. What is the Commission's reaction to this?

3. Will the Commission examine the possibility of creating a database at EU level of information on unit prices, to be used by engineers estimating the cost of new projects, in order to help beneficiaries reduce the price of their tenders?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(15 October 2013)

1. The Commission agrees with this recommendation. It has already undertaken several unit cost studies in recent years and will continue to do so.

2. Financial assistance is already dependent on the existence of clear goals and optimal technical solutions. Road projects (as all other projects) should have clear objectives accompanied by appropriate indicators, which is already the case for major projects. In the current period, this information is required as part of the description of major projects, as well as of the cost benefit analysis. Furthermore, the selection of cost effective technical solutions is part of the feasibility study for each major project, which should result in selecting the best solutions. The Commission proposals for the European Structural and Investment Funds for the next period contain a comprehensive performance framework and conditionality which will help in ensuring that future road projects will contain clear objectives accompanied by indicators.

3. The Commission will consider the issue of making available more detailed unit cost information in the update of the Commission's Guide to cost benefit analysis. It notes however that the existence of such a database is not a sufficient element in itself to reduce tender prices. The cost of construction depends on various elements, such as road alignment, technical specifications and standards, procurement practices and project management modes. In addition, the EU Directives on public procurement aim to ensure the principles of fair and open competition throughout the EU, as well as ensuring the best value for money.

The Commission also refers to the relevant replies given to the Court's Special Report on Roads. ([1])

([1]) Special Report No 5/2013 http://www.eca.europa.eu/Lists/ECADocuments/SR13_05/SR13_05_EN.PDF

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009680/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(28 août 2013)

Objet: Panne sèche pour les voitures électriques

Faible autonomie, prix élevés, absence de bornes de chargement: le marché des voitures électriques ne décolle pas. Les chiffres de vente sont catastrophiques. La fontaine est tarie. La voiture électrique reste en panne dans les showrooms. En Belgique, pour les six premiers mois de 2013, à peine plus d'une centaine d'unités ont été immatriculées; 128 selon les chiffres communiqués par la Febiac. Un peu plus si on y tient compte des Kangoo utilitaires. Soit près de quatre fois moins qu'une année auparavant, sur la même période. Et encore, dans cette liste, on ajoute aux modèles purement électriques ceux qui bénéficient d'un moteur d'appoint, comme l'Opel Ampera, la Chevrolet Volt ou la Fisker Karma. Attention, les hybrides simples n'y sont pas. Elles connaissent, elles, un succès plus fort.

En mai dernier, il s'est vendu à peine 2 558 voitures électriques, selon un rapport de l'industrie. Ce qui représente 0,25 % seulement du marché automobile, et guère plus qu'un an auparavant (0,21 %). Moyenne minable que ne dépassent que la France (0,46 %), les Pays-Bas (0,59 %) et la Norvège, exception notable dans ce paysage désolé, avec 2,90 % de voitures électriques.

1. Comment la Commission explique-t-elle cette débâcle?

2. La Commission compte-t-elle changer la donne?

Réponse donnée par M. Tajani au nom de la Commission
(17 octobre 2013)

Le volume total de ventes de voitures demeure globalement faible en raison de l'atonie de l'activité économique. En l'absence de systèmes de primes à la casse importants, la confiance des consommateurs ne semble pas rebondir. Cela devrait changer bientôt dès que la demande de remplacement de véhicules repartira. De plus, les mesures de stimulation de la demande dans les différents États membres devraient être la clé de l'orientation des préférences futures des consommateurs en termes d'achat, ce qui devrait aboutir à l'adoption par le marché de véhicules économes en énergie. Cependant, les voitures électriques sont en compétition directe avec d'autres véhicules à carburant alternatif ([1]), représentant des segments du marché qui connaissent également une croissance, alors que les véhicules à moteur à combustion traditionnel profitent actuellement d'une diminution des prix du pétrole.

L'application du plan d'action CARS 2020 ([2]) est essentielle à cet égard. En particulier, le financement au niveau de l'UE ([3]) devrait assurer un investissement permanent dans la mise au point de technologies innovantes. Mais la Commission est attachée au principe de neutralité technologique. Cela dit, ces initiatives peuvent apporter les solutions technologiques susceptibles d'améliorer le développement des cellules électriques et de prolonger la vie des batteries, et donc d'accroître l'attractivité de la flotte de véhicules électriques. La mise en œuvre effective du paquet «Énergie propre pour les transports», ([4]), conjointement avec la bonne application des lignes directrices de la Commission relatives aux incitations financières pour des véhicules propres et économes en énergie ([5]), devrait avoir un effet supplémentaire de façonnement du marché qui accélérera la mise en place d'une infrastructure pour les carburants de substitution et l'introduction sur le marché de véhicules à carburant alternatif plus efficaces et accroîtra aussi la demande de voitures électriques.

([1]) Par exemple propane, hydrogène, gaz naturel.
([2]) COM(2012) 636 final.
([3]) En tant qu'élément de l'initiative Horizon 2020 de la Commission et de l'instrument de partage des risques de la BEI.
([4]) COM(2013) 17 final.
([5]) SWD(2013) 27 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009680/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(28 August 2013)

Subject: The electric car market — has it gone flat?

Short battery lives, high prices and a lack of charging points are combining to prevent the electric car market from taking off. Sales figures are dire, demand has dried up and the cars are sitting idle in showrooms. In Belgium, barely more than a hundred cars were registered in the first six months of 2013 — 128 according to the Belgian Automobile and Cycle Federation — a handful more if Kangoo vans are counted. That is just over a quarter of the number sold in the same period the previous year. What is more, that list includes not only purely electric cars, but also models with an ancillary power source, such as the Opel Ampera (known as the Chevrolet Volt in the US) or the Fisker Karma. It does not include hybrids, however, which are more successful.

In May 2013, according to an industry report only 2 558 electric cars were sold throughout Europe. That figure represents a mere 0.25% of total car sales, and only a tiny increase on the previous year's figure of 0.21%. Only three countries are bucking this pitiful trend: France (0.46%), the Netherlands (0.59%) and Norway, which is by far the best of a bad bunch (2.9%).

1. What is the Commission's explanation for this woeful state of affairs?

2. How does the Commission intend to reverse the trend outlined above?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(17 October 2013)

The total volume of car sales remains broadly depressed by the sluggish economic activity. In the absence of major scrapping schemes, consumer confidence does not seem to rebound. This is expected to change as soon as the replacement demand surges. Moreover demand stimulation measures in different Member States should be regarded as key for shaping future purchasing preferences of consumers, hopefully leading to the market uptake of energy-efficient vehicles. However, electric cars are in direct competition with other alternative fuel vehicles ([1]), the segments that equally experience growth, while the vehicles with traditional combustion engines currently benefit from decreasing oil prices.

The implementation of the CARS 2020 Action plan ([2]) is central to the issue. In particular, the funding at EU level ([3]) should ensure continuous investment in the development of breakthrough technologies. The Commission, however, is attached to the principle of technological neutrality. That being said, these initiatives can bring about the necessary technological solutions that can improve both the development of electric cells and the life of batteries and thus increase the appeal of the electrical fleet. The effective implementation of the Clean Power for Transport ([4]) package, jointly with a correct implementation of the Commission Guidelines on financial incentives for clean and energy efficient vehicles ([5]), should bring about the additional market shaping effect accelerating the build-up of alternative fuel infrastructure, the market introduction of more efficient alternative fuel vehicles and spur the intensifying demand also for electric cars.

([1]) e.g. propane, hydrogen, natural gas.
([2]) COM(2012) 636 final.
([3]) As a part of the Commission's Horizon 2020 initiative and EIB's Risk Sharing Instrument.
([4]) COM(2013) 17 final.
([5]) SWD(2013) 27 final.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009682/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(28 août 2013)

Objet: Conflit avec l'Amérique latine

Les présidents des pays du Mercosur font front commun. Tous ont soutenu l'initiative du Venezuela, de la Bolivie et du Nicaragua d'octroyer l'asile politique à Edward Snowden, écrivait le 15 juillet 2013 le quotidien *Kommersant*.

Les dirigeants sud-américains ont demandé aux États-Unis de cesser leurs activités d'espionnage cybernétique et menacé d'évoquer cette question lors d'une prochaine réunion du Conseil de sécurité de l'ONU. Pour le moment ces pays envisagent de rappeler leurs ambassadeurs en Europe.

Les chefs d'État sud-américains ont annoncé leur volonté d'accueillir l'analyste fugitif de la CIA lors du sommet du Mercosur à Montevideo. Ils ont notamment indiqué que l'asile constituait un «droit imprescriptible de tout pays que personne n'est en mesure de limiter ou d'enlever».

Le Mercosur est une entité économique et politique qui regroupe l'Argentine, le Brésil, l'Uruguay et le Venezuela — la Bolivie, la Colombie, le Pérou, le Chili et l'Équateur sont membres associés. L'objectif de l'organisation consiste à promouvoir le commerce libre et la circulation des marchandises, des populations et des devises entre les États-membres.

Les leaders du Mercosur jugent les actions des États-Unis pour obtenir l'extradition d'Edward Snowden comme «révoltantes et inacceptables». Après l'incident à propos de l'avion du président bolivien, les membres du Mercosur ont décidé de rappeler pour consultation leurs ambassadeurs en Espagne, en France, en Italie et au Portugal. Ces diplomates ne reviendront à leurs postes qu'après des excuses officielles de la part de l'Europe.

1. Quelle est votre réaction face à la demande adressée par les autorités sud américaines aux États Unis?

2. Quelle est votre réaction au rappel de plusieurs ambassadeurs sud américains en Europe vers leur pays d'origine?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(17 octobre 2013)

Après la révélation des activités présumées de surveillance menées par l'Agence de sécurité nationale des États-Unis et portant atteinte aux droits des citoyens européens, l'Union européenne et les États-Unis d'Amérique ont mis en place un groupe de travail ad hoc pour traiter les questions relatives à la protection des données qui relèvent de la compétence de l'UE. La première réunion s'est tenue les 22 et 23 juillet derniers, à Bruxelles. Une autre réunion devrait être organisée à Washington au cours des prochaines semaines. La Commission européenne fera rapport au Conseil et au Parlement européen en octobre. Dans ce contexte, la Commission ne voit pas la nécessité de s'exprimer sur les demandes adressées par des pays tiers.

À la suite du sommet de juillet à Montevideo, les dirigeants du Mercosur ont convenu de rappeler temporairement, à des fins de consultation, leurs ambassadeurs bilatéraux auprès d'un certain nombre de pays européens. Les pays du Mercosur n'ont pas rappelé leurs ambassadeurs auprès de l'UE. La Commission tient à souligner qu'elle entretient des relations de longue date, étroites et solides avec tous les partenaires d'Amérique latine et des Caraïbes de l'Union européenne.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009682/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(28 August 2013)

Subject: Dispute with Latin America

The *Kommersant* newspaper of 15 July 2013 reported that the presidents of the Mercosur countries were united in their support for the decision of Venezuela, Bolivia and Nicaragua to offer political asylum to Edward Snowden.

The South American leaders have called on the United States to end its online espionage activities and threatened to raise the question at a future meeting of the UN Security Council. They are currently envisaging the recall of their ambassadors from Europe.

At the Mercosur Summit held in Montevideo, South American Heads of State announced their willingness to shelter the fugitive CIA analyst, arguing that the inalienable right of every State to grant asylum could be neither restricted nor curbed.

Mercosur is an economic and political entity composed of Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay and Venezuela, while Bolivia, Colombia, Peru, Chile and Ecuador are associate members. Its purpose is to promote free trade and the movement of goods, people and currency between its member countries.

Mercosur leaders have condemned as repugnant and inadmissible efforts by the United States to obtain the extradition of Edward Snowden. Following the incident involving the aircraft carrying the Bolivian President, its members decided to recall for consultation their ambassadors from Spain, France, Italy and Portugal and not allow them to return until such time as official apologies are forthcoming from Europe.

1. What view do you take of the demand addressed to the United States by the South American authorities?

2. What view do you take of the recall of a number of South American ambassadors from Europe to their countries of origin?

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

Following the revelations of alleged US National Security Agency surveillance activities affecting the rights of EUcitizens, the EU and the US established an ad-hoc working group to deal with data protection issues falling under the competence of the EU. The first meeting was held on 22-23 July in Brussels. Another meeting is to be scheduled in Washington in the coming weeks. The Commission will report to the Council and the Parliament in October. The Commission sees no need to express views on demands of third countries in this context.

Following the July Summit in Montevideo, Mercosur leaders agreed to temporarily recall their bilateral ambassadors to a number of European countries for consultation. Mercosur ambassadors to the EU were not recalled. The Commission wishes to stress that it has longstanding, broad based and solid relations with all Latin American and Caribbean partners of the Union.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009684/13
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(28 agosto 2013)

Oggetto: Influenza aviaria nel Nordest Italia e fiere degli uccelli come veicolo potenziale di diffusione del virus. Possibili violazioni della normativa dell'Unione

Come riferito nella precedente interrogazione ([1]), nel corso del corrente mese di agosto in tre allevamenti dell'Emilia Romagna ([2]) sono stati rilevati focolai del virus dell'influenza aviaria che hanno portato le autorità a sopprimere ben 732 000 galline ovaiole e tacchini, mentre in Veneto ([3]), in via preventiva, sono state soppresse 200 000 galline. Al fine di evitare il contagio, una delle precauzioni adottate dalle autorità competenti è stata di decretare il divieto di movimentazione di volatili vivi. In Italia in questo periodo hanno luogo diverse fiere degli uccelli che comportano la movimentazione di migliaia di volatili come i germani reali ([4]), anatra nella quale, stando ai dati del ministero della Salute, è stato più volte riscontrato il virus dell'influenza aviaria. Nonostante la situazione di emergenza, in Veneto domenica scorsa 25/8 si sono svolte le seguenti fiere degli uccelli: a Montebelluna (TV) e ad Annone Veneto (VE); le prossime si terranno il 1°/9 a Gaiarine (TV), l'8/9 a Cisano Bardolino (VR) e il 27/10 a Godega Sant'Urbano (TV). In Lombardia il 31/8 a Casnigo (BG), il 1°/9 a Bienno (BS) e a Cantello (VA) e l'8/9 a Gussago (BS). In Toscana il 31/8 a Ponte Cappiano (FI), il 7/9 a Santa Croce sull'Arno (PI), l'8/9 a Capannoli Valdera (PI), il 23/9 a Terranuova B. (AR), il 29/9 a Crespina (PI) e a Montopoli in Val D'Arno (PI), il 6/10 a Pian di Scò (AR) e il 21/11 a Santa Croce sull'Arno (PI). In Friuli Venezia Giulia si terrà una fiera il 1°/9 a Brugnera (PN) e a Cividale (UD), l'8/11 a Tricesimo (UD) e il 15/11 a Porcia (PN). Anche in Emilia Romagna erano previste fiere: il 7/9 a Brisighella (RA) e il 28/9 a Sant'Arcangelo di Romagna (RN) ma questa regione, l'unica in Italia, ha deciso di annullare questo tipo di manifestazioni.

Lo scrivente, in data 25 agosto, ha visitato la fiera di Montebelluna accertando l'assenza di controlli e la presenza di centinaia di uccelli selvatici e di allevamento, fra i quali decine di anatre molte delle quali appartenenti alla specie del germano reale. Molti degli espositori e dei venditori, nonché gli stessi visitatori, provenivano da fuori provincia e regione.

Può la Commissione riferire se queste manifestazioni sono compatibili con le norme dell'Unione in materia di prevenzione dell'aviaria e se ritiene di chiedere alle autorità italiane il blocco di queste rischiose movimentazioni di uccelli?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(14 ottobre 2013)

L'Italia sta applicando la normativa dell'UE ([5]) per controllare un recente focolaio di influenza aviaria ad alta patogenicità che è finora stato contenuto con successo nelle province di Ferrara e Bologna della regione Emilia Romagna. La direttiva prevede che si istituisca una zona di protezione avente un raggio di 3 km e una zona di sorveglianza avente un raggio di 10 km intorno a ogni focolaio confermato. In tali zone sono vietati fiere, mercati, esposizioni o altri raduni di pollame o altri volatili in cattività.

Le norme dell'UE non obbligano le autorità italiane a vietare fiere, mercati o altri raduni di pollame o altri volatili in cattività nel resto del territorio al di là delle zone di protezione e di sorveglianza istituite.

([1]) Depositata in data 26 agosto 2013.
([2]) A Ostellato (FE), a Mordano (BO) e a Portomaggiore (FE).
([3]) A Occhiobello (RO).
([4]) Nome scientifico Anas platyrhynchos.
([5]) Direttiva 2005/94/CE del Consiglio, del 20 dicembre 2005, relativa a misure comunitarie di lotta contro l'influenza aviaria e che abroga la direttiva 92/40/CEE (GU L 10 del 14.1.2006, pag. 16).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009684/13
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(28 August 2013)

Subject: Bird flu in north-eastern Italy, propagation risk at live bird markets and possible infringement of EC law

As indicated in a previous question ([1]), the bird flu virus was detected on three poultry farms in Emila Romagna in August 2013 ([2]), leading to the destruction of 732 000 laying hens and turkeys, while in Veneto ([3]) 200 000 hens had to be destroyed as a preventive measure. One of the precautions taken by the authorities to avoid contagion was to prohibit the movement of live birds. In Italy, a number of bird markets are normally held over this period, involving the movement of thousands of birds such as the mallard ([4]), a species in which, according to the Health Ministry, the bird flu virus has been detected on a number of occasions. Despite the emergency, a number of bird markets were held in Veneto last Sunday, 25 August, at Montebelluna (TV) and Annone Veneto (VE), the next ones being scheduled for 1 September at Gaiarine (TV), 8 September at Cisano Bardolino (VR) and 27 October at Godega Sant'Urbano (TV). In Lombardy, they are scheduled for 31 August at Casnigo (BG), 1 September at Bienno (BS) and Cantello (VA) and 8 September and at Gussago (BS); in Tuscany, they are scheduled for 31 August at Ponte Cappiano (FI), 7 September at Santa Croce sull'Arno (PI), 8 September at Capannoli Valdera (PI), 23 September at Terranuova B. (AR), 29 September at Crespina (PI) and Montopoli in the Val D'Arno (PI), 6 October at Pian di Scò (AR) and 21 November at Santa Croce sull'Arno (PI); in Friuli Venezia Giulia, they are scheduled for1 September at Brugnera (PN) and Cividade (UD), 8 November at Tricesimo (UD) and 15 November at Porcia (PN). Only Emila Romagna, where markets have been scheduled for 7 September at Brisighella (RA) and 28 September at Sant'Arcangelo di Romagna (RN), has decided to cancel.

On 25 August, on visiting the Montebelluna market, the questioner noted the absence of any inspection procedures despite the presence of hundreds of wild and domestic fowl, including dozens of ducks and a large percentage of mallard, with many exhibitors, sellers and visitors coming from outside the province and region.

In view of this:

Can the Commission say whether the holding of these markets is in accordance with Community rules regarding the prevention of bird flu and will it call on the Italian authorities to halt the circulation of birds in this manner, given the risks involved?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(14 October 2013)

Italy is applying EU legislation ([5]) to control the recent outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza that has so far been successfully contained in the Provinces of Ferrara and Bologna in the Region of Emilia Romagna. The directive foresees the establishment of a protection zone of a 3km radius and a surveillance zone of a 10km radius around each confirmed outbreak. In these zones fairs, markets, shows or other gatherings of poultry or other captive birds are prohibited.

The EU rules do not oblige the Italian authorities to prohibit fairs, markets or other gatherings of poultry or other captive birds in the rest of the territory beyond the established protection and surveillance zones.

([1]) Tabled on 26 August 2013.
([2]) At Ostellato (FE), Mordano (BO) and Portomaggiore (FE).
([3]) At Occhiobello (RO).
([4]) Anas platyrhynchos.
([5]) Council Directive 2005/94/EC of 20 December 2005 on Community measures for the control of avian influenza and repealing Directive 92/40/EEC (OJ L 10, 14.1.2006, p. 16).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009685/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(28 agosto 2013)

Oggetto: Interventi rapidi di Frontex in Italia

In Italia si assiste all'afflusso di numerosi sbarchi di clandestini provenienti dal Nord Africa.

L'articolo 8 bis del regolamento Frontex relativo agli interventi rapidi sostiene che «su richiesta di uno Stato membro che si trovi a far fronte a pressioni urgenti ed eccezionali, specie in caso di afflusso massiccio alle frontiere esterne di cittadini di paesi terzi che tentano di entrare illegalmente nel territorio di tale Stato membro, l'Agenzia può inviare per un periodo limitato nel territorio dello Stato membro richiedente una o più squadre europee di guardie di frontiera ("squadre"), per la durata necessaria, in conformità dell'articolo 4 del regolamento (CE) n. 863/2007».

Vista la straordinarietà della situazione in cui versano le coste meridionali dell'Europa, in particolare quelle italiane, la Commissione è a conoscenza se l'Agenzia Frontex ha ricevuto da parte dello Stato italiano una richiesta di intervento rapido e/o di un rafforzamento dell'assistenza tecnica e operativa?

La Commissione promuove da sempre la solidarietà e la condivisione delle responsabilità tra Stati membri per quanto concerne la gestione dei crescenti flussi migratori. Tuttavia, la normativa vigente non le consente di imporre agli Stati membri quote vincolanti per l'ammissione dei migranti da accogliere.

La Commissione ha intenzione di introdurre tali vincoli? Nel frattempo, la Commissione come intende coniugare il cosiddetto «burden sharing» nonché il principio di solidarietà fra gli Stati dell'Unione europea se non vi è alcuna normativa che li regoli?

Risposta di Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(4 novembre 2013)

Al fine di affrontare le condizioni d'instabilità nel Mediterraneo in modo efficace, FRONTEX ha riesaminato tutte le operazioni in corso, che coprono essenzialmente tutte le principali rotte migratorie nel Mediterraneo. Ciò ha determinato la proroga dei periodi di attuazione delle operazioni congiunte Hermes e AENEAS ospitate dall'Italia. Finora l'Italia non ha chiesto l'invio di squadre di intervento rapido alle frontiere, ma l'Agenzia è in contatto permanente con le autorità italiane al fine di valutare la situazione e fornire un'adeguata assistenza operativa. Per evitare ulteriori perdite di vite umane in mare, nel corso della riunione del Consiglio «Giustizia e affari interni» svoltasi il 7 e l'8 ottobre 2013 la Commissione ha proposto agli Stati membri l'avvio di una robusta operazione congiunta coordinata da Frontex nel Mediterraneo, volta a migliorare il monitoraggio, l'identificazione e infine il salvataggio delle imbarcazioni. Le modalità e l'incidenza sul bilancio di tale operazione devono ancora essere definite.

La Commissione non può imporre agli Stati membri contingenti obbligatori o limitare il numero di immigranti irregolari che dovrebbero essere ammessi nel territorio nazionale dopo la loro individuazione ai confini esterni o in acque internazionali. Tuttavia, essa ha ripetutamente invitato gli Stati membri ad agire in uno spirito di solidarietà e di condivisione delle responsabilità, promuovendo anche sistemi di ricollocazione volontaria per i rifugiati, che consentano di evitare che la capacità di accoglienza di uno Stato membro sia sollecitata oltre misura. Finora, un sistema di questo tipo è stato posto in atto solo per Malta.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009685/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(28 August 2013)

Subject: Rapid intervention by Frontex in Italy

Numerous illegal immigrants from North Africa have been landing in Italy.

Article 8a of the Frontex Regulation concerning rapid intervention operations states that 'at the request of a Member State faced with a situation of urgent and exceptional pressure, especially the arrival at points of the external borders of large numbers of third-country nationals trying to enter the territory of that Member State illegally, the Agency may deploy for a limited period one or more European border guard teams (hereinafter referred to as "teams") on the territory of the requesting Member State, for the appropriate duration, in accordance with Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 863/2007'.

Given the exceptional situation along Europe's southern coastline, particularly in Italy, does the Commission know whether the Frontex Agency has received a request from the Italian Government for rapid intervention and/or increased technical and operational assistance?

The Commission has always sought to encourage solidarity and shared responsibility between Member States in dealing with the growing influx of migrants. However, it is not, under current legislation, authorised to impose binding limits on the number of migrants who may be admitted into the Member States.

Does the Commission intend to introduce such limits? In the meantime, how does it intend to implement the principles of burden sharing and solidarity between EU Member States in the absence of any regulatory provisions?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(4 November 2013)

In order to address the volatile situation in the Mediterranean effectively, Frontex has reviewed all ongoing operations, which are covering essentially all major migration routes across the Mediterranean Sea. This resulted in the extension of the implementation periods of Joint Operations Hermes and Aeneas hosted by Italy. Until now Italy has not requested the deployment of rapid border intervention teams, but the Agency is in permanent contact with the Italian authorities in order to assess the situation and provide for appropriate operational assistance. In order to further prevent loss of life at sea, the Commission has proposed to the Member States at the meeting of the JHA Council held on 7-8 October 2013, launching a robust Frontex-coordinated joint operation in the Mediterranean, focusing on better tracking, identification and thus eventual rescue of boats. Modalities and budget implication of such operation still have to be worked out.

The Commission cannot impose on Member States obligatory quotas or limit the number of irregular immigrants who should be admitted to their territory following their detection at the external borders or at international waters. However, it has repeatedly called on Member States to act in the spirit of solidarity and responsibility sharing, including promoting voluntary relocation schemes for refugees from Member States whose reception capacity is overstretched. To date, such a scheme has only been put in place for Malta.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009686/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(28 agosto 2013)

Oggetto: Rifiuto della Turchia di concedere borse di studio ai manifestanti

Il notiziario online turco *Hurriyet* riferisce che, secondo quanto reso noto dal Kyk (l'ente pubblico incaricato di sostenere finanziariamente gli studenti meno abbienti), coloro che si impegnano in azioni di «resistenza, boicottaggio, occupazione, scrittura o pittura (in spazi pubblici) ovvero cantano slogan» non potranno ottenere borse di studio in quanto le citate attività violano «il diritto all'educazione».

Il testo della comunicazione riporta che non saranno idonei alla concessione del finanziamento non solo coloro che compiono atti di vandalismo volti a danneggiare gli spazi pubblici oppure atti di terrorismo, ovvero che si aggirano con oggetti che possano destare sospetto, ma anche coloro che semplicemente manifestano in maniera aperta qualche forma di protesta «nelle istituzioni educative frequentate, negli annessi quali dormitori studenteschi, fuori dalle sedi scolastiche e dai dormitori, individualmente o collettivamente».

Tutti i comportamenti specificati nel documento sono stati definiti come «violazioni del diritto allo studio».

È la Commissione a conoscenza della citata decisione da parte del Kyk?

Non ritiene la Commissione che un simile provvedimento leda i principi di libertà di associazione e di espressione?

Nella sua comunicazione COM(2012)0600 del 10 ottobre 2012 la Commissione sosteneva la necessità di rivedere la legge sulle manifestazioni.

Sa la Commissione se tale revisione è avvenuta?

Risposta di Stefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(28 ottobre 2013)

La Commissione è a conoscenza del regolamento del 2004 dello YURTKUR, l'ente che gestisce il credito e gli alloggi per gli studenti dell'istruzione superiore, modificato nel 2008, che stabilisce le condizioni per la cancellazione di borse di studio o prestiti a studenti implicati in atti penalmente perseguibili. Alla Commissione non risulta che siano state apportate ulteriori modifiche a tale regolamento.

La Turchia deve ancora rivedere e chiarire meglio l'applicazione della legge che regolamenta le manifestazioni e i comizi. Il 30 settembre 2013 il primo ministro Erdoğan ha annunciato un pacchetto di misure di democratizzazione, tra cui modifiche alla suddetta legge che garantiscano un approccio più partecipativo nell'organizzazione delle manifestazioni. La Commissione continuerà a seguire da vicino la questione.

In generale, la Commissione sottolinea che la Turchia, in quanto paese che sta negoziando la una futura adesione all'UE, dovrà rispettare pienamente il diritto alla libertà di espressione, di riunione e di associazione, nel rispetto delle norme europee. Nella sua relazione 2013 sullo stato di avanzamento pubblicata il 16 ottobre ([1]), la Commissione fornisce una valutazione dettagliata sul rispetto dei criteri politici da parte della Turchia.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/strategy-and-progress-report/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009686/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(28 August 2013)

Subject: Turkey's refusal to award study grants to demonstrators

The online news Turkish newspaper Hurriyet has reported that, according to Kyk (the public body responsible for providing financial support to low-income students), those who engage in any 'resistance, boycotts, sit-ins, graffiti or painting (in public areas), or who chant slogans' will not be able to obtain student grants, since such activities are in breach of 'the right to education'.

The text of the announcement states that not only will those who commit acts of vandalism to damage public areas, or acts of terrorism, or those who roam around with suspicious objects, be ineligible for grants, but so will those who simply protest openly, in some way, 'in educational institutions, in annexes such as student dormitories, or outside schools, universities or dormitories, either individually or collectively.'

All such types of behaviours set out in the document have been defined as 'violations of the right to education.'

Is the Commission aware of this decision by Kyk?

Does the Commission not agree that such a measure would infringe the principles of freedom of association and of expression?

In its communication COM(2012) 0600 of 10 October 2012, the Commission maintained that the law on demonstrations needed to be revised.

Does the Commission know whether such revision has taken place?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(28 October 2013)

The Commission is aware of the 2004 regulation of Higher Education Credit and Hostels Institution (YURTKUR), amended in 2008, which stipulates the conditions under which scholarships or loans are to be terminated if the beneficiaries are involved in criminal acts. The Commission is not aware of any amendments made to this regulation.

Turkey still needs to revise and introduce clarity to the application of the law on demonstrations and meetings. Prime Minister Erdoğan on 30 September 2013 announced a set of democratisation measures which includes future amendments to the law to ensure a more participatory approach during the organisation of demonstrations. The Commission will continue to follow the issue closely.

On a general basis, the Commission underlines that Turkey, as a country negotiating future EU Membership, will need to fully respect the right to freedom of expression, assembly and association in line with European standards. The Commission has given a detailed assessment on respect for the political criteria in Turkey in its 2013 Progress Report published on 16 October ([1]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/strategy-and-progress-report/index_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009687/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(28 agosto 2013)

Oggetto: Albania: compatibilità dello status di candidato ufficiale all'UE

Fonti di stampa rivelano che l'Albania potrebbe ottenere lo status di candidato ufficiale all'UE entro il prossimo dicembre. A tal fine si chiede:

1. L'Albania è vincolata agli impegni assunti nell'ambito dell'accordo di stabilizzazione e associazione (ASA) siglato nel 2006. La Commissione può specificare quali sono questi impegni e se sono effettivamente rispettati?

2. In quanto paese pre-candidato, l'Albania beneficia dal 2007 dei finanziamenti dello strumento di preadesione (IPA). A quanto ammontano tali finanziamenti e come sono stati utilizzati?

3. Dal 1992 l'Albania appartiene all'OCI (Organizzazione della cooperazione islamica) che ha come finalità la salvaguardia degli interessi e lo sviluppo delle popolazioni musulmane nel mondo. La Commissione non ritiene vi siano incongruenze con quelle che sono le radici cristiane dell'Europa?

4. È noto che la pubblica amministrazione albanese è stata il braccio operativo della politica e che in questi anni l'economia albanese si è retta in gran parte sullo scambio di favori con la politica e il «fai da te»: c'è quindi uno stretto legame politica-corruzione, come affermato dal neo-premier Edi Rama. Il PIL — oltre ad omettere che un'importante componente dell'economia nazionale era di provenienza illecita — sta rallentando, passando dal 6,1 nel 2008 all'1,8 % per il 2013. Oggi la crisi attraversa anche l'economia albanese: come intende la Commissione affrontare questo grave problema aggravato dal sistema di corruzione che vige in Albania?

5. In tema di criminalità organizzata e traffico di esseri umani, armi e stupefacenti, sono noti i rapporti dei criminali albanesi con quelli dei paesi confinanti (Italia compresa). Come intende la Commissione monitorare questa situazione?

Risposta di Stefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(25 ottobre 2013)

Gli accordi di stabilizzazione e associazione (ASA) individuano gli obiettivi comuni finalizzati a promuovere la stabilità politica, economica e istituzionale e la cooperazione regionale, gettando le basi per l'integrazione europea dei Balcani occidentali. Inoltre i suddetti accordi prevedono la creazione di una zona di libero scambio tra l'UE, i suoi Stati membri e i paesi interessati. Nel complesso, l'Albania sta attuando correttamente gli impegni assunti nell'ambito dell'ASA e, tra l'altro, ha ridotto o abolito i dazi all'importazione e all'esportazione e gli ostacoli al commercio come specificato nell'accordo.

In materia di politica estera, l'Albania si è sostanzialmente allineata alle posizioni degli Stati membri. L'Albania è uno Stato laico e mantiene una politica di buone relazioni interconfessionali, che si fonda sul rispetto e sulla tolleranza reciproci.

Per quanto concerne le preoccupazioni espresse dall'onorevole parlamentare in merito alla corruzione e alla criminalità organizzata, la Commissione lo rimanda alla relazione sui progressi compiuti dall'Albania ([1]), in cui queste problematiche vengono affrontate in modo dettagliato.

Inoltre, nel dicembre 2012 il Consiglio ha individuato nell'Albania un paese prioritario per potenziare e razionalizzare la cooperazione nella lotta contro la tratta degli esseri umani. Nel quadro dello strumento di assistenza preadesione (IPA) la Commissione fornisce assistenza tecnica alle autorità albanesi, in particolare per migliorare le capacità in materia di applicazione della legge, protezione dei testimoni e controlli alle frontiere e la lotta contro il riciclaggio di denaro e la criminalità economica.

Ulteriori informazioni sull'IPA sono disponibili sul sito della Commissione ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2013/package/al_rapport_2013.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/instruments/funding-by-country/albania/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009687/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(28 August 2013)

Subject: Albania — deserving of official EU candidate status?

According to press reports, Albania could be awarded official EU candidate status by December. With this in mind, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Is Albania bound by commitments under the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) signed in 2006? If so, what are these commitments and have they been honoured?

2. Has Albania, as a pre-accession country, been receiving funding under the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) since 2007? If so, how much funding has been awarded and how has it been used?

3. Albania has been a member of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OCI) since 1992. The aim of that organisation is to protect the interests and the development of Muslim communities worldwide. Does the Commission not feel this to be out-of-keeping with the Christian roots of Europe?

4. The Albanian public administration is known to be the operational arm of politics and the Albanian economy has recently come to revolve around political favours and ad hoc politics, which means that politics is closely tied to corruption, as has been confirmed by the new premier, Edi Rama. GDP — besides not including a large slice of national product that is of illegal origin — is stalling, and has dropped from 6.1% in 2008 to 1.8% in 2013, with the crisis now also affecting the Albanian economy. How does the Commission intend to address this serious problem, which is being exacerbated by the corruption that reigns in Albania?

5. As regards organised crime and the trafficking of human beings, arms and drugs, it is well known that Albanian criminal networks have links with those in neighbouring countries (including Italy). How does the Commission plan to monitor that situation?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(25 October 2013)

The Stabilisation and Association Agreements (SAA) identify common objectives aiming at fostering political, economic and institutional stability and regional cooperation, setting the basis for the European integration of the western Balkans. Furthermore, they provide for the establishment of a free trade area between the EU and its Member States and the countries concerned. Overall, Albania is implementing well the commitments under the SAA, and, among other things, has reduced or abolished import and export duties and trade barriers as specified in the agreement.

In foreign policy matters, Albania has generally aligned with the positions of Member States. Albania is a secular state and maintains a policy of good interfaith relations based on mutual respect and tolerance.

As regards the concerns relating to corruption and organised crime raised by the Honourable Member, the Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its Progress Report on Albania ([1]), which covers those issues in detail.

Albania has also been identified by the Council in December 2012 as a priority country for strengthening and streamlining cooperation in addressing trafficking in human beings. Under the instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) the Commission provides technical assistance to the Albanian authorities, notably to improve law-enforcement capacities, witness protection and border controls, and the fight against money laundering and economic crime.

Further information on IPA can be found on the web page of the Commission ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2013/package/al_rapport_2013.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/instruments/funding-by-country/albania/index_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009688/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(28 agosto 2013)

Oggetto: Pericolo fondamentalisti

Il quotidiano serbo Nase Novine scrive che, recentemente, i servizi segreti serbi (Bia) hanno arrestato in un villaggio vicino ad Arandjelovac (50 km a sud di Belgrado) quattro presunti estremisti islamici wahabiti (il wahabismo è una delle correnti più fondamentaliste dell'Islam sunnita) e un militare serbo in pensione. Nella perquisizione della casa di quest'ultimo hanno trovato grandi quantità di armi automatiche, bombe e munizioni.

La Serbia ha ottenuto lo status di paese candidato all'UE: in vista di ciò, come intende la Commissione intervenire affinché questi focolai di estremisti islamici vengano debellati?

Risposta di Stefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(22 ottobre 2013)

La Commissione europea esercita un monitoraggio rigoroso sugli sviluppi relativi allo Stato di diritto registrati nei paesi candidati all'adesione, compresa la Serbia. Attraverso un'assistenza finanziaria specifica nell'ambito dello strumento di preadesione (IPA), la Commissione aiuta i paesi che aspirano ad aderire all'Unione ad allineare il diritto nazionale con la normativa UE in materia di giustizia, libertà e sicurezza, favorendo inoltre lo sviluppo delle loro capacità e competenze, in stretta collaborazione con gli Stati membri e con organismi specializzati quali Europol.

Per quanto riguarda il caso a cui si riferisce l'interrogazione, la Commissione è al corrente dell'arresto di presunti membri del movimento wahabita, all'inizio di agosto, nell'ambito di un'azione condotta dalla polizia serba nella parte centrale del paese. Alla Commissione risulta che la polizia e la magistratura serba stiano indagando su questi fatti.

La Commissione riferirà ulteriormente sulle questioni attinenti alla giustizia, alla libertà e alla sicurezza, compresa la lotta alla criminalità organizzata, nella relazione sui progressi compiuti dalla Serbia, che sarà pubblicata il 16 ottobre 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009688/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(28 August 2013)

Subject: Danger posed by fundamentalists

The Serbia daily newspaper 'Nase Novine' has recently reported the arrest by the Serbian secret services (BIA) of four suspected Islamic fundamentalists belonging to the Wahhabi (ultra-conservative Sunni) movement, together with a Serbian ex-serviceman, in a village close to Arandjelovac (50 km south of Belgrade). The ex-serviceman's home was found to contain large quantities of automatic weapons, bombs and ammunition.

Given that Serbia is now officially an applicant for EU accession, how does the Commission intend to ensure that such Islamic fundamentalist cells are effectively eradicated?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(22 October 2013)

The European Commission closely monitors the developments in the area of the rule of law in EU-candidate countries including in Serbia. Overall, the Commission supports through dedicated financial assistance under the Instrument of Pre-accession (IPA) EU-aspiring countries to align their legislation with EU legislation on justice, freedom and security issues, as well as to develop their capacities and expertise, in close cooperation with EU Member States and expert bodies such as Europol.

Regarding the case mentioned, the Commission was informed about a Serbian police action in central Serbia in early August that led to the arrest of alleged members of the Wahhabi movement. The Commission understands that the Serbian police and judiciary are currently investigating the case.

The Commission will continue to report on justice, freedom and security issues, including the fight against organised crime, in the upcoming progress report on Serbia, to be released on 16 October 2013.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009689/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(28 agosto 2013)

Oggetto: Moria di farfalle in Europa

Da uno studio dell'Agenzia Europea per l'Ambiente si deduce che se non si troveranno soluzioni per mantenere l'habitat delle farfalle, molte specie di esse potrebbero scomparire.

Il brusco calo delle farfalle si spiega in due modi: da un lato, gli insetti sono vittime dell'agricoltura intensiva che utilizza grandi quantità di pesticidi; dall'altro, il venir meno dell'allevamento in certe campagne fa scomparire le superfici di prato (favorevoli agli impollinatori) che vengono invase dal sottobosco e dagli alberi.

Come intende la Commissione intervenire in difesa dell'ecosistema, per la sopravvivenza delle farfalle nel territorio europeo?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(22 ottobre 2013)

La strategia dell'UE sulla biodiversità fino al 2020 ([1]) predispone un quadro d'azione per arrestare e invertire la tendenza all'estinzione delle farfalle. Le azioni previste contrastano le pratiche agricole non sostenibili, l'utilizzo intensivo del suolo, la frammentazione degli habitat, le specie invasive e la perdita di biodiversità. L'elemento centrale della strategia è la piena attuazione della direttiva Uccelli ([2]) e della direttiva Habitat ([3]), soprattutto per quanto riguarda la gestione efficace dei siti Natura 2000, che prevede la conservazione di specie di farfalle a rischio di estinzione nell'UE. Circa il 40 % della rete terrestre di Natura 2000 è costituito da terreni agricoli.

La politica agricola comune offre agli Stati membri l'opportunità di attuare misure di sostegno alla biodiversità. Ad esempio, è stata ampliata la definizione di superficie di prato ammissibile ai pagamenti diretti per includere, nel prossimo periodo di finanziamento, un maggior numero di pascoli, che sono un habitat importante per le farfalle. L'inverdimento dei pagamenti diretti contribuirà a migliorare gli habitat sui seminativi nelle aree di interesse ecologico. I pagamenti aggiuntivi previsti nel quadro delle misure agro-ambientali dei programmi di sviluppo rurale possono incoraggiare gli agricoltori a propendere per scelte che tutelano le biodiversità e, quindi, le farfalle. Gli Stati membri inoltre sono tenuti ad adottare le misure necessarie per incentivare una difesa fitosanitaria a basso apporto di pesticidi, tramite la difesa integrata, che sarà obbligatoria dal 1º gennaio 2014 ([4]).

Altre priorità della strategia prevedono lo sviluppo di infrastrutture verdi, il ripristino degli ecosistemi e la proposta di un nuovo strumento legislativo sulle specie esotiche invasive ([5]). La strategia prevede inoltre azioni destinate a migliorare la conoscenza degli ecosistemi e dei relativi servizi (ad esempio per l'impollinazione), che dovrebbero avere effetti positivi sulla gestione dei terreni agricoli a vantaggio delle farfalle.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/biodiversity/comm2006/pdf/2020/comm_2011_244/1_IT_ACT_part1_v2.pdf
([2]) Direttiva 2009/147/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 30 novembre 2009, relativa alla conservazione degli uccelli selvatici.
([3]) Direttiva 92/43/CEE del Consiglio, del 21 maggio 1992, relativa alla conservazione degli habitat naturali e seminaturali e della flora e della fauna selvatiche (GU L 206 del 22.7.1992).
([4]) Direttiva 2009/128/CE del Consiglio, del 21 ottobre 2009, che istituisce un quadro per l'azione comunitaria ai fini dell'utilizzo sostenibile dei pesticidi.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/invasivealien/docs/proposal/it.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009689/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(28 August 2013)

Subject: Butterfly mortality in Europe

A study by the European Environment Agency suggests that unless ways are found to maintain butterfly habitats, many species could be lost.

There are two explanations for the sharp decline in butterfly populations: firstly, butterflies are victims of intensive farming, which uses large quantities of pesticides; secondly, because farms have been abandoned in some rural areas, grasslands (favourable sites for pollinators) are gradually becoming overgrown with scrub and trees.

What will the Commission do to protect the ecosystem in order to ensure the survival of butterflies in Europe?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(22 October 2013)

The EU 2020 Biodiversity Strategy ([1]) provides a framework for action to halt and reverse the loss of butterflies in the EU. Relevant actions include addressing unsustainable agricultural practices, intensive land-use, habitat fragmentation, species decline and invasive species. At the core of the strategy is the full implementation of the Birds ([2]) and Habitats ([3]) Directives, especially the effective management of Natura 2000 sites, which provides for the conservation of butterfly species of EU conservation concern. About 40% of the terrestrial Natura 2000 network is farmland.

The Common Agricultural Policy provides opportunities to Member States to support biodiversity-related measures. The definition of grasslands eligible for direct payments has been widened, allowing the inclusion of more pasture land, an important habitat for butterflies, in the next financing period. Greening of the direct payments will provide opportunities to improve habitats on arable land in Ecological Focus Areas. Top-up payments under the agri-environment measure of Rural Development Programmes may also encourage farmers to opt for more biodiversity-orientated options that benefit butterflies. Moreover, Member States shall take the necessary measures to promote low pesticide-input management with integrated pest management which will be obligatory from 1 January 2014 ([4]).

Other relevant priorities under the strategy include the development of green infrastructure, restoration of ecosystems and the new proposed instrument on Invasive Alien Species ([5]). The strategy also foresees actions to improve our understanding of ecosystems and their services (e.g. pollination), which should also be beneficial to the management of farmland for butterflies.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/biodiversity/comm2006/pdf/2020/1_EN_ACT_part1_v7[1].pdf
([2]) Council Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds.
([3]) Council Directive 92/43/EEC, of 21 May 1992, on the protection of natural habitats and wild fauna and flora. OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.
([4]) Council Directive 2009/128/EC of 21 October 2009 establishing a framework for Community action to achieve the sustainable use of pesticides.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/invasivealien/docs/proposal/en.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009690/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(28 agosto 2013)

Oggetto: Istituzione e competenza della Procura europea

Si stima che ogni anno l'Unione perde almeno 500 milioni di euro in entrate e spese per presunti casi di frode. Per non consentire l'impunità di coloro che derubano il contribuente europeo, la Commissione ha proposto di istituire una nuova Procura europea.

La nuova Procura europea avrebbe il compito di colmare le lacune esistenti tra i sistemi penali dei paesi europei, le cui competenze si arrestano ai confini nazionali, e gli organi dell'UE, che non hanno il potere di svolgere indagini penali.

La Procura sarà integrata nei sistemi giudiziari nazionali e dotata di procuratori europei delegati, che svolgeranno le indagini e avvieranno le azioni penali nel rispettivo Stato membro avvalendosi del personale nazionale e applicando le leggi nazionali. Un unico procuratore europeo garantirà che i singoli procuratori delegati seguano un approccio uniforme in tutti i paesi.

La Commissione non ritiene che con la Procura europea siano elusi i principi di sussidiarietà, di attribuzione e di proporzionalità (articolo 5 del TUE), rafforzati con il trattato di Lisbona?

Pare che, con l'istituzione della Procura europea, l'attuale Ufficio antifrode, l'OLAF, venga depotenziato e che non sarà più responsabile delle indagini amministrative nei casi di frode a danno dell'Unione o di ulteriori reati che ledono gli interessi finanziari dell'UE.

Perché la Commissione, anziché creare un ennesimo organo europeo rischiando di sovrapporre comunque competenze e deleghe, non potenzia il già esistente OLAF incaricandolo delle mansioni previste per la Procura europea?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(24 ottobre 2013)

Il trattato impone una protezione efficace ed equivalente degli interessi finanziari dell'Unione (articolo 325 del TFUE) e prevede la possibilità di istituire una Procura europea competente per individuare, perseguire e rinviare a giudizio gli autori di reati che ledono tali interessi (articolo 86 del TFUE). Il trattato stabilisce altresì che la Procura europea sia istituita a partire da Eurojust, il che suggerisce l'esistenza di uno stretto legame tra i due organi. Sulla base di queste disposizioni è evidente che il principio di attribuzione è rispettato purché venga dimostrata la necessità di un'azione a livello dell'UE, necessità sottolineata chiaramente nella valutazione d'impatto ([1]) che accompagna la proposta della Commissione.

Il modello decentrato di Procura europea proposto dalla Commissione rispetta i sistemi giuridici nazionali: si basa sulle procure e sui servizi investigativi nazionali, richiede l'osservanza della legislazione nazionale e garantisce la competenza processuale degli organi giurisdizionali nazionali. La proposta pertanto riflette pienamente i principi di proporzionalità e sussidiarietà.

L'OLAF resterà responsabile delle indagini amministrative nei settori che esulano dalle competenze della Procura europea. Pur non svolgendo più indagini amministrative nei casi di frode a danno dell'Unione o di altri reati che ledono gli interessi finanziari dell'Unione, l'OLAF potrà prestare assistenza alla Procura europea, su richiesta di quest'ultima (come fa già attualmente con i pubblici ministeri nazionali).

([1]) SWD(2013)274 del 17.7.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009690/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(28 August 2013)

Subject: Establishment and powers of the European Public Prosecutor's Office

It is estimated that each year the Union loses at least EUR 500 million in revenue and expenditure due to presumed cases of fraud. In order not to allow those who rob European taxpayers to go unpunished, the Commission has proposed setting up a new European Public Prosecutor's Office.

The new European Public Prosecutor would have the task of bridging existing gaps between the criminal justice systems of EU countries — whose powers stop at national borders — and EU bodies, which do not have the power to conduct criminal investigations.

The Public Prosecutor's Office will be incorporated into national legal systems and will have 'European Delegated Prosecutors', who will carry out investigations and will initiate prosecutions in the relevant Member State, making use of national staff and applying national laws. A single European Public Prosecutor will ensure that the individual delegated prosecutors take a uniform approach in all countries.

Does the Commission not agree that with the establishment of a European Public Prosecutor the principles of subsidiarity, conferral and proportionality (Article 5, TEU), as strengthened by the Treaty of Lisbon, will no longer be complied with?

It would appear that, with the establishment of the European Public Prosecutor, the current Anti-Fraud Office, OLAF, will be weakened and will no longer be responsible for administrative investigations in cases of fraud against the Union, or of further crimes which damage the financial interests of the EU.

Why does the Commission, rather than set up yet another European body with the risk of overlapping responsibilities and powers, not reinforce the existing OLAF and make it responsible for the tasks that have been allocated to the European Public Prosecutor?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(24 October 2013)

The Treaty requires an effective and equivalent protection of the financial interests of the EU (Article 325 TFEU) and foresees the possibility of establishing an EU Office with the competence to investigate, prosecute and bring to justice offences against these interests (Article 86 TFEU). The Treaty requires that the Office will be established from Eurojust which suggests close links between the two bodies. On the basis of these provisions it is clear that the principle of conferral is respected subject to demonstrating the need for action at the EU level. The Impact Assessment ([1]) accompanying the Commission proposal illustrates the clear need for such an action.

The decentralised model of the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) proposed by the Commission respects national justice systems: it builds on national prosecution and investigation services, it requires compliance with national law and ensures that the offences will be dealt with by national courts in the trial phase. The proposal therefore fully reflects the principles proportionality and subsidiarity.

OLAF will remain responsible for administrative investigations in areas which don't fall within the competence of the EPPO. While OLAF will no longer carry out administrative investigations into EU fraud or other crimes affecting the financial interests of the EU, it may in the future provide assistance to the EPPO on request (as it already does today to national prosecutors).

([1]) SWD(2013) 274, 17.7.2013.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009691/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(28 agosto 2013)

Oggetto: Costi della Procura europea

Circa l'istituzione della Procura europea, si apprende che l'intera struttura si avvarrà di risorse esistenti, per cui non dovrebbe comportare costi aggiuntivi rilevanti.

Inoltre, l'ufficio del pubblico ministero europeo deve avere una struttura decentrata costituita dalla procura europea, quattro procuratori europei e procuratori europei delegati, in ciascuno Stato membro.

La Commissione può specificare:

1. Quali sono i costi aggiuntivi non rilevanti ai quali si fa cenno?

2. Dove dovrebbe essere la sede centrale della Procura europea e quale struttura dovrebbe utilizzare?

3. Chi si assume i costi della struttura centrale e a carico di chi sono quelli delle strutture decentrate?

4. A carico di chi sono gli emolumenti dei vari procuratori?

5. Con quali criteri sono selezionati i procuratori europei delegati e non?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(29 ottobre 2013)

L'istituzione della Procura europea comporterà costi supplementari limitati per l'Unione o gli Stati membri, perché i suoi servizi amministrativi saranno gestiti da Eurojust e le sue risorse proverranno da organismi già esistenti come l'OLAF. La scheda finanziaria legislativa che accompagna la proposta della Commissione contiene maggiori particolari al riguardo ([1]).

I rappresentanti degli Stati membri, riuniti a livello di capi di Stato o di governo a Bruxelles il 13 dicembre 2003, hanno fissato la sede della Procura europea a Lussemburgo, conformemente alle conclusioni della presidenza del Consiglio europeo.

Alla stregua degli altri organismi dell'Unione europea, la Procura europea avrà un bilancio proprio che ne coprirà le spese di esercizio, compresi i costi relativi agli uffici. Nel capo VII della proposta della Commissione figurano ulteriori dettagli sulla procedura di bilancio della Procura europea.

I procuratori europei delegati, i quattro sostituti e il personale di sostegno saranno soggetti allo statuto dei funzionari e al regime applicabile agli altri agenti. Le loro retribuzioni saranno coperte dal bilancio della Procura europea. I procuratori europei delegati manterranno il proprio status di pubblici ministeri nazionali, ma riceveranno un compenso per il lavoro svolto per la Procura europea.

Conformemente agli articoli da 8 a 10 del regolamento proposto, il procuratore europeo, i sostituti e i procuratori europei delegati devono riunire le condizioni richieste per l'esercizio delle alte funzioni giurisdizionali e possedere una grande esperienza in materia di azione penale.

([1]) COM(2013)534, pag. 50.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009691/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(28 August 2013)

Subject: Cost of the European Public Prosecutor's Office

As regards the establishment of the European Public Prosecutor's Office, it has been stated that the entire structure will be based on existing resources, so should not result in substantial additional costs.

Furthermore, the European Public Prosecutor's Office is supposed to have a decentralised structure consisting of the European Public Prosecutor's office itself and four European Prosecutors and European Delegated Prosecutors in each Member State.

Can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. What exactly are the non-substantial additional costs mentioned?

2. Where is the European Public Prosecutor's Office likely to be based and what facilitieswill it use?

3. Who will bear the costs of the headquarters and who will bear those of the decentralisedfacilities?

4. Who will pay the salaries of the various prosecutors?

5. Under what criteria will the European Prosecutors and European Delegated Prosecutorsbe selected?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(29 October 2013)

The European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) will generate limited additional costs for the Union or the Member States as its administration services will be handled by Eurojust and its resources will come from existing entities such as OLAF. Further details are set out in the Legislative Financial Statement accompanying the Commission proposal ([1]).

The Representatives of the Member States, meeting at Head of State or Government level in

Brussels on 13 December 2003 determined the seat of the European Public Prosecutor's Office in accordance with the conclusions of the Presidency of the European Council to be in Luxembourg.

Like any other European Union body, the EPPO will have its own budget which will cover the costs of its functioning, including the costs of the offices. Further details on the EPPO's budgetary procedure are set out at Chapter VII of the Commission proposal.

The European Delegated Prosecutors, the four deputies and support staff of the office will be under the provisions of the Staff Regulations and the Conditions for Employment of Other Servants. Their salaries will be paid from the budget of the Office. The European Delegated Prosecutors will keep their status as national prosecutors but will receive compensation for work done for the EPPO.

As foreseen by the proposed Regulation (Articles 8-10) the European Public Prosecutor, the Deputies and the European Delegated Prosecutors shall possess the qualification required for appointment to high judicial office and relevant prosecutorial experience.

([1]) COM(2013) 534, page 50 and following.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009692/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(28 agosto 2013)

Oggetto: Agrumi sudafricani contaminati da fitopatia CBS esportati in Europa

Recentemente è emerso il caso degli agrumi sudafricani affetti da fitopatia CBS («citrus black spot», o macchia nera degli alimenti).

Questi agrumi, circa il 50 % della produzione sudafricana, sarebbero esportati anche nell'UE e avrebbero quindi possibili ripercussioni sulla salute dei cittadini.

Si è appreso inoltre che l'Autorità europea per la sicurezza alimentare (EFSA) avrebbe stilato una relazione sui reali rischi di contaminazione della CBS nell'area europea.

Pare però che l'Unione europea potrebbe essere più flessibile circa l'allentamento delle restrizioni imposte agli agrumi sudafricani.

La Commissione conosce i dettagli della relazione dell'EFSA circa la problematica degli agrumi sudafricani affetti da fitopatia CBS?

La Commissione può specificare:

— quali agrumi sono interessati da tale fitopatia?

— Quali potrebbero essere le conseguenze sulla salute dei cittadini?

— Qual è la posizione dell'UE circa le restrizioni di importazione di questi prodotti?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(14 ottobre 2013)

La macchiettatura degli agrumi e una malattia fungina degli agrumi provocata dalla «Guignardia citricarpa». Questo fungo colpisce solo i frutti e le piante di agrumi e non ha conseguenze per la salute umana.

I portatori della macchiettatura degli agrumi sono frutti come le arance, i limoni, i pompelmi o i mandarini.

Il territorio dell'UE è esente dalla macchiettatura degli agrumi; l'introduzione di questa malattia nell'UE costituirebbe una grave minaccia per le aree di produzione degli agrumi. La legislazione dell'UE in materia di fitosanità, vale a dire la direttiva 2000/29/CE del Consiglio ([1]), disciplina pertanto la macchiettatura degli agrumi al fine di evitare la sua introduzione da paesi terzi e la sua diffusione nel territorio dell'UE.

Un'analisi del rischio fitosanitario della macchiettatura degli agrumi è attualmente effettuata dall'Autorità europea per la sicurezza alimentare al fine di valutare i requisiti UE attualmente vigenti. Si prevede che il parere dell'Autorità europea per la sicurezza alimentare sarà espresso entro la fine del 2013. In base ai risultati di questa valutazione, se necessario, gli attuali requisiti fitosanitari saranno rivisti.

([1]) GU L 169 del 10.7.2000, pag.1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009692/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(28 August 2013)

Subject: Exports to Europe of South African citrus fruit contaminated with the plant disease Citrus Black Spot

The issue has recently emerged of South African citrus fruit carrying the plant disease Citrus Black Spot.

The citrus fruit in question, which accounts for around 50% of South African production, is said to have been exported to areas including the EU, with potential repercussions for public health.

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has drawn up a report on the actual risks of CBS spreading to Europe.

It would seem, however, that the EU might be considering greater flexibility as regards lifting the restrictions on South African citrus fruit.

Does the Commission know the details of the EFSA report concerning South African citrus fruit carrying the plant disease CBS?

Can the Commission specify:

— which types of citrus fruit carry that disease?

— what the consequences could be for public health?

— what the EU's stance is with regard to import restrictions on those products?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(14 October 2013)

Citrus black spot is a fungal disease of citrus caused by 'Guignardia citricarpa'. This fungus only affects citrus plants and fruits, and does not have any consequences for human health.

Citrus black spot may be carried by citrus fruit such as orange, lemon, grapefruit or soft citrus.

The EU territory is free from citrus black spot and its introduction into the EU would pose a serious threat to the EU's citrus-producing areas. Therefore, the EU plant health legislation, i.e. Council Directive 2000/29/EC ([1]), regulates citrus black spot in order to avoid its introduction from third countries and spread within the EU.

A pest risk analysis of citrus black spot is being carried out by the European Food Safety Authority in order to evaluate the current EU requirements. The opinion of the European Food Safety Authority is expected to be delivered by the end of 2013. Based on the outcome of this evaluation, the current phytosanitary requirements will be revised, if needed.

([1]) OJ L 169, 10.7.2000, p.1.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009693/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(28 agosto 2013)

Oggetto: Coltivazione e traffico di droga in Albania e in Europa

Al termine di una missione finalizzata alla localizzazione delle piantagioni di cannabis in Albania, si evidenzia che la coltivazione di marijuana in Albania è una vera e propria industria da miliardi di euro, dove solo nel villaggio di Lazarat, nel sud del paese, a ridosso del confine con la Grecia, il prodotto finito frutterebbe 4,5 miliardi di euro l'anno, poco meno del 50 per cento del PIL nazionale albanese.

Lazarat è un'unica area di produzione che da sola si estende su 319 ettari di terreno coltivati di cannabis, che producono oltre 900 tonnellate di prodotto finito che, immesse sul mercato europeo al prezzo al dettaglio pari a 5 euro al grammo, equivalgono a circa 4,5 miliardi di euro.

Il direttore generale della polizia albanese ha dichiarato che le forze dell'ordine albanesi sono intervenute distruggendo le coltivazioni in 108 piantagioni e che sono state arrestate 23 persone.

Come valuta la Commissione questa situazione in relazione al traffico di droga che coinvolge altri Stati membri dell'UE?

Visto che l'Albania potrebbe ottenere lo status di paese candidato ufficiale all'UE entro il prossimo mese di dicembre, come intende intervenire la Commissione?

Risposta di Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(31 ottobre 2013)

La Commissione è a conoscenza della coltivazione di cannabis in Albania.

La Commissione non attua misure operative di contrasto, ma sostiene la cooperazione tra le autorità degli Stati membri nella lotta contro la criminalità organizzata e il traffico di stupefacenti. La Commissione sostiene inoltre le attività delle competenti agenzie dell'UE, quali Europol, Eurojust e Frontex, nel coordinare e assistere la cooperazione antidroga a livello transfrontaliero, in particolare mediante il ciclo delle politiche dell'UE volte a contrastare la criminalità organizzata e *le forme gravi di criminalità* internazionale, che vede tra le sue priorità il traffico di droga e i Balcani occidentali.

Una priorità della strategia dell'Unione europea in materia di droga 2013-2020 ([1]) e del relativo piano d'azione 2013-2016 è la cooperazione con alcuni paesi candidati potenziali come l'Albania. La strategia e il piano di azione prevedono la cooperazione tra l'UE e i paesi candidati potenziali, segnatamente per quanto riguarda la condivisione dell'intelligence e lo scambio delle migliori pratiche, il potenziamento delle capacità di lotta agli stupefacenti e lo sviluppo di competenze nei paesi di origine e di transito.

Compiere ulteriori sforzi significativi nella lotta contro il crimine organizzato, in particolare conseguendo una solida serie di risultati in questo campo, è una delle priorità chiave formulate nella «Strategia di allargamento e sfide principali per il periodo 2013-2014» pubblicata il 16 ottobre. Il nuovo approccio al sistema giudiziario, ai diritti fondamentali e a giustizia, libertà e sicurezza contemplato nei quadri di negoziazione dei paesi candidati garantisce che lo Stato di diritto sia al centro dell'intero processo di adesione sin dalle prime fasi.

([1]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/it/12/st17/st17547.it12.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009693/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(28 August 2013)

Subject: Cultivation and trafficking of drugs in Albania and Europe

A mission to locate cannabis plantations in Albania has found growing marijuana in that country to be a billion-euro industry. In one village alone — that of Lazarat, in the south of Albania on the border with Greece — processed cannabis brings in EUR 4.5 billion each year, which is equivalent to a little under 50% of the GDP for the whole of Albania.

Solely in Lazarat, which is a single-crop area, there are 319 hectares under cannabis. These yield over 900 tonnes of a finished product that sells at EUR 5 per gramme on the European market, amounting to a total of EUR 4.5 billion.

The Chief Inspector of the Albanian Police Force has stated that the Albanian police have destroyed 108 plantations and made 23 arrests.

How does the Commission view this situation in the light of drugs trafficking involving EU Member States?

What action will it take in view of the fact that Albania could be awarded official EU candidate status by December?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(31 October 2013)

The Commission is aware of the cannabis cultivation taking place in Albania.

While the Commission itself does not undertake operational law enforcement measures, it supports the cooperation between Member States' authorities in combating organised crime and drug trafficking. It also supports the work of relevant EU agencies such as Europol, Eurojust or Frontex in coordinating and assisting cross-border anti-drug cooperation, notably within the EU policy cycle for organised and *serious international* crime, where drug trafficking and the western Balkans are among the current priorities.

The EU Drug Strategy 2013-2020 ([1]) and its implementing Action Plan on Drugs (2013-2016) identify cooperation with potential candidate countries such as Albania as a priority. They envisage cooperation between the EU and potential candidate countries, notably concerning 'intelligence-sharing and the exchange of best practices' and the 'strengthening of counter-narcotics capacity and developing expertise of source and transit countries'.

Make further determined efforts in the fight against organised crime, including towards establishing a solid track record in this area is one of the key priorities set out in the 'Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2013-2014', published on 16 October. The new approach to judiciary and fundamental rights and justice, freedom and security in candidate countries' negotiating frameworks ensures that the rule of law is at the heart of the whole accession process from its earliest stages.

([1]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/12/st17/st17547.en12.pdf

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-009694/13
aan de Commissie
Bart Staes (Verts/ALE)
(28 augustus 2013)

Betreft: Staatssteun aan exportkredietinstellingen

De Nationale Delcrederedienst ontving in 2011 1,2 miljard euro aan staatssteun. Zij zou hiervoor voldoen aan de voorwaarden uit artikel 87, lid 1 van het EG-Verdrag.

Naar aanleiding van een discussie over een exportkredietverzekering die de Nationale Delcrederedienst toekende aan een Belgische onderneming in opdracht van de Staat, verklaart de dienst dat de „betrokken beslissingen en bijhorende documenten kaderen in commerciële procédés en niet als administratieve beslissingen of het uitoefenen van openbare bestuursfuncties kunnen worden beschouwd."

1. Wettelijk gezien is de Nationale Delcrederedienst een overheidsbedrijf maar in de praktijk voert zij commerciële procédés uit terwijl ze tegelijk een beroep doet op overheidssteun om haar bedrijfsuitgaven zelf te financieren. Voldoet de Delcrederedienst hiermee aan de voorwaarden uit art. 87, lid 1 van het EG-Verdrag?

2. Is de Commissie van oordeel dat de steunmaatregel op ernstige wijze de markt verstoort aangezien de Nationale Delcrederedienst commerciële procédés uitvoert, vergelijkbaar met private maatschappijen zoals Atradius en Coface, maar voor haar bedrijfsuitgaven, in tegenstelling tot de private maatschappijen, staatssteun en -garanties ontvangt?

3. Kan de Commissie duidelijkheid verschaffen over de juiste interpretatie van de wetgeving en over de toepassing ervan in andere Europese landen? Is de Commissie van oordeel dat het hier wel degelijk gaat om commerciële procédés en niet om administratieve beslissingen of het uitoefenen van openbare bestuursfuncties?

4. Is de Commissie, indien nodig, bereid een onderzoek in te stellen naar de concurrentievervalsing van de Nationale Delcrederedienst?

Antwoord van de heer Almunia namens de Commissie
(24 september 2013)

De Commissie acht het voor het goede functioneren van de interne markt van cruciaal belang om concurrentievervalsingen uit de weg te ruimen die in de sector exportkredietverzekering wordt veroorzaakt door staatssteun wanneer er concurrentie speelt tussen publieke of door de overheid gesteunde exportkredietverzekeraars en private exportkredietverzekeraars. De Commissie onderscheidt tussen verhandelbare en niet-verhandelbare risico's. Verhandelbare risico's zijn risico's waarvoor er in beginsel particuliere verzekeringscapaciteit beschikbaar is. Kortlopende exportkredietrisico's op debiteuren in alle lidstaten (behalve Griekenland) en in bepaalde OESO-landen zijn, in beginsel en in de huidige stand van zaken, verhandelbaar.

In haar mededeling van 2012 betreffende staatssteun in de sector kortlopende exportkredietverzekering ([1]) geeft de Commissie de nodige aanwijzingen over hoe zij de artikelen 107 en 108 van het Verdrag in dit verband uitlegt en toepast in deze sector. Die mededeling legt vast welke voorwaarden vervuld moeten zijn wanneer publieke verzekeraars de markt voor exportkredietverzekering van verhandelbare risico's willen betreden. De Commissie heeft de beginselen voor overheidsoptreden in deze sector voor het eerst vastgelegd in haar mededeling van 1997 ([2]) (die nadien is gewijzigd en werd verlengd tot eind 2012). Indien de Nationale Delcredere Dienst verhandelbare kortlopende exportkredietrisico's verzekert, moet deze de desbetreffende mededelingen in acht nemen. Mocht de Commissie een klacht ontvangen dat onrechtmatige steun wordt verleend, dan zal zij deze onderzoeken in het licht van de inhoudelijke en procedurele regels op het gebied van staatssteun. Recentelijk heeft de Commissie twee diepgaande onderzoeken afgerond (die er na een klacht gekomen waren) over steun die Delcredere ([3]) en SACE BT ([4]) van hun respectieve publieke moedermaatschappijen hadden gekregen.

([1]) PB C 392 van 19.12.2012, blz. 1.
([2]) PB C 281 van 17.9.1997, blz. 4.
([3]) Steunmaatregel SA.23420.
([4]) Steunmaatregel SA.23425.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009694/13
to the Commission
Bart Staes (Verts/ALE)
(28 August 2013)

Subject: State aid to export credit agencies

In 2011, the Belgian export credit agency 'Nationale Delcrederedienst' received EUR 1.2 bn in state aid. It was claimed that it met the conditions for this laid down in Article 87(1) of the EC Treaty.

Following a discussion of export credit insurance which the Nationale Delcrederedienst extended to a Belgian undertaking on the instructions of the State, the Nationale Delcrederedienst has stated that 'the decisions concerned and the documents pertaining to them fall within the context of commercial procedures and cannot be regarded as administrative decisions or the performance of public administrative functions'.

1. From the legal point of view, the Nationale Delcrederedienst is a State undertaking, but in practice it engages in commercial procedures while at the same time using state aid to finance its commercial expenditure itself. Does the agency therefore meet the conditions laid down in Article 87(1) of the EC Treaty?

2. Does the Commission consider that the aid measure seriously distorts the market, bearing in mind that the Nationale Delcrederedienst engages in commercial procedures comparable to those carried out by private companies such as Atradius and Coface, but — unlike the private companies — receives state aid and State guarantees for its commercial expenditure?

3. Can the Commission indicate the correct interpretation of the legislation and its application in other European countries? Does the Commission consider that the procedures in question are indeed commercial procedures and not administrative decisions or the performance of public administrative functions?

4. Will the Commission, if necessary, investigate the distortion of competition by the Nationale Delcrederedienst?

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

The Commission considers it essential for a well-functioning of the internal market to remove competition distortions due to state aid in the export-credit insurance sector where there is competition between public or publicly supported export-credit insurers and private ones. The Commission makes a distinction between marketable and non-marketable risks. Marketable risks are those for which in principle a private insurance capacity is available. Short-term export-credit risks related to debtors established within all the Member States (except Greece) and in certain OECD countries are, in principle and at present time, marketable.

In its 2012 Communication relating to state aid in the short-term export-credit insurance sector ([1]), the Commission provides guidance about its interpretation of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty and their application to this sector. It lays down the conditions that must be fulfilled when State insurers want to enter the export-credit insurance market for marketable risks. The Commission had first laid down the principles for State intervention in this sector, in its 1997 Communication ([2]) (subsequently amended and prolonged until end 2012). If the Nationale Delcredere Dienst insures marketable short term export-credit risks, it must comply with the relevant afore mentioned Communications. In case the Commission receives a complaint alleging the grant of unlawful aid, it will examine it in accordance with state aid substantive and procedural rules. Recently, the Commission has concluded two in depth investigations, which were initiated following a complaint, concerning support measures granted to Ducroire ([3]) and SACE BT ([4]) by their respective state-owned parent companies.

([1]) OJ C 392, 19.12.2012.
([2]) OJ C 281, 17.9.97, p. 4.
([3]) SA.23420.
([4]) SA.23425.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-009695/13
alla Commissione
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(28 agosto 2013)

Oggetto: Treni acquistati dalla Regione Toscana

Rispondendo alla mia interrogazione E-009501/2012 dell'ottobre scorso sull'acquisto di alcuni treni da parte della Regione Toscana, la Commissione si impegnava a prendere contatto con le autorità italiane per chiedere loro di fornire chiarimenti e informazioni supplementari sulla vicenda.

Nel frattempo, lo scorso luglio il TAR (Tribunale Amministrativo Regionale) del Lazio, accogliendo un ricorso presentato da una società concorrente, ha bloccato l'aggiudicazione dell'appalto alla società che era stata scelta in base ad un'indagine di mercato internazionale commissionata dalla Regione Toscana a Trenitalia.

Alla luce di questi nuovi sviluppi, può la Commissione indicare quali siano i risultati delle sue indagini in merito?

Può indicare inoltre se sia stata commessa una violazione della normativa europea in materia di appalti pubblici?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(1º ottobre 2013)

A seguito dell'interrogazione scritta n. E-009501/2012 dell'ottobre 2012, i servizi della Commissione hanno contattato le autorità italiane ai fini di un'indagine volta ad appurare se la procedura di acquisto di alcuni treni di Trenitalia sulla base di uno studio di mercato internazionale commissionato dalla Regione Toscana costituisse una violazione delle norme dell'UE in materia di aggiudicazione di appalti. Nel marzo 2013 le autorità italiane hanno informato i servizi della Commissione che tale procedura era stata chiusa senza aggiudicare l'appalto e che era stato deciso di includere l'acquisto dei dieci treni diesel in una procedura negoziata più ampia per la fornitura di 40 treni avviata da Trenitalia nel dicembre 2012.

Sulla base delle informazioni fornite dalle autorità italiane, la Commissione ritiene che quest'ultima procedura non violi le norme dell'UE in materia di aggiudicazione di appalti.

Per quanto riguarda le circostanze del luglio 2013 cui fa riferimento l'onorevole parlamentare, la Commissione non dispone di sufficienti elementi di informazione per poter formulare osservazioni.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009695/13
to the Commission
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(28 August 2013)

Subject: Purchase of trains — Region of Tuscany

In its answer to my Written Question E-009501/2012 of October 2012 on the Region of Tuscany's purchase of some trains, the Commission undertook to contact the Italian authorities and ask them to furnish further information and clarifications about the matter.

Meanwhile, in July 2013 the Regional Administrative Court in Lazio (the TAR) upheld an appeal brought by a rival company and stopped the award of the contract to the company chosen on the basis of an international market study commissioned by the Region of Tuscany from Trenitalia.

In light of these new developments, what have the Commission's investigations into the matter found?

Has EU legislation on public procurement been infringed in any way?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(1 October 2013)

Following the Written Question E-009501/2012 of October 2012, the Commission's services took contact with the Italian authorities in order to investigate whether the procedure to purchase ten diesel trains on the basis of an international market study commissioned by the Region of Tuscany from Trenitalia was in violation of EU public procurement rules. In March 2013, the Italian authorities informed the Commission's services that this procedure had been closed without awarding a contract and that it had been decided to include the purchase of the ten diesel trains within a larger negotiated procedure for the supply of 40 trains launched by Trenitalia in December 2012.

On the basis of the information provided by the Italian authorities, the Commission does not consider that this latter procedure violates EU public procurement rules.

As for the events of July 2013 reported by the Honourable Member, the Commission does not have sufficient elements in hands to bring additional comments.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009696/13
a la Comisión
Dolores García-Hierro Caraballo (S&D)
(29 de agosto de 2013)

Asunto: Prospecciones petrolíferas en Canarias

El ministro de Industria, Energía y Turismo del Gobierno de España ha anunciado que Repsol iniciará en el segundo semestre de 2014 las prospecciones petrolíferas autorizadas en las costas de Lanzarote y Fuerteventura. Según ha comentado, los sondeos comenzarán una vez que el Ministerio de Agricultura, Alimentación y Medio Ambiente apruebe la declaración de impacto ambiental, que se encuentra en periodo de información pública hasta el 25 de septiembre. Asimismo, ha indicado que en el caso de que en estos sondeos se hallara petróleo o gas, las extracciones podrían comenzar en el primer semestre de 2015.

En su respuesta de 5 de julio de 2013, la Comisión indicaba que sus servicios estaban clarificando con las autoridades españolas algunas decisiones relacionadas con las obligaciones previstas en la Directiva 94/22/CE sobre las condiciones para la concesión y el ejercicio de las autorizaciones de prospección, exploración y producción de hidrocarburos, tanto en relación con la aplicación general de dicha legislación en España como, más en concreto, con su aplicación respecto a los permisos otorgados.

¿Ha tomado la Comisión Europea alguna decisión al respecto? ¿Está analizando la Comisión Europea la posibilidad de que se pudiera vulnerar la legislación ambiental comunitaria de protección del medio marino?

Respuesta del Sr. Oettinger en nombre de la Comisión
(14 de octubre de 2013)

Como consecuencia de las denuncias dirigidas a la Comisión, relativas a la correcta aplicación de la Directiva 94/22/CE ([1]) sobre las condiciones para la concesión y el ejercicio de las autorizaciones de prospección, exploración y producción de hidrocarburos en España, la Comisión ha examinado las cuestiones planteadas.

Basándose en la documentación y la información recibidas hasta el momento tanto de parte de las autoridades españolas como en el marco de las denuncias pertinentes antes citadas de entidades públicas y privadas, la Comisión no ha probado la existencia de una infracción de la legislación de la UE.

([1]) Directiva 94/22/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 30 de mayo de 1994, sobre las condiciones para la concesión y el ejercicio de las autorizaciones de prospección, exploración y producción de hidrocarburos, Diario Oficial L 164 de 30.6.1994.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009696/13
to the Commission
Dolores García-Hierro Caraballo (S&D)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: Oil prospecting in the Canary Islands

The Spanish Ministry of Industry, Energy and Tourism has announced that Repsol has been given permission to begin oil prospecting off the coasts of Lanzarote and Fuerteventura in the second half of 2014. The Ministry says that drilling will start as soon as the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and the Environment has approved the Environmental Impact Statement, which is currently out for public consultation until 25 September 2013. It has also stated that should the exploratory drilling strike oil or gas, then extraction could begin in the first half of 2015.

In its answer of 5 July 2013, the Commission said that its services were clarifying with the Spanish authorities some of the decisions in relation to obligations under Directive 94/22/EC on the conditions for granting and using authorisations for the prospection, exploration and production of hydrocarbons, both as regards the general implementation of that legislation in Spain as well as, specifically, its application for the licences granted.

Has the Commission taken any decisions in this regard? Is it examining the possibility that this may breach EU environmental laws on the protection of the marine environment?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(14 October 2013)

Following complaints addressed to the Commission, regarding the correct application of Directive 94/22/EC ([1]) on the conditions for granting and using authorisations for the prospection, exploration and production of hydrocarbons in Spain, the Commission has examined the issues raised.

Based on documents and information received so far from both the Spanish authorities and in the context of abovementioned relevant complaints from public and private entities, the Commission has not established any breach of EU legislation.

([1]) Directive 94/22/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 1994 on the conditions for granting and using authorisations for the prospection, exploration and production of hydrocarbons, Official Journal L 164 , 30/06/1994.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-009697/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(29 Αυγούστου 2013)

Θέμα: Απάντηση της Επιτροπής στις ερωτήσεις μου E-005821/2010 και E-005858/2010

Σε γραπτή απάντηση στις ερωτήσεις μου με αριθμό E-005821/2010 και E-005858/2010, η Επιτροπή αναφέρει, μεταξύ άλλων, ότι:

1. Αποδοκιμάζει κάθε καταστροφή στη θρησκευτική και πολιτιστική κληρονομιά στο βόρειο τμήμα της Κύπρου.

2. Τον Μάρτιο του 2010, η Επιτροπή ξεκίνησε μελέτη στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος χρηματοδοτικής βοήθειας προς την τουρκοκυπριακή κοινότητα προκειμένου να εκπονηθεί ένας κατάλογος της ακίνητης πολιτιστικής κληρονομιάς της Κύπρου σύμφωνα με κοινή μεθοδολογία.

3. Η Επιτροπή είναι πρόθυμη να εξετάσει αν μπορεί να παρασχεθεί περαιτέρω βοήθεια, αφού προηγουμένως ολοκληρωθεί με επιτυχία η μελέτη κατά τα τέλη του 2010.

Επειδή οι φωνές διαμαρτυρίας για καταπίεση των θρησκευτικών ελευθεριών και καταστροφή της πολιτιστικής κληρονομιάς στο κατεχόμενο τμήμα της Κύπρου συνεχίζουν να αυξάνονται, καλείται η Επιτροπή, συμπληρωματικά προς την αρχική της απάντηση, όπως με ενημερώσει για τα ακόλουθα:

1. Θεωρεί ότι έχει έκτοτε υπάρξει οποιαδήποτε πρόοδος στο θέμα του σεβασμού της πολιτιστικής κληρονομιάς και των θρησκευτικών ελευθεριών των εγκλωβισμένων χριστιανών στο κατεχόμενο τμήμα της Κύπρου;

2. Έχει ολοκληρωθεί η μελέτη της Επιτροπής για την ακίνητη πολιτιστική κληρονομιά στην κατεχόμενη Κύπρο, και ποια τα ευρήματά της;

3. Προφανώς η έκφραση αγαθών προθέσεων εκ μέρους της Επιτροπής δεν είναι αρκετή για επίλυση προβλημάτων. Ερωτάται, συνεπώς, η Επιτροπή, κατά πόσο είναι σήμερα σε θέση να υλοποιήσει την εκφρασθείσα πρόθεσή της για παραχώρηση περαιτέρω βοήθειας, τι είδους βοήθεια μπορεί να παραχωρήσει και μέχρι ποίου ύψους;

Απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(23 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή θέτει τακτικά το θέμα της θρησκευτικής ελευθερίας στην τουρκοκυπριακή κοινότητα και θα συνεχίζει να το προβάλλει κατά περίπτωση, υπογραμμίζοντας την εξέχουσα σημασία του σεβασμού της ελευθερίας θρησκεύματος και πεποιθήσεων.

Το 2010, η ΕΕ χρηματοδότησε μια μελέτη με θέμα την ακίνητη πολιτιστική κληρονομιά της Κύπρου μέσω του οικείου προγράμματος βοήθειας για την τουρκοκυπριακή κοινότητα και έπειτα από αίτημα του Κοινοβουλίου. Η μελέτη, ως συμβολή στο έργο της δικοινοτικής τεχνικής επιτροπής για την πολιτιστική κληρονομιά που λειτουργεί υπό την αιγίδα του ΟΗΕ, κατέληξε στη σύνταξη καταλόγου με περισσότερα από 2 300 μνημεία πολιτιστικής κληρονομιάς, καθώς και την κατάρτιση περίπου 700 δελτίων/διαγραμμάτων απογραφής και τη διεξαγωγή 121 τεχνικών αξιολογήσεων, με ανάλυση της υφιστάμενης κατάστασης των μνημείων, και την κοστολόγηση της αποκατάστασής τους. Η μελέτη συνεκτίμησε τη σημασία και τον επείγοντα χαρακτήρα της απαιτούμενης αποκατάστασης.

Ακολουθώντας την εν λόγω μελέτη, οι ηγέτες των δύο κοινοτήτων συμφώνησαν σε έναν κατάλογο 40 μνημείων σε ολόκληρο το νησί όσον αφορά έργα προτεραιότητας ([1]). Με βάση το έγγραφο αυτό, η δικοινοτική τεχνική επιτροπή προσδιόρισε το 2012 έντεκα θέσεις πολιτιστικής κληρονομιάς, σε ολόκληρο το νησί, όπου πρέπει να ληφθούν επείγοντα μέτρα.

Βάσει του προγράμματος βοήθειας για το 2012 που αφορά την τουρκοκυπριακή κοινότητα, η ΕΕ διέθεσε 2 εκατ. ευρώ για τη στήριξη των δραστηριοτήτων της δικοινοτικής τεχνικής επιτροπής. Η Επιτροπή παρακολουθεί τις αποφάσεις της τεχνικής επιτροπής σχετικά με τα μνημεία που πρόκειται να αποκατασταθούν και να προστατευτούν. Χάρη στη χρηματοδότηση της ΕΕ, ολοκληρώθηκαν τον Απρίλιο του 2013 τα επείγοντα έργα για το τέμενος Δένειας/Denya.

Βάσει του προγράμματος βοήθειας για το 2013, η ΕΕ έχει δεσμευθεί να συνεχίσει τη στήριξη των εργασιών της εν λόγω δικοινοτικής επιτροπής με πιθανή περαιτέρω συνεισφορά ύψους 2 εκατ. ευρώ.

([1]) Ο κατάλογος περιλαμβάνει 25 εκκλησίες, οκτώ τζαμιά, τρία λουτρά, το κάστρο της Αμμοχώστου/πύργου του Οθέλλου, ένα μοναστήρι, έναν μεντρεσέ, και ένα υδραγωγείο/μύλο.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009697/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: Questions E-005821/2010 and E-005858/2010

In its written answer to my questions E-005821/2010 and E-005858/2010, the Commission indicated that:

1. It deplored any damage to religious and cultural heritage in the northern part of Cyprus;

2. In March 2010, it had launched a study under the financial aid programme for the Turkish Cypriot Community to compile a list of immovable cultural heritage of Cyprus according to a common methodology.

3. It was ready to see if further assistance could be provided, once the first study had been successfully completed by the end of 2010;

In view of the constantly growing concern being expressed at the restriction of religious freedom and destruction of the cultural heritage in the occupied part of Cyprus, can the Commission provide the following additional information:

1. Does it consider that any progress has since been made regarding respect for the cultural heritage and religious freedom in the Christian enclaves of occupied Cyprus?

2. Has the Commission study concerning the immovable cultural heritage in occupied Cyprus been completed and what are its findings?

3. Clearly statements of good intentions by the Commission will not alone resolve any problems. To what extent therefore is it now able to live up to its undertaking to provide additional assistance? What would be the nature and amount of such assistance?

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

The Commission regularly raises the issue of freedom of religion or belief with the Turkish Cypriot community and will continue to take up this issue as appropriate, stressing the paramount importance of respecting it.

In 2010, the EU financed a study on the immovable cultural heritage of Cyprus through its aid programme for the Turkish Cypriot community and at the request of Parliament. The study, in support of the bi-communal technical committee on Cultural Heritage operating under UN auspices, led to a list of more than 2 300 cultural heritage sites, the preparation of around 700 inventory charts and the carrying out of 121 technical assessments, analysing the current conditions of the monuments, and restoration costing needs. The study took into account the importance and the urgency of the needed restoration.

Following this study, both community leaders agreed on an island-wide list of 40 monuments for priority works ([1]). Based on this document, the bi-communal technical committee identified, in 2012, eleven cultural heritage sites throughout the island in need of emergency measures.

Under the 2012 Aid Programme for the Turkish Cypriot community, the EU has provided EUR 2 million for the support of activities of the bi-communal technical committee. The Commission follows the decisions of the committee on the monuments to be restored and protected. Thanks to EU funding, emergency work was completed for the Deneia/Denya Mosque in April 2013.

Under the 2013 Aid Programme, the Commission is committed to continue supporting the work of the committee with a likely further contribution of EUR 2 million.

([1]) The list includes 25 churches, eight mosques, three baths, the Famagusta citadel/Othello tower, one monastery, one madrasa, and one aquaduct/mill house.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009698/13
to the Commission
George Lyon (ALDE)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: Update: Enforcement of Directive 2008/120/EC on the protection of pigs — ban on individual sow stalls

Directive 2008/120/EC on the protection of pigs bans the use of individual sow stalls and requires that untethered sows be kept in groups for the first four weeks after insemination until the week before farrowing, as of 1 January 2013.

In its response to Written Question E-011604/2012, given on 20 February 2013, asking for an update on compliant Member States following the entry into force of the ban, the Commission stated that it 'expects more Member States to fully comply with group housing of sows within the coming months'.

The Commission's latest information published in August 2013 indicates that infringement proceedings have been initiated against nine Member States.

Can the Commission provide an update on what infringement proceedings have been initiated and what steps it can take to improve compliance?

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

With regard to which infringement procedures have been initiated the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Question E-3275/2013 ([1]).

The Commission is currently assessing the answers given by the Member States to its letter requesting summaries of action taken on the issue of group housing of sows ([2]). Given the administrative procedure for infringements any further steps taken against a Member State or States may at the earliest occur in October 2013.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) Council Directive 2008/120/EC laying down minimum standards for the protection of pigs; OJ L 47, 18.2.2009, p. 5.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-009699/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(29 août 2013)

Objet: PRISM pour le citoyen européen

1. Concernant l'affaire PRISM, la Commission voudrait-elle expliquer dans quelle mesure les législations américaines sont ou non en accord avec le droit international européen?

2. Voudrait-elle exposer, et ce sans détour, quelles sont les répercussions claires et précises du programme PRISM sur la protection de la vie privée des citoyens européens?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Reding au nom de la Commission
(30 septembre 2013)

La Commission invite l'Honorable Parlementaire à prendre connaissance de sa réponse à la question écrite E-007934/13.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009699/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: PRISM and EU citizens

1. With regard to PRISM, would the Commission please explain to what extent US laws either are or are not in line with EU international law?

2. Could the Commission state plainly what exactly are the repercussions of the PRISM programme for the privacy of EU citizens?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-007934/13.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009700/13
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: Ricoh Arena

The Ricoh Arena is situated in Coventry, United Kingdom, and an ERDF sign is displayed on the building. This arena seems to be part of the Foleshill Gas Works ERDF project.

Coventry City Council received two ERDF grants in 2003 (GBP 4 750 000.00 plus VAT) in relation to the Foleshill Gas Works project. To my 'Freedom of Information' request submitted to Coventry City Council, I received a reply on 20 August 2013 stating: 'Coventry City Council received two ERDF grants. On the 29th August 2003 the Council received GBP 4,750,000.00 plus VAT to assist the purchase of the site from HBG Holdings Limited. This grant was not used for the construction of the arena'.

In a UK Government document on ERDF funding ([1]), it is stated that 'ERDF funding was used to support eligible areas of economic development. This included the state-of-the-art exhibition and conference facilities, a number of public transport initiatives and also the development of pedestrian archways which were built under the railway line to provide better access for all to the arena and also to job opportunities which have been created due to the overall development'.

Could the Commission please confirm under what grounds an application was made for ERDF funding, and what the money was used for in relation to the Foleshill Gas Works project (where the Ricoh Arena is situated and the ERDF sign is displayed)? Could the Commission indicate the exact percentage of its support in relation to the other partners?

Does the Commission have a final audit of how the money was spent, and could it provide me with a copy of this information?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(16 October 2013)

The project, as funded through the West Midlands objective 2 programme was known as the 'Foleshill Gas Works Site, Coventry Arena project'. The passage cited by the Honourable Member was from the then Government Office's 'Celebrating Success' brochure.

The project was split between two priorities within the programme; Strategic Regeneration and Removing Barriers to Markets, Employment & Training.

The first of these priorities saw a European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) grant awarded solely towards the costs of the conference and exhibition activity within the Arena development and the associated land preparation and car parking costs. This was separate from the football stadium. The banqueting facilities are located beneath the football stadium and these costs were excluded from the total eligible expenditure.

The second priority awarded a grant to support the creation of two bus hubs which enabled two public transport initiatives to take place. These initiatives included the realignment of over 20 bus routes to improve the accessibility of the facilities — previously there had been no bus access. The route changes enabled local people to access the facilities and jobs that had been created. It opened up the former gasworks site, and particularly the Ricoh Arena, to bus transport.

The costs mentioned by the Honourable Member were the costs as originally foreseen. The actual total grant paid using ERDF funding came to GBP 4,614,348 (split GBP 4,028,677 and GBP 585,671 respectively) which represents a 15% rate of ERDF co-financing.

The Commission does not have a final audit report on this project.

([1]) https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/91905/ERDF_West_Midlands_celebrating_success_2000_to_2006_ERDF_programme.pdf

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-009701/13
до Комисията
Monika Panayotova (PPE)
(29 август 2013 г.)

Относно: Средствата за България през новия програмен период 2014—2020 г. по линия на европейските структурни и инвестиционни фондове

В българското публично пространство съществува разнопосочна информация по отношение на обема от средства, с които България ще разполага през новия програмен период 2014—2020 г. по линия на европейските структурни и инвестиционни фондове.

Съгласно индикативното разпределение на средствата, публикувано на страницата на Генерална дирекция „Регионална политика“ на ЕК, България следва да разполага със 7,1 млрд. евро за кохезия през новия програмен период (вкл. средствата за трансгранично сътрудничество, средствата по Инструмента за свързване на Европа, както и тези, заделени под формата на резерв). Следователно обемът от средства е номинално повече в сравнение с разполагаемия ресурс по седемте оперативни програми за периода 2007—2013 г. — общо 6,7 млрд. евро. Същевременно, обаче, настоящото българско правителство разпространява в публичното пространство непълна и неточна информация за обема от средства по линия на Кохезионната политика през новия програмен период, твърдейки, че той ще е по-нисък от гореспоменатите суми. Това от своя страна оказва негативно влияние върху общественото мнение и създава усещането за по-малко разполагаеми средства за българските граждани и България, което не отговаря на действителността.

Поради тази причина уточнението за индикативната сума, определена за България по линия на европейските фондове за периода 2014—2020 г. е изключително важно с оглед на високия процент на доверие и подкрепа на българските граждани и особено на младите хора към Европа — 70 % от младите хора в страната одобряват членството на България в ЕС, по данни към август 2013 г. на Националния център за изучаване на общественото мнение, и над 54 % от българските граждани, според Евробарометър — повече, отколкото гражданите на която и да е друга държава членка.

В тази връзка може ли ЕК да предостави справка с общата индикативна сума, предвидена за България по линия на политиката за сближаване, общата селскостопанска и рибарска политика, както и индикативна разбивка по отделни програми/фондове/инструменти? Какви са предстоящите стъпки и срокове за приключване на преговорите с България по Споразумението за партньорство и оперативните програми, за да се избегне рискът от късен старт в изпълнението им, какъвто за съжаление беше налице в началото на настоящия програмен период?

Отговор, даден от г-н Hahn от името на Комисията
(29 октомври 2013 г.)

На 22 юли Комисията информира българските власти относно финансовата рамка по политиката на сближаване за периода 2014-2020 г.

В рамките на политиката на сближаване България отговаря на условията за получаване на 6 764 млн. EUR по цени от 2011 г. ([1]), в т.ч. 2 018 млн. EUR от Кохезионния фонд, 4 601 млн. EUR за по-слабо развитите региони (от ЕФРР и ЕСФ) и 145 млн. EUR в рамките на ЕТС ([2]). Тези суми не са окончателни, тъй като все още не е постигнато споразумение относно резервния фонд за изпълнение и Фонда за европейско подпомагане на най-нуждаещите се лица. Поради това окончателната сума ще бъде малко по-ниска.

По отношение на ОСП ([3]) финансовата рамка за развитието на селските райони в България през следващия период ще възлиза на 2 079 млн. EUR по цени от 2011 г. ([4]), след като бъде приет Регламентът на Европейския парламент и на Съвета относно подпомагането на развитието на селските райони от ЕЗФРСР ([5]).

Размерът на средствата, които ще бъдат предоставени по линия на ЕФМДР ([6]), не е известен, тъй като преговорите с държавите членки все още не са приключили.

([1]) По текущи цени общата сума ще бъде 7 638 млн. EUR.
([2]) Европейско териториално сътрудничество.
([3]) Обща селскостопанска политика.
([4]) 2 339 млн. EUR по текущи цени.
([5]) Европейски земеделски фонд за развитие на селските райони.
([6]) Европейски фонд за морско дело и рибарство.

С оглед постигане на плавен преход от настоящия към следващия програмен период бяха започнати подготвителни действия през месец Февруари. Официалните преговори би следвало да протекат с ускорени темпове непосредствено след приемането на РОР ([7]), което ще позволи програмите по кохезионната политика да бъдат изпълнени възможно най-скоро.

В актуалния проект за споразумение за партньорство, получен на 30 август, българските власти представиха списък от програми с индикативно разпределение на средствата, предоставени от европейските структурни и инвестиционни фондове. Очаква се проектопрограмите да бъдат получени през следващите месеци. Окончателната финансова рамка за програмите и фондовете ще бъде определена в рамките на продължаващите преговори между България и Европейската комисия.

([7]) Регламент за общоприложимите разпоредби.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009701/13
to the Commission
Monika Panayotova (PPE)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: Resources allocated to Bulgaria for the new programming period 2014-2020 under the EU's structural and investment funds

A range of conflicting information is available in the Bulgarian public domain on the volume of financing that Bulgaria stands to receive in the new programming period 2014-2020 under the EU's structural and investment funds.

According to the indicative allocations published on the website of the Commission's Directorate-General for Regional Policy, Bulgaria can count on EUR 7.1 billion in cohesion funding in the new programming period (including cross-border cooperation funding under the Connecting Europe Facility and funds placed in reserve). That volume of financing is consequently a nominal one, especially in comparison to the resources available under the seven operational programmes for the period 2007-2013, which total EUR 6.7 billion. At the same time, however, the current Bulgarian Government is putting out into the public domain incomplete and inaccurate information on the volume of cohesion funding available in the new programming period, claiming that it will be less than the amounts quoted above. This in turn is adversely affecting public opinion and creating the feeling that less funding will be available for Bulgarians and Bulgaria, which is not actually the case.

It is therefore extremely important — in view of the high level of confidence and support among Bulgarians, and particularly young Bulgarians, vis-à-vis Europe — that the indicative amount of EU funding set for Bulgaria for the period 2014-2020 be stated precisely. 70% of young people in Bulgaria approved of their country's membership of the EU according to statistics from the National Centre for Public Opinion Research from August 2013, as did over 54% of Bulgarians according to Eurobarometer, which is more than in any other Member State.

In this connection, can the Commission provide information on the overall indicative amount earmarked for Bulgaria under the cohesion policy and the common agricultural and fisheries policies, giving an indicative breakdown by individual programme, fund and instrument? What are the next stages and deadlines in the negotiations with Bulgaria on the partnership and operational programmes, with a view to avoiding the risk of their late implementation — as was unfortunately the case at the start of the current programming period?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(29 October 2013)

The Commission informed the Bulgarian authorities on 22 July of the financial allocation for 2014-2020 cohesion policy.

Bulgaria is eligible for EUR 6 764 million in 2011 prices ([1]) for cohesion policy, comprising EUR 2 018 million Cohesion Fund, EUR 4 601 million for less developed regions (i.e. ERDF and ESF) and EUR 145 million under ETC ([2]). Amounts are still provisional, pending an agreement on the performance reserve and the Fund for European Aid to the most deprived. The final amount will therefore be slightly lower.

As regards the CAP ([3]), the rural development allocation to Bulgaria for the next period amounts to EUR 2 079 million in 2011 prices ([4]), subject to the adoption of the regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on support for rural development by the EAFRD ([5]).

The allocations under the EMFF ([6]) are not known yet as negotiations with Member States are still ongoing.

Preparations have started in February to facilitate an orderly transition from the present to the next period. Official negotiations should be able to progress quickly once the CPR ([7]) is adopted, allowing implementation of cohesion policy programmes as soon as possible.

([1]) In current prices the total amount will be EUR 7 638 million.
([2]) European Territorial Cooperation.
([3]) Common Agricultural Policy.
([4]) EUR 2 339 million in current prices.
([5]) European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development.
([6]) European Maritime and Fisheries Fund.
([7]) Common Provision Regulation.

In the latest draft Partnership Agreement, received on 30 August, the Bulgarian authorities provided a list of programmes with indicative allocations of support from ESI Funds. Draft programmes are expected in the months to come. The final allocations to the programmes and funds will be determined in the context of the ongoing discussions between Bulgaria and the Commission.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009702/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(29 août 2013)

Objet: Réforme des retraites en France

Les recommandations économiques ([1]) de la Commission à la France, adoptées par les États membres en juillet, mettaient l'accent sur la nécessité d'assurer la stabilité des finances publiques, mais aussi de réduire le coût du travail en France. La Commission avait notamment insisté sur la nécessité d'éviter de recourir à une hausse des cotisations patronales. L'idée est «d'éviter une nouvelle détérioration de la compétitivité des entreprises françaises et de leur capacité à créer des emplois», a rappelé le porte-parole.

Le gouvernement français a précisément décidé de faire porter une bonne part de l'effort de financement des retraites sur une hausse des cotisations sociales de 0,3 point à l'horizon 2017, tant pour les salariés que les employeurs, ce qui a suscité la grogne du patronat.

1. La Commission encourage-t-elle la voie prise par le gouvernement français?

2. Quelle est son analyse?

Mercredi, le ministre du Travail, Michel Sapin, a promis une compensation pour les entreprises sous la forme d'un «transfert progressif» vers un autre mode de financement d'une partie des cotisations patronales aux branches famille et maladie de la Sécurité sociale.

3. Quelle est la position de la Commission sur ce point?

Réponse donnée par M. Rehn au nom de la Commission
(22 octobre 2013)

Les recommandations adressées par le Conseil à la France en juillet dernier ([2]) soulignaient la nécessité d'assurer la correction du déficit excessif d'une manière durable d'ici à 2015, afin de garantir la stabilité des finances publiques. Elles mettaient également en exergue la nécessité de prendre des mesures pour réduire le coût du travail en vue de rétablir la compétitivité des entreprises françaises.

En ce qui concerne la réforme des retraites, le Conseil a préconisé l'adoption de mesures destinées à équilibrer durablement le système des retraites, en insistant sur la nécessité d'éviter une augmentation des cotisations sociales. Dans ce contexte, la Commission a salué le projet de réforme des retraites, qui vise à réduire le déficit du système d'ici à 2020, mais déplore que jusqu'à cette date, les efforts reposent essentiellement sur une hausse des cotisations de sécurité sociale et non sur une réduction des dépenses, ce qui va contribuer à alourdir la charge fiscale déjà élevée et à accroître le coût du travail.

Elle se félicite de l'engagement du gouvernement de compenser entièrement l'augmentation des coûts de main-d'œuvre par une réduction des cotisations familiales. Elle salue également l'annonce faite par le gouvernement de «transférer progressivement» les cotisations sociales pesant sur le travail vers d'autres formes de fiscalité. Ce transfert serait en principe conforme aux recommandations du Conseil, bien que ni la réduction annoncée du coût du travail les années suivantes ni la solution de financement de remplacement n'aient encore été précisées.

([1]) http://www.euractiv.com/fr/services-financiers/la-commission-examine-les-reform-news-528139
([2]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/fr/13/st10/st10635-re01.fr13.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009702/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: Pension reform in France

The Commission's economic recommendations to France ([1]), which were endorsed by the Member States in July, stressed the need to guarantee the stability of public finances and reduce the cost of labour in France. The Commission placed particular emphasis on the need to avoid any increase in employers' contributions. Its spokesperson recalled that the idea is to prevent any further deterioration in the competitiveness of French businesses and their capacity to create employment.

The French Government has in fact decided to base a large part of its efforts to fund pensions on a 0.3% increase in social security contributions by 2017 for both workers and employers, which has been ill-received by the latter.

1. Does the Commission support the approach taken by the French Government?

2. How does it assess the situation?

On Wednesday, the French Labour Minister, Michel Sapin, promised compensation for businesses in the form of a 'gradual transfer' to another funding model, whereby part of employers' contributions would be covered by the family and sickness headings of social security.

3. What is the Commission's position on this issue?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(22 October 2013)

The Council's country specific recommandations for France last July ([2]) stressed the need to ensure a correction of the excessive deficit in a sustainable manner by 2015 in order to guarantee the stability of public finances. They also highlighted the need to take action to lower the cost of labour in France in order to restore the external competitiveness of French companies.

Regarding the pension reform, the Council called for measures to bring the system into balance in a sustainable manner, insisting on the need to avoid increasing social contributions. Against this background, the Commission welcomed the draft pension reform, which aims at reducing the system's deficit by 2020 but regreted that up to 2020 the effort is mainly based on increases in social security contributions instead of focusing on expenditure savings, as this will further increase the already high tax burden and the cost of labour,

The Commission welcomes the commitment by the government to fully offset the increase in labour costs by reducing family contributions. Besides, the Commission welcomes the announcement made by the government of a further 'gradual transfer' of social contributions weighing on labout toward other forms of taxation. Such a transfer would be, in principle, in line with the Council's recommendations, although neither the announced reduction in the cost of labour in the subsequent years nor the alternative funding solution have been specified yet.

([1]) http://www.euractiv.com/euro-finance/france-placed-eu-reform-scrutiny-news-528132
([2]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/13/st10/st10635-re01.en13.pdf

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009703/13
au Conseil
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(29 août 2013)

Objet: Croatie: mandat d'arrêt européen

Un texte législatif a été adopté par la Croatie le 28 juin, juste avant son entrée dans l'UE. Celui-ci prévoit que les mandats d'arrêt européens ne peuvent s'appliquer pour des crimes commis avant 2002. Sont ainsi exclus ceux commis à l'époque yougoslave et pendant la guerre serbo-croate (1991-1995). Cette législation est surnommée la loi Perkovic, du nom d'un ex-responsable de la branche croate des services de renseignement yougoslaves (UDBA), recherché en Allemagne dans le cadre d'une enquête sur l'assassinat d'un dissident croate en 1983, près de Munich.

En 2008, la justice allemande a émis un mandat d'arrêt européen contre J. Perkovic, accusé d'avoir organisé cette exécution. Le refus croate de l'extrader explique l'absence de la chancelière Merkel aux cérémonies d'adhésion, fin juin, au prétexte d'un «agenda serré». Le premier ministre croate a estimé que la loi européenne était «tordue» et «discriminatoire». Il souligne que la Croatie n'est pas le seul pays membre à avoir limité la portée du mandat d'arrêt européen.

Le Conseil compte-t-il mettre ce dossier à l'ordre du jour? Estime-t-il que des sanctions sont nécessaires ou estime-t-il faire valoir les arguments croates sur une jurisprudence en la matière?

Réponse
(28 octobre 2013)

Le Conseil tient à préciser que c'est à la Commission européenne qu'il incombe de contrôler l'application du droit de l'Union européenne, y compris les traités d'adhésion. Il appartient donc à la Commission de se prononcer sur la question soulevée par l'Honorable Parlementaire, et il ne serait pas opportun que le Conseil s'exprime à ce sujet.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009703/13
to the Council
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: Croatia — European arrest warrant

A legislative text was adopted by Croatia on 28 June 2013, immediately before its entry into the EU, stipulating that European arrest warrants shall not be applicable to crimes committed before 2002. This effectively covers crimes committed during the Yugoslav period and the Serbo-Croatian war (1991-1995). The law is known as the Perkovic law, after a former head of the Croatian branch of the Yugoslav secret services (UDBA), who is wanted in Germany in relation to the assassination of a Croatian dissident near Munich in 1983.

In 2008, a German court issued a European arrest warrant for Josip Perkovic, who is accused of masterminding the execution. Croatia's refusal to extradite Perkovic explains Chancellor Merkel's absence from Croatia's accession ceremony at the end of June 2013, on the pretext of an 'overloaded agenda'. The Croatian Prime Minister has labelled the European law 'twisted' and 'discriminatory' and has emphasised that Croatia is not the only Member State to have limited the scope of the European arrest warrant.

Does the Council intend to include this matter in its agenda? Does it see a need to penalise Croatia, or consider that Croatia's arguments should be tested against existing case history in this field?

Reply
(28 October 2013)

The Council would point out that it is the European Commission which is responsible for overseeing the implementation of European Union law, including accession treaties. The issue raised by the Honourable Member is therefore a matter for the Commission, and it would not be appropriate for the Council to express a view on the matter.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009704/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(29 août 2013)

Objet: Éditeurs de livres en Pologne

En juillet dernier, les éditeurs polonais faisaient part de leurs préoccupations relatives aux prix des livres, et à la baisse de leurs bénéfices, consécutive selon eux à la hausse de la TVA, passée de 0 à 5 %. Cette mesure est entrée en vigueur le 1er janvier 2013. Les éditeurs souhaitent limiter les remises sur les livres pendant une période indéterminée, afin de limiter les pertes.

Si le respect des règles de concurrence préside aux décisions de la Commission, celle-ci peut parfois déroger à la règle si le commerce entre les États n'est pas touché par ces nouvelles mesures restrictives. Le cas allemand dit «Sammelrevers» est ainsi l'un de ceux qui avaient conduit la Commission à accepter une fixation des prix: la Börsenverein des Deutschen Buchhandels (association des libraires et éditeurs allemands), le groupe d'édition Random House GmbH et le libraire Koch, Neff & Oetinger GmbH avaient été inquiétés par une plainte du libraire autrichien Libro AG et du libraire belge Proxis. Ces derniers se considéraient dans leur droit en vendant des best-sellers allemands à des prix inférieurs à celui fixé en Allemagne, et dénonçaient un possible embargo de la part des éditeurs allemands.

La Commission avait alors statué en faveur d'une limitation des remises, lorsque le consommateur final était en Allemagne: «L'engagement précise que pour parler de non-respect, il convient qu'un libraire allemand lié par le prix fixe prenne l'initiative de ne pas respecter le système du prix fixe, éventuellement par l'intermédiaire ou avec l'aide d'un libraire étranger».

Qu'en est-il ici?

Réponse donnée par M. Almunia au nom de la Commission
(24 octobre 2013)

Les conventions collectives sectorielles ou la législation peuvent tenter de fixer le prix de vente au détail des livres. Cela dit, pour déterminer si une loi ou une convention collective est contraire aux règles de concurrence de l'UE, il faut prendre en compte toute une série d'éléments factuels, juridiques et économiques.

Dans l'affaire allemande «Sammelrevers» de 2002, la Commission avait examiné les accords passés entre éditeurs et libraires, mais n'avait pas statué définitivement à leur égard. Elle avait conclu, sur la base des faits de l'espèce, que, compte tenu du fait que les parties intéressées s'étaient formellement engagées à garantir la liberté de vente directe transfrontière de livres allemands à des consommateurs finals en Allemagne, le régime en cause n'avait pas d'incidence notable sur le commerce entre États membres et que, par conséquent, il ne relevait pas des règles de concurrence de l'Union ([1]).

En ce qui concerne l'éventuelle initiative polonaise qui viserait à fixer des prix minimums pour les livres, la Commission n'a pas été saisie d'une plainte officielle concernant le droit de la concurrence ni ne dispose d'éléments qui lui permettraient d'apprécier ses effets potentiels sur le commerce entre États membres.

Les dispositions nationales en matière de fixation du prix des livres peuvent aussi violer les dispositions du traité relatives à la libre circulation des marchandises si elles ont un caractère discriminatoire ([2]). Dans le cas des livres électroniques, la législation nationale se doit notamment d'être compatible avec la libre circulation des services et la liberté d'établissement. Dans la mesure où une telle législation comporte des restrictions aux libertés garanties au sein du marché intérieur, ces restrictions doivent être appropriées à la poursuite d'objectifs stratégiques clairement identifiés et proportionnées à ces objectifs. Il convient de garder à l'esprit le fait que l'État membre doit apporter la preuve que ces exigences sont satisfaites.

La Commission reste déterminée à garantir le plein respect du droit de la concurrence et des règles du marché intérieur de l'UE dans le secteur de l'édition et suit de près l'évolution de la situation dans ce secteur.

([1]) Communiqué de presse IP/02/461.
([2]) Voir, par exemple, l'arrêt de la Cour de justice du 30 avril 2009 dans l'affaire C-531/07 au sujet du régime «Sammelrevers».

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009704/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: Polish publishing industry

In July 2013, Polish book publishers voiced concerns at the price of books and the impact they claimed new rules which had increased VAT from 0% to 5% as from 1 January 2013 were having on their profits. They are now calling for minimum prices to be set for their books in an attempt to keep their losses to a minimum.

Although the Commission must take decisions which are consistent with competition rules, it may occasionally make an exception as long as trade between Member States is not affected by the new restrictions. The German 'Sammelrevers' case is one instance of the Commission agreeing to allow price fixing: the Börsenverein des Deutschen Buchhandels (German Publishers and Booksellers Association), the publishing group Random House GmbH and the bookseller Koch, Neff & Oetinger GmbH were unhappy about a complaint brought by two European booksellers, Libro AG (Austrian) and Proxis (Belgian), who believed they had the right to sell German bestsellers at prices lower than those set in Germany and expressed their dismay at the threat of an embargo by German publishers.

The Commission ultimately ruled in favour of the German restriction on discounts:

'The Undertaking makes it clear that for circumvention to take place it would require a German bookseller bound by the fixed price to take the initiative of circumventing the price fixing possibly by means of or with the help of a foreign bookseller.'

Does the ruling also apply to the Polish publishing industry?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(24 October 2013)

Industry-wide agreements or legislation may attempt to set the retail price for books. That said, whether a law or an agreement is contrary to EU competition rules depends on a range of factual, legal and economic elements.

In the 2002 German 'Sammelrevers' case, the Commission examined but did not take a definitive view regarding the agreements between publishers and booksellers. It concluded on the facts of the case that, in light of the undertaking given by the parties involved that guaranteed the freedom of direct cross-border selling of German books to final consumers in Germany, the relevant agreements did not have an appreciable effect on trade between Member States, and therefore fell outside EU competition rules ([1]).

As regards the possible Polish initiative to set minimum prices for books, the Commission has neither received a formal complaint relating to competition law nor does it have any elements at its disposal to assess its possible effect on trade between Member States.

National provisions on book pricing might also infringe Treaty provisions on free movement of goods if they are discriminatory ([2]). In case of e-books, national legislation should be compatible in particular with the free movement of services and the freedom of establishment. To the extent that such legislation contains restrictions on internal market freedoms, these restrictions must be suitable to attain recognised policy objectives and be proportionate to those objectives. It should be borne in mind that the Member State has to proof that those requirements are fulfilled.

The Commission remains committed to ensuring the full respect of the EU competition law and internal market rules in the publishing sector and closely monitors relevant developments.

([1]) Press release IP/02/461.
([2]) See e.g. judgment of the Court of Justice of 30 April 2009 in Case C531/07 concerning the Sammelrevers scheme.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009705/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(29 août 2013)

Objet: Question du collatéral

1. La Commission s'interroge-t-elle sur la limitation de l'amplitude d'un actif proposé en collatéral? Le problème est que celui-ci passe de main en main un trop grand nombre de fois, au point qu'on ne sait plus, finalement, qui détient quoi et qu'on ne connaît plus les risques associés.

2. Que propose, dans ce contexte, la Commission pour améliorer la traçabilité du marché du collatéral?

3. Que pense-t-elle d'une régulation formelle?

4. La Commission partage-t-elle l'avis que la réutilisation ou les techniques d'optimisation du collatéral conduisent à une plus grande interconnexion au sein du secteur financier, à des risques de contagion entre les secteurs, à des effets procycliques en réponse à des chocs sur les prix ou à des dégradations de participants de marché ou de titres de collatéral?

Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission
(25 octobre 2013)

Depuis le commencement de la crise financière, la législation de l'UE, par exemple le règlement sur l'infrastructure du marché européen (EMIR) ou la directive sur les exigences de fonds propres, donne au collatéral une place centrale dans les opérations de marché, afin de réduire le risque de contrepartie. La relative rareté du collatéral de premier ordre a motivé certaines pratiques du marché, qui ont un impact sur la façon de se procurer du collatéral et sur les conditions contractuelles de celui-ci. Il s'agit notamment des réhypothèques, de la transformation de collatéral et de l'optimisation de collatéral. Ces pratiques peuvent réduire la transparence et aggraver les risques.

La Commission a publié le 4 septembre 2013 une communication sur le secteur bancaire parallèle, qui établit une feuille de route et examine, entre autres sujets, les risques liés à la réutilisation du collatéral. Cette réutilisation génère des chaînes dynamiques où le même titre est prêté plusieurs fois, impliquant souvent plusieurs intervenants. Il peut en résulter une augmentation du niveau de levier et un renforcement du caractère procyclique du système financier, qui devient vulnérable aux paniques (runs) et aux mouvements soudains de réduction du levier.

La Commission prend également une part active aux travaux concernant les opérations de financement sur titres dans le cadre du Conseil de stabilité financière et du Conseil européen du risque systémique. L'opacité des marchés du financement sur titres complique l'identification des droits de propriété («qui possède quoi?») et le suivi de la concentration des risques. Plus particulièrement, la Commission a entrepris depuis plusieurs années de réexaminer la législation européenne sur les valeurs mobilières, de façon à mieux répondre à la question du «qui possède quoi?» dans l'UE. Les fruits de ce travail devraient lui permettre d'élaborer une politique qui relève tous les défis d'ordre réglementaire identifiés.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009705/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: Collateral (finance)

1. Is the Commission exploring the possibility of imposing limits on the value of assets used as collateral? The problem here is such assets change hands so many times that ultimately it is no longer clear who owns what and who is bearing the risks involved.

2. How does the Commission intend to improve the traceability of collateral?

3. Does the Commission see scope for formal regulation in this area?

4. Does the Commission agree that the re-use of collateral and the use of collateral optimisation techniques may lead to a greater degree of mutual exposure in the financial sector, cross-sector contagion risks, pro-cyclical effects in the event of price shocks and the downgrading of financial institutions or asset-backed securities?

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

Since the beginning of the financial crisis, EU legislation, such as the European Market Infrastructure Regulation or the Capital Requirements Directive, has called for collateral to become a central part of market operations in order to reduce counterparty risk. The relative scarcity of high quality collateral has driven certain market practices which impact on where collateral is sourced from and on what terms. These include rehypothecation, collateral transformation and optimisation. Such practices can reduce transparency and increase risks.

The Commission has published a communication on shadow banking on 4 September 2013. It sets out a roadmap and *inter alia* looks at the risks of collateral reuse. Collateral reuse generates dynamic chains in which the same security is lent several times, often involving many actors. This can contribute to an increase in leverage and procyclicality of the financial system, making it vulnerable to bank runs and sudden deleveraging.

The Commission is also closely involved in the work on securities financing transactions at the Financial Stability Board and the European Stability Risk Board. The lack of transparency in securities financing markets makes it difficult to identify 'who owns what' and to monitor concentration risks. More specifically, the Commission has been reviewing securities laws for several years with a view to addressing the issue of 'who owns what' in the EU. The progress of this work should enable the Commission to develop a policy that meets all identified regulatory challenges.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009706/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(29 août 2013)

Objet: Encombrement des actifs

La dette non sécurisée coûtant plus cher, les banques ont accru ces dernières années leur financement collatéralisé: covered bonds, dont l'encours a triplé en France entre 2007 et 2011, RMBS aux États-Unis, pension livrée (repo) pour le financement des activités de marché. Une part croissante des actifs du bilan des banques se trouve donc «encombrée», c'est-à-dire mobilisée pour sécuriser une catégorie de créanciers, jusqu'à 50 % dans le cas des banques hypothécaires d'Europe du Nord.

Que pense la Commission de l'idée d'inciter les banques à transmettre aux superviseurs des détails sur l'encombrement de leurs actifs?

Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission
(25 octobre 2013)

La Commission partage ce point de vue. Elle a donc pleinement soutenu, pendant la négociation du paquet CRD IV, l'introduction d'une obligation de déclaration prudentielle concernant les actifs grevés. L'article 100 du règlement (UE) n° 575/2013 du 26 juin 2013 fait obligation aux banques de déclarer à leurs autorités de surveillance toute forme de charges grevant leurs actifs. En vertu de ce règlement, l'Autorité bancaire européenne (EBA) doit aussi élaborer un projet de norme technique d'exécution définissant des modèles communs de déclaration des actifs grevés, que toutes les banques de l'UE devront utiliser. L'EBA a déjà soumis un projet à consultation et devrait présenter sous peu son projet de norme technique d'exécution à la Commission pour adoption.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009706/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: Asset encumbrance

Since unsecured debt is a more expensive option than collateralised debt, banks have in recent years been increasing the latter, be this in the form of covered bonds — the rates for which tripled in France between 2007 and 2011 — RMBS in the United States or repurchasing (repo) for financing market activities. A growing proportion of banks' balance sheet assets are hence being 'encumbered', or in other words used to secure a certain category of creditor. In the case of Northern European mortgage banks this can be at rates of up to 50%.

What does the Commission think of the idea of encouraging banks to communicate their asset encumbrance details to the banking supervisors?

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

The Commission agrees with this point of view and therefore fully supported the inclusion of a supervisory reporting requirement regarding encumbered assets during the negotiations of the CRD IV package. Article 100 of Regulation (EU) 575/2013 of 26 June 2013 requires banks to report all forms of encumbrance of assets to their supervisors. According to this regulation, the European Banking Authority (EBA) is also required to prepare a draft implementing technical standard defining common reporting templates on asset encumbrance reporting that all banks in the EU must use. EBA has already consulted on a draft and is expected to submit the draft implementing technical standard for endorsement by the Commission shortly.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009707/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(29 août 2013)

Objet: Un mur anti-Roms

La construction d'un mur anti-Roms, qui entraîne «la ségrégation» d'une partie de la population, est en contradiction avec la raison d'être même du titre de «Capitale européenne de la culture». La construction de barrières physiques est une véritable honte et constitue une rupture avec les valeurs sur lesquelles notre Union européenne est fondée. Qu'en est-il du respect de la dignité humaine et des droits humains?

Il faut savoir que le mur anti-Roms de Košice est le huitième mur de ce type érigé depuis 2009 dans cette région et le 14e dans le pays, selon le site d'information romovia.sme.sk.

1. La Commission a-t-elle obtenu une réponse à sa demande de destruction «sans délai» d'un mur en béton anti-Roms érigé récemment à Košice?

2. Dans la négative, des sanctions seront-elles prises?

Réponse donnée par Mme Reding au nom de la Commission
(25 octobre 2013)

La Commission a reçu une réponse du maire de Košice expliquant que le mur de séparation a été érigé illégalement par une entité de la ville sur laquelle la municipalité n'a pas de prise et que des poursuites appropriées vont être engagées. La Commission a demandé à être tenue informée du suivi.

La mise en œuvre des programmes culturels prévus dans le cadre de la manifestation Capitale européenne de la culture relève des autorités nationales et locales. Toutefois, la Commission veillera, dans les limites de ses compétences, à ce que l'action soit mise en œuvre conformément à la décision qui l'a instituée ([1]).

De surcroît, le rejet de toute forme de racisme, y compris des barrières mentales et physiques, et l'octroi des mêmes droits à tous les citoyens et à toutes les communautés étant aujourd'hui les objectifs pour l'Europe qui devraient être les mêmes pour tous les États membres, la Commission a demandé à la République slovaque de concrétiser les mesures relatives aux Roms que celle-ci s'était engagée à mettre en œuvre dans sa stratégie nationale d'intégration des Roms. La Commission continuera de suivre de près l'évolution sur le terrain et poursuivra les échanges bilatéraux avec les autorités slovaques sur les progrès accomplis

([1]) Décision n° 1622/2006/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009707/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: 'Anti-Roma' wall in Košice, Slovakia

The building of an anti-Roma wall in Košice, which effectively segregates one section of the population from the other, is at odds with everything that the title 'European Capital of Culture' is supposed to embody. Erecting physical barriers between people is a disgrace and violates the principles on which the EU is founded. How on earth can the building of this wall be reconciled with the concepts of human dignity and human rights?

According to the website romovia.sme.sk, the wall in Košice is the eighth of its kind to be erected in the region since 2009 and the fourteenth in the country as a whole.

1. Has the Commission received a response to its request for the anti-Roma wall to be pulled down 'without delay'?

2. If not, will it impose penalties?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(25 October 2013)

The Commission received an answer from the Mayor of Košice explaining that the segregation wall was erected illegally by a city entity over which the municipality has no control and that appropriate legal action would follow. The Commission asked to be kept informed about the follow-up.

The implementation of the cultural programmes foreseen in the framework of a European Capital of Culture is the responsibility of the national and local authorities. However, the Commission will ensure, within the remit of its competences, that the action is implemented according to the decision establishing it ([1]).

In addition, as rejecting all forms of racism, including mental or physical walls, and granting the same rights to all citizens and communities are today's objectives for Europe and should be the same for all its Member States, the Commission called on the Slovak Republic to implement the Roma related measures it committed to in its National Roma Integration Strategy to support Roma inclusion. The Commission will keep monitoring closely what is taking place on the ground, and will pursue bilateral exchanges with the Slovak authorities, on progress made.

([1]) Decision 1622/2006/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of the EU.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009708/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(29 août 2013)

Objet: Gibraltar — Espagne vs Royaume-Uni

L'Espagne et le Royaume-Uni ont un différend diplomatique depuis que les autorités de Gibraltar, territoire britannique, ont coulé au large de leurs côtes des blocs de béton formant un récif artificiel. L'Espagne affirme qu'il s'agit d'une entrave au travail de ses pêcheurs. Depuis, de longues files d'attente se sont formées à la frontière entre l'Espagne et Gibraltar, ce dernier ayant immédiatement accusé Madrid d'avoir multiplié les contrôles par mesure de représailles.

Le gouvernement espagnol a réaffirmé qu'il «ne renoncerait pas» à ces contrôles, affirmant qu'ils sont, d'une part, obligatoires, puisque Gibraltar, comme le Royaume-Uni, n'est pas membre de l'espace Schengen, et, d'autre part, nécessaires pour lutter contre la contrebande, de tabac notamment.

On ne peut que regretter l'échec des récents efforts diplomatiques.

1. La Commission, en tant que gardienne des traités, compte-t-elle enquêter?

2. Quelles sont les mesures que la Commission peut prendre pour régler ce litige?

3. Une décision peut-elle être prise au plus vite afin d'éviter l'intensification d'une crise qui apporterait de l'eau au moulin des eurosceptiques?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Malmström au nom de la Commission
(4 octobre 2013)

La Commission invite l'Honorable Parlementaire à se référer aux réponses qu'elle a données aux questions écrites E-009281/2013 de M. Daniel Hannan et E-009591/2013 de M^me^ Diane Dodds.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009708/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: Gibraltar — Spain against the United Kingdom

The authorities in Gibraltar, a British territory, have sunk concrete blocks off the coast, forming an artificial reef and resulting in a diplomatic row between Spain and the United Kingdom. Spain maintains that this is impeding fishing. Since then, there have been long queues at the border between Spain and Gibraltar, with Gibraltar immediately accusing Spain of stepping up checks by way of reprisals.

The Spanish Government has reaffirmed that it will not abandon the checks, claiming that they are both mandatory (since neither Spain nor the United Kingdom is a member of the Schengen Area) and necessary (in order to combat smuggling, especially tobacco smuggling).

It is regrettable that recent diplomatic efforts have failed.

1. Is the Commission, as the guardian of the Treaties, intending to investigate?

2. What action can the Commission take to settle this dispute?

3. Can a decision be taken as quickly as possible so as to prevent the crisis from worsening, since that would benefit the eurosceptics' cause?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(4 October 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to Written Question E-009281/2013 by Mr Daniel Hannan and E-009591/2013 by Mrs. Diane Dodds.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-009709/13
alla Commissione
Lara Comi (PPE)
(29 agosto 2013)

Oggetto: Emergenza immigrazione — Conflitto in Siria

Premesso che:

— la situazione siriana sta peggiorando di ora in ora a causa della guerra civile e il rischio di un intervento militare sembra sempre più concreto e imminente;

— dalla stampa si apprende che sta aumentando vertiginosamente il numero delle persone in fuga da questo paese che vanno ad aggiungersi a quelle provenienti dall'Egitto che, lungo le rotte del Mediterraneo, sbarcano in Italia;

— secondo i dati diffusi dal Viminale, nei primi otto mesi del 2013 gli sbarchi in Italia sarebbero stati 2872, mentre restano senza risposta le grida di allarme lanciate da amministratori locali e operatori del settore che evidenziano l'impossibilità per l'Italia di accogliere nuove ondate di profughi senza aiuti concreti dall'Europa;

— Malta si è già rifiutata di offrire accoglienza a numerosi migranti nonostante le forti pressioni europee;

— l'articolo 80 TFUE prevede espressamente che le politiche relative ai controlli alle frontiere, all'asilo e all'immigrazione — e la loro attuazione — siano governate «dal principio di solidarietà e di equa ripartizione della responsabilità tra gli Stati membri, anche sul piano finanziario. Ogniqualvolta necessario, gli atti dell'Unione adottati […] contengono misure appropriate ai fini dell'applicazione di tale principio».

Tutto quanto sopra premesso, si chiede:

1. Stante la situazione attuale della Siria, quali misure urgenti e preventive intende la Commissione intraprendere per far fronte alla potenziale emergenza profughi che aggraverebbe una situazione già insostenibile per alcuni Stati membri i quali, a causa della posizione geografica, sono lasciati pressoché soli a gestire questa drammatica situazione che ha risvolti sociali e per la sicurezza interna dei cittadini europei?

2. Al di là dell'emergenza in atto, come intende la Commissione dare concreta e stabile attuazione ai principi di solidarietà e di equa ripartizione della responsabilità tra gli Stati membri e con quali azioni, ai sensi dell'articolo 80 TFUE?

Risposta di Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(27 settembre 2013)

La Commissione segue con apprensione l'evolvere degli eventi in Siria ed è conscia che l'afflusso di cittadini siriani sta mettendo sotto pressione una serie di Stati membri. Finora sono state sollecitate soprattutto la Germania e la Svezia, ma anche altri Stati membri alle frontiere del Mediterraneo sono esposti al rischio di flussi improvvisi.

Sin dallo scoppio della crisi la Commissione ha monitorato la situazione e ha creato una rete Frontex-EASO per lo scambio di informazioni sugli arrivi nell'UE. Su richiesta della Commissione, l'EASO ha convocato una serie di riunioni pratiche di cooperazione per individuare le misure atte a assicurare un livello coerente di protezione all'interno dell'UE. Frontex aiuta gli Stati membri a gestire i flussi migratori indotti dalla crisi. La Commissione garantisce inoltre un più ampio sforzo umanitario, in collaborazione con gli Stati membri. In tal senso l'Unione è il principale donatore impegnato a rispondere ai bisogni a fronte della diaspora siriana.

Quanto all'Italia, il paese è assistito dall'EASO tramite uno speciale piano di sostegno, convenuto a giugno 2013, e beneficia di finanziamenti d'emergenza per 2 milioni di euro dal Fondo europeo per i rifugiati. Il governo italiano ha inoltre la possibilità di chiedere nuovi fondi e l'EASO, che ha un mandato d'emergenza, può mobilitare altri strumenti.

Quanto alla necessità di assicurare la solidarietà e l'equa ripartizione delle responsabilità, rimando alla comunicazione della Commissione sulla solidarietà all'interno dell'UE e alla recente relazione della Commissione europea sull'immigrazione e l'asilo che dedica un'intera sezione alla solidarietà nell'UE ([1]).

([1]) COM(2013)422 def.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009709/13
to the Commission
Lara Comi (PPE)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: Immigration crisis — conflict in Syria

The civil war in Syria is making conditions in the country worse by the hour and military intervention seems ever more likely and imminent. Press reports speak of a dramatic rise in the number of people fleeing the country, adding to the numbers of refugees crossing the Mediterranean from Egypt to land in Italy.

Figures from the Italian Ministry of the Interior put the number of refugees landing in Italy in the first eight months of 2013 at 2 872. However, the cries of alarm from local officials and operators in the sector who point out that Italy simply cannot cope with new waves of refugees without tangible aid from the European Union, have met with no response.

Malta has already refused to accept large numbers of migrants, despite strong pressure from the EU to do so.

Article 80 TFEU provides expressly that policies on border checks, asylum and immigration — and their implementation — shall be governed by 'the principle of solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility, including its financial implications, between the Member States. Whenever necessary, the Union acts adopted […] shall contain appropriate measures to give effect to this principle'.

1. The situation in Syria being what it is at present, what urgent precautionary measures will the Commission be taking to tackle this potential refugee crisis which will only aggravate a situation that is already unsustainable for those Member States which, because of their geographical situation, are left to manage more or less alone this dramatic situation and the social and domestic security implications it has for EU citizens?

2. Looking beyond the current crisis, how and through what actions does the Commission plan to ensure that the principles of solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility between Member States are put into practice with lasting effect, pursuant to Article 80 TFEU?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(27 September 2013)

The Commission follows with concern the unfolding of events in Syria and is aware of the situation of pressure the inflow of Syrian nationals has generated in some Member States. So far, Germany and Sweden have received a majority of applications, but other Member States, on the Mediterranean border, are exposed to possible sudden flows.

Since the set of the crisis the Commission has been monitoring the situation by establishing a network including Frontex and EASO, in order to exchange information on the arrivals in the EU. EASO, upon request of the Commission, has organised a series of practical cooperation meetings to discuss steps to be taken to ensure a consistent level of protection within the EU. Frontex is supporting Member States in managing migratory flows triggered by the crisis. This complements a wider humanitarian effort that the Commission is pursuing together with Member States. In this respect, the European Union is the largest donor addressing the needs emerging from the displacement of Syrian nationals.

As far as Italy is concerned, EASO is providing assistance through a Special Support Plan which was agreed in June 2013. This was compounded by the disbursement of EUR 2 million in emergency funds from the European Refugee Fund. Upon request of the Italian Government, additional funds could be made available and EASO could trigger further instruments under its emergency mandate.

On the necessity to ensure solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility let me refer you to the Commission Communication on intra-EU solidarity and the recently published report by the European Commission on Migration and Asylum which contains a section devoted to solidarity at the EU level ([1]).

([1]) COM(2013) 422 final.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris P-009710/13
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(29 august 2013)

Subiect: Impactul revizuirii Directivei privind fabricarea, prezentarea și vânzarea tutunului și a produselor aferente

În luna iulie, Comisia pentru mediu, sănătate publică și siguranță alimentară a Parlamentului European a votat Raportul referitor la propunerea de Directivă privind fabricarea, prezentarea și vânzarea tutunului și a produselor aferente. Printre propunerile votate de Comisia ENVI se numără interzicerea țigaretelor de tip „slim", precum și a aditivilor care dau impresia că produsele din tutun au efecte benefice asupra sănătății. Plenul Parlamentului European urmează a se pronunța asupra propunerii de directivă în toamna acestui an.

Care ar fi impactul economic, dar mai ales la nivelul sănătății populației, al interzicerii țigaretelor de tip „slim" și a celor care conțin diverse arome? A realizat Comisia studii care să cuantifice numărul fumătorilor de țigarete „slim" la nivel european? Întrebarea este justificată mai ales de faptul că în unele state membre, proporția fumătorilor de astfel de țigarete este mai ridicată decât în altele, lucru ce ar putea conduce la un impact diferit de la stat la stat.

Nu în ultimul rând, cum evaluează Comisia posibilitatea, invocată în special de reprezentanții industriei tutunului, ca traficul ilicit de țigări să crească în urma unor astfel de măsuri?

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(18 septembrie 2013)

După cum s-a subliniat în evaluarea impactului efectuată de Comisie ([1]), prezentarea și forma țigaretelor pot influența modul în care este perceput riscul asociat acestora. Țigaretele subțiri sunt adesea percepute de către tineri ca fiind mai puțin dăunătoare, cu o politică de marketing care vizează mai ales femeile tinere. De asemenea, există dovezi conform cărora țigaretele cu arome caracteristice pot facilita adoptarea obiceiului de a fuma prin mascarea aromelor de tutun mai neplăcute, atrăgând astfel în special consumatorii tineri.

În pofida faptului că piața țigaretelor este în declin, în ansamblul ei, pentru țigaretele cu mentol și pentru cele subțiri cota de piață a crescut în ultimii ani: cota de piață a țigaretelor mentolate a crescut în UE la aproximativ 5 % din totalul vânzărilor, iar volumul vânzărilor de țigarete subțiri a crescut cu 30 % între 2006 și 2010, cu o creștere de 50 % a cotei de piață.

Se estimează că măsurile propuse vor duce la o scădere de 2 % a consumului pe o perioadă de cinci ani.

Riscul ca efectul interzicerii anumitor produse să fie subminat de comerțul ilicit rămâne limitat. Propunerea Comisiei cuprinde măsuri care au ca scop reducerea comerțului ilicit prin intermediul unui sistem de urmărire și localizare și al unor caracteristici de securitate, care ar trebui să contribuie în mod eficient la reducerea acestui tip de comerț.

([1]) Documentul de lucru al serviciilor Comisiei (2012) 452 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009710/13
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: Impact of the revision of the directive on the manufacture, presentation and sale of tobacco and related products

In July, the European Parliament's Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI) adopted the report on the proposal for a directive on the manufacture, presentation and sale of tobacco and related products. One of the suggestions adopted by the ENVI Committee involves banning 'slim' cigarettes, as well as additives which give the impression that tobacco is beneficial to health. The European Parliament is to vote on the proposal for a directive in plenary this autumn.

What economic — and more especially public health — impact will the banning of 'slim'-type cigarettes and aromatised cigarettes have? Has the Commission conducted any studies to ascertain how many Europeans smoke 'slim'-type cigarettes? This is an especially important question since more people smoke this type of cigarette in some Member States than in others, meaning that the impact may vary from one country to another.

Last but not least, how does the Commission view the claim, made notably by the representatives of the tobacco industry, that such a ban would act as a spur to the illegal trafficking of cigarettes?

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

As outlined in the Commission's impact assessment ([1]), the presentation of cigarettes and their individual shape can influence the perception of risk. Slim cigarettes are often perceived as less harmful by young people, with targeted marketing towards young women. Likewise, evidence presented shows that cigarettes with characterising flavours can facilitate the uptake of smoking by masking harsher tobacco flavours, thereby attracting in particular young consumers.

Despite an overall declining market for cigarettes, the market share of menthol cigarettes and slims has increased in recent years: the share of mentholated cigarettes has grown in the EU to approximately 5% of the total sales, and sales volumes of slim cigarettes have increased by 30% between 2006 and 2010, with a 50% increase in market share.

The proposed measures are expected to lead to a 2% decrease in consumption over 5 years.

The risk that the prohibition of certain products may be circumvented through illicit trade remains limited. The Commission proposal contains measures aimed at reducing illicit trade through a tracking and tracing system and security features, which are expected to effectively contribute to a reduction of such trade.

([1]) SWD (2012) 452 final.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande P-009711/13
till kommissionen
Mikael Gustafsson (GUE/NGL)
(29 augusti 2013)

Angående: Tigrisdalen

Vår civilisations vagga, Tigrisdalen, riskerar att dränkas för evigt. Den turkiska staten fortsätter sina planer att genomföra ett av världens största och skadligaste dammprojekt i det gamla Mesopotanien. Staden Hasankeyf och 10 000 år gamla lämningar kommer att dränkas om dammen blir verklighet. De miljömässiga konsekvenserna blir omfattande och allvarliga. 70 000 människor, framför allt kurder, kommer att fördrivas från sina hem.

Projektet strider mot internationell rätt och har fördömts av Världsbanken. Tidigare europeiska banker och företag, bland annat svenska Skanska, har dragit sig ur på grund av att dammprojektet bryter mot så många internationella konventioner.

Jag anser att EU måste agera mycket kraftfullt mot den turkiska regeringen för att stoppa detta vansinnesprojekt. Att kräva ett stopp för dammbygget borde vara ett av de krav som EU bör ställa som villkor för turkiskt medlemskap i EU.

Vad har kommissionen hittills gjort i denna fråga?

Vilka åtgärder avser kommissionen vidta om Turkiet fortsätter med dammprojektet?

Anser kommissionen att ett stopp för dammbygget borde fogas till villkoren för ett turkiskt medlemskap i EU?

Svar från Štefan Füle på kommissionens vägnar
(25 september 2013)

Kommissionen hänvisar parlamentsledamoten till svaret på den tidigare skriftliga frågan E-010687/2012 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009711/13
to the Commission
Mikael Gustafsson (GUE/NGL)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: The Tigris valley

The cradle of our civilisation, the Tigris valley, is at risk of being permanently inundated. The Turkish State is persisting with its plans to carry out one of the largest and most damaging dam projects in the world in the region that used to be Mesopotamia. The town of Hasankeyf and 10 000 year old remains will be submerged if the dam is built. The environmental impact will be large-scale and serious. 70 000 people, mainly Kurds, will be driven away from their homes.

The project is contrary to international law and has been condemned by the World Bank. Previously, European banks and undertakings, including the Swedish-based Skanska, have withdrawn from the dam project because it violates so many international conventions.

I consider that the EU should make very forceful representations to the Turkish Government to stop this crazy project. The EU ought to demand that the building of the dam should cease as one of its conditions for Turkey's membership of the EU.

What has the Commission done in this regard so far?

What measures will the Commission take if Turkey continues with the dam project?

Does the Commission consider that halting the building of the dam should be added to the conditions for Turkey's accession to the EU?

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

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its answer to previous Written Question E-010687/2012 ([1]).

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

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009712/13
a la Comisión
Carmen Romero López (S&D)
(29 de agosto de 2013)

Asunto: Exención del IVA

El artículo 132, letra i) de la Directiva 2006/112/CE del Consejo, de 28 de noviembre de 2006, relativa a las exenciones de IVA dice expresamente:

«la educación de la infancia o de la juventud, la enseñanza escolar o universitaria, la formación o el reciclaje profesional, así como las prestaciones de servicios y las entregas de bienes directamente relacionadas con estas actividades, cuando sean realizadas por Entidades de Derecho público que tengan este mismo objeto o por otros organismos a los que el Estado miembro de que se trate reconozca que tienen fines comparables;»

Sin embargo, la transposición de la Directiva por el Reglamento de ejecución (EU) n° 282/2011 limita, en su artículo 44, las exenciones que la Directiva establece a las actividades curriculares necesarias para la adquisición o actualización de conocimientos a efectos profesionales, siendo así que las letras g), h), i), m) y n) del artículo 132 de la Directiva deben entenderse, como dice la Directiva, en beneficio de las actividades que son complementarias a la educación e incluso de las actividades de asistencia social como están siendo los comedores de los centros públicos que en tiempos de crisis se ven abocados a cubrir la manutención de los alumnos en los términos que las familias no puedan permitirse.

¿Cree la Comisión que el Reglamento ha hecho una interpretación correcta de la Directiva?

¿Cree que el Gobierno español debe modificar el Reglamento para dar cabida a estas actividades complementarias como exentas de IVA, teniendo en cuenta el evidente interés general de dichas actividades?

Respuesta del Sr. Šemeta en nombre de la Comisión
(1 de octubre de 2013)

El artículo 44 del Reglamento de Ejecución (UE) n° 282/2011 («el Reglamento») no persigue definir plenamente el alcance de la exención prevista en el artículo 132, apartado 1, letra i), de la Directiva 2006/112/CE («la Directiva del IVA»). Por el contrario, solo tiene por objeto velar por que los Estados miembros apliquen de manera uniforme los conceptos de «formación o reciclaje profesional» utilizados en dicha disposición, lo que se ajusta al considerando 5 del Reglamento, según el cual sus disposiciones « … incluyen normas específicas que responden a cuestiones concretas planteadas en materia de aplicación, y tienen por objeto dar, en toda la Unión, un trato uniforme a esos casos particulares únicamente. Por lo tanto, no pueden hacerse extensivas a otros supuestos y, dada su formulación, deben aplicarse de manera restrictiva».

El artículo 132, apartado 1, letra i), de la Directiva del IVA es más amplio que el artículo 44 del Reglamento, ya que además de la formación y el reciclaje profesional, contempla también actividades tales como «la educación de la infancia o de la juventud, la enseñanza escolar o universitaria». Puesto que el artículo 44 del Reglamento no pretende aplicar el artículo 132, apartado 1, letra i), de la Directiva del IVA en su totalidad, no obstaculiza ni impide ese ámbito de aplicación más amplio de la Directiva del IVA.

El Reglamento constituye un acto del Consejo que es directamente vinculante para los Estados miembros y en el que el Reino de España no puede introducir una modificación de forma unilateral. Este Reglamento solo puede modificarse mediante acuerdo unánime de todos los Estados miembros en el seno del Consejo, a propuesta de la Comisión ([1]). En lo que respecta al artículo 44 del Reglamento, la Comisión no ve ninguna necesidad de modificarlo. Además, en lo que respecta a los servicios mencionados en la pregunta, la Comisión se remite a su respuesta escrita a la pregunta E-005758/2013.

([1]) Artículo 397 de la Directiva del IVA.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009712/13
to the Commission
Carmen Romero López (S&D)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: VAT exemption

Article 132(i) of Council Directive 2006/112/EC of 28 November 2006 referring to transactions exempt from VAT states expressly:

'the provision of children's or young people's education, school or university education, vocational training or retraining, including the supply of services and of goods closely related thereto, by bodies governed by public law having such as their aim or by other organisations recognised by the Member State concerned as having similar objects;'

In laying down measures for this directive, Article 44 of Implementing Regulation (EU) No 282/2011 restricts the exemptions established in the directive to instruction needed to acquire or update knowledge for vocational purposes. However the directive makes it clear that the provisions in Article 132(g), (h), (i), (m) and (n) are intended to benefit activities that are complementary to education, and forms of welfare, i.e. school canteens which, in times of crisis, provide a decent meal for pupils from families who would not otherwise have the means for this.

Does the Commission think that the directive has been properly interpreted in the regulation?

Does it think that the Spanish Government should amend the regulation in order to exempt these complementary activities from VAT, bearing in mind that they are clearly of general interest?

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

Article 44 of Implementing Regulation (EU) No 282/2011 ('the regulation') does not aim at fully defining the scope of the exemption in Article 132(1)(i) of Directive 2006/112/EC ('the VAT Directive'). On the contrary, it only aims at ensuring that the notions of 'vocational training or retraining' used in that provision are applied uniformly by the Member States. This is in line with Recital (5) of the regulation, according to which its provisions

'… contain specific rules in response to selective questions of application and are designed to bring uniform treatment throughout the Union to those specific circumstances only. They are therefore not conclusive for other cases and, in view of their formulation, are to be applied restrictively'.

Article 132(1)(i) of the VAT Directive is wider than Article 44 of the regulation, since in addition to vocational training or retraining it also covers activities such as 'the provision of children's or young people's education, school or university education'. As Article 44 of the regulation is not seeking to implement Article 132(1)(i) of the VAT Directive in its entirety, it does not hinder or obstruct that wider scope of the VAT Directive.

The regulation is a Council act which is directly binding on Member States and to which the Kingdom of Spain cannot unilaterally introduce an amendment. That regulation can be amended only by unanimous agreement of all Member States within the Council upon a proposal of the Commission ([1]). With regard to Article 44 of the regulation, the Commission does not find any need for an amendment. Further, regarding the services cited in the question, the Commission refers to its written answer to E-005758/2013.

([1]) Article 397 of the VAT Directive.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009713/13
an die Kommission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(29. August 2013)

Betrifft: Ergänzende Informationen zum OLAF Jahresbericht 2012

1. In welchen Ländern fanden die auf Seite 21 des OLAF Jahresbericht 2012 geschilderten On-the-spot-Checks statt?

2. In früheren Jahresberichten hat das OLAF angegeben, in welchen Ländern und in welchen Bereichen es während des Jahres ermittelte. Kann das OLAF dies auch für 2012 tun?

3. Da in vergangenen Berichtsperioden die durchschnittliche Dauer der Ermittlungen auf Basis der geschlossenen Fälle (exklusive der noch offenen Fälle am Jahresende) berechnet wurde: wie hoch war die durchschnittliche Ermittlungsdauer bei den 2012 abgeschlossenen Ermittlungen? Wie hoch war sie 2011 und 2010?

4. Wie lange hat das OLAF in den 2012 abgeschlossenen Ermittlungen in den Ermittlungsarten external, internal, coordinated and criminal assistance cases im Jahr 2012

a. inklusive der noch geöffneten Fälle am Jahresende ermittelt?

b. exklusive der noch geöffneten Fälle am Jahresende ermittelt?

5. In früheren Jahresberichten hat das OLAF angegeben, aus welchem Jahr, es finanzielle, gerichtliche, disziplinarische und administrative Empfehlungen abgegeben hat. Kann das OLAF dies auch für das Jahr 2012 tun?

6. In früheren Jahresberichten hat das OLAF angegeben, wie hoch die wiedereingezogenen Beträge in den einzelnen betroffenen Ermittlungsbereichen waren. Kann das OLAF dies auch für 2012 tun?

7. In früheren Jahresberichten hat das OLAF angegeben, aus welchen Gründen Gerichte der Mitgliedstaaten OLAF-Fälle nicht weiterverfolgt haben. Kann das OLAF dies auf für das Jahr 2012 tun?

8. In früheren Jahresberichten hat das OLAF angegeben, wie viele Fälle aktiver Ermittlungen in welchen EU Institutionen am Ende des Jahres stattfanden. Kann das OLAF dies auch für das Jahr 2012 tun?

Antwort von Herrn Šemeta im Namen der Kommission
(25. Oktober 2013)

1. Das OLAF ([1]) führte im Jahr 2012 in 18 Mitgliedstaaten ([2]) Kontrollen vor Ort durch.

2. Der Jahresbericht 2012 des OLAF enthält Angaben zu laufenden Untersuchungen und Koordinierungsverfahren nach Sektoren ([3]). Ein Großteil der Untersuchungen des OLAF ist grenzüberschreitender Art und betrifft Wirtschaftsteilnehmer aus mehr als einem Mitgliedstaat. Nach Mitgliedstaaten aufgeschlüsselte Statistiken sind deshalb potenziell irreführend.

([1]) Europäisches Amt für Betrugsbekämpfung.
([2]) Belgien, Deutschland, Frankreich, Griechenland, Italien, Lettland, Litauen, Malta, die Niederlande, Österreich, Polen, Rumänien, Slowakei, Spanien, Tschechische Republik, Ungarn, das Vereinigte Königreich und Zypern. Ferner nahm das OLAF 2012 im Rahmen von Informationsbesuchen zu Untersuchungszwecken in Drittländern auch Vor-Ort-Kontrollen in Lesotho und Guyana vor.
([3]) Schaubild 10, Seite 19 des OLAF-Jahresberichts 2012.

3.-4. Im Jahresbericht 2011 des OLAF ([4]) wurde eine Änderung der Art und Weise, wie die durchschnittliche Dauer der Untersuchungen/Koordinierungsverfahren berechnet wird, erläutert. Diese Änderung wurde vorgenommen, um sich ein besseres Bild von der Effizienz des OLAF zu machen und verlässlichere Statistiken zu erhalten ([5]). Hinsichtlich der durchschnittlichen Dauer der Untersuchungen im Zeitraum 2010-2012 verweist die Kommission die Frau Abgeordnete auf den Jahresbericht 2012 des OLAF ([6]).

5. Im Jahr 2012 hat das OLAF 199 Empfehlungen abgegeben. Bei der Mehrzahl davon handelte es sich — entsprechend dem Auftrag des OLAF, die finanziellen Interessen der EU zu schützen, — um finanzielle Empfehlungen. Die Kommission verweist die Frau Abgeordnete diesbezüglich auf den Jahresbericht 2012 des OLAF ([7]).

6. Die Kommission verweist die Frau Abgeordnete auf den Jahresbericht 2012 des OLAF ([8]).

7. Die in früheren Jahresberichten enthaltenen Statistiken über Fälle, die von Gerichten weiterverfolgt wurden, basierten auf der Struktur des Amtes vor der Umstrukturierung des Jahres 2012. Das OLAF überarbeitet derzeit die Grundlage für seine Berichte über Maßnahmen, die im Anschluss an seine Empfehlungen von einzelstaatlichen Justizbehörden ergriffen werden. Ziel dieser Überarbeitung ist eine transparentere und kohärentere Darstellung der Daten, wodurch besser widergespiegelt wird, welche Maßnahmen von den Justizbehörden der Mitgliedstaaten aufgrund der Empfehlungen des OLAF ergriffen werden.

8. Die Kommission verweist die Frau Abgeordnete auf den Jahresbericht 2012 des OLAF ([9]). Es gibt 95 Fälle, an denen Organe, Einrichtungen und Agenturen der EU beteiligt sind. Die größte Anzahl betrifft die EK ([10]), gefolgt von EP ([11]) und EAD ([12]).

([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/anti_fraud/documents/reports-olaf/2011/olaf_report_2011_de.pdf

([5]) Die Dauer der Untersuchungsphase schließt in den derzeit verwendeten Berechnungen die Dauer der während des Berichtszeitraums abgeschlossenen und der am Ende des Berichtszeitraums noch offenen Fälle ein. Diese Parameter wurden auf 2007 zurückgerechnet, um die Indikatoren vergleichbar zu machen — siehe Schaubild 10 und Fußnote 8 auf Seite 19 des Jahresberichts 2011 des OLAF: http://ec.europa.eu/anti_fraud/documents/reports-olaf/2011/olaf_report_2011_de.pdf und Schaubild 11 auf Seite 20 des Jahresberichts 2012 des OLAF: http://ec.europa.eu/anti_fraud/documents/reports-olaf/2012/olaf_report_2012_de.pdf. Seit der Umstrukturierung des OLAF im Jahr 2012 führt das Amt entweder eine Untersuchung oder ein Koordinierungsverfahren durch. Die durchschnittliche Dauer der offenen Fälle wurde unter Berücksichtigung dieser Änderung neu berechnet. Zusätzliche Informationen zum Unterschied zwischen Untersuchung und Koordinierungsverfahren, siehe: http://ec.europa.eu/anti_fraud/documents/gip/gip_18092013_en.pdf

([6]) Zur durchschnittlichen Dauer von Untersuchungen und Koordinierungsverfahren, siehe Schaubilder 11 und 12, S. 20.

([7]) Tabelle 5, S. 21, und Schaubild 14, S. 22.

([8]) Tabelle 8, S. 24.

([9]) Tabelle 10, S. 19.

([10]) Europäische Kommission.

([11]) Europäisches Parlament.

([12]) Europäischer Auswärtiger Dienst.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009713/13
to the Commission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: Additional information in connection with OLAF's annual report for 2012

1. In which countries did the on-the-spot checks referred to on page 21 of OLAF's annual report for 2012 take place?

2. In previous annual reports, OLAF has identified the countries and areas in which it had investigated during the year in question. Can OLAF also do so for 2012?

3. For earlier reporting periods, the average duration of investigations was calculated by reference to cases closed (i.e. excluding cases still open at year-end). What, accordingly, was the average duration of investigations closed in 2012? What was the average duration in 2011 and 2010?

4. With regard to investigations closed in 2012, how long did OLAF investigate in external, internal, coordinated and criminal assistance cases in 2012

(a) including cases still open at year-end?

(b) excluding cases still open at year-end?

5. In previous annual reports, OLAF has specified the years in which it issued financial, judicial, disciplinary and administrative recommendations. Can OLAF also do so for 2012?

6. In previous annual reports, OLAF has specified the amounts recovered in each investigative area concerned. Can OLAF also do so for 2012?

7. In previous annual reports, OLAF has stated why OLAF cases have not been followed up by Member State courts. Can OLAF also do so for 2012?

8. In previous annual reports, OLAF has given the number of cases in which investigations were ongoing, and in which EU institutions, at year-end. Can OLAF also do so for 2012?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(25 October 2013)

1. In 2012, OLAF ([1]) carried out on-the-spot checks in 18 Member States (MS) ([2]).

2. OLAF's annual report (AR) 2012 provides information on open investigation and coordination cases by sector ([3]). A large part of OLAF's investigations is of a transnational nature and concerns economic operators from more than one MS. Therefore, attempts at giving statistics by MS are potentially misleading.

3-4. In the OLAF AR 2011 ([4]), it is explained that the way of calculating the average duration of investigation/coordination cases has changed. The change was done to better reflect the efficiency of OLAF and provide more reliable statistics ([5]). Concerning the average duration of investigations 2010-2012, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the OLAF AR 2012 ([6]).

([1]) The European Anti-Fraud Office.
([2]) Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Spain and the United Kingdom . In 2012 in the framework of investigative missions to the third countries, OLAF carried out also on-the-spot controls in Lesotho and Guyana.
([3]) Chart 10, page 19 of the OLAF annual report 2012.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/anti_fraud/documents/reports-olaf/2011/olaf_report_2011_en.pdf
([5]) The duration of the investigative phase in the currently used calculations includes the duration of cases closed during the reporting period and those still open at the end of the reporting period. These parameters have been recalculated back to 2007 in order to make the indicators comparable — see chart 10 and footnote (8) on page 19 in the OLAF annual report 2011: http://ec.europa.eu/anti_fraud/documents/reports-olaf/2011/olaf_report_2011_en.pdf and in the chart 11 on the page 20 in the OLAF annual report 2012: http://ec.europa.eu/anti_fraud/documents/reports-olaf/2012/olaf_report_2012_en.pdf.
Since the OLAF reorganisation 2012, the Office conducts only either an investigation or a coordination case. The average duration of the open cases has been recalculated according to this change. For further information concerning distinction into investigation and coordination case, see: http://ec.europa.eu/anti_fraud/documents/gip/gip_18092013_en.pdf
([6]) Chart 11 and 12, p. 20 for the information on average duration of investigation and coordination cases.

5. OLAF issued in 2012 199 recommendations of which the majority are of a financial nature, reflecting OLAF's mandate to protect the financial interests of the EU. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the OLAF AR 2012 ([7]).

6. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the OLAF AR 2012 ([8]).

7. The statistics on judicial follow-up presented in previous annual reports were based on the Office's structure before the reorganisation of 2012. OLAF is working on reviewing the basis upon which it reports on the actions taken by national judicial authorities following its recommendations. The intention of this review is to present the data in a more transparent and coherent manner which will reflect better the measures taken by MS' judicial authorities on the basis of the OLAF recommendations.

8. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the OLAF AR 2012 ([9]). There are 95 cases with EU institutions, bodies and agencies involved. The largest number is in the EC ([10]), followed by the EP ([11]) and the EEAS ([12]).

([7]) Table 5, p. 21 and chart 14, p. 22.
([8]) Table 8, p. 24.
([9]) Chart 10, p. 19.
([10]) The European Commission.
([11]) The European Parliament.
([12]) The European External Action Service.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009714/13
an die Kommission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(29. August 2013)

Betrifft: Follow-Up: Antwort zu Umzugskosten, Anfrage E-006329/213

In ihrer Antwort auf die Anfrage E-006329/2013 nach Umzugskosten verweist die Kommission auf einen nicht funktionierenden Link. Darüber hinaus bietet das Arbeitsdokument zum Haushaltsentwurf 2014, auf das die Kommission verweist, nicht alle Informationen nach denen gefragt wurde. Daher erneut folgende Fragen:

1. Wie vielen Bediensteten der Kommission und deren Familien wurden im Jahr 2012 die Umzugskosten innerhalb der EU erstattet? Wie viele Personen waren das?

2. Für Umzüge aus welchen EU-Staaten fielen die höchsten Umzugskosten an? Für wie viele Begünstigte?

3. Für Umzüge in welche EU-Staaten fielen die höchsten Umzugskosten an? Für wie viele Begünstigte?

4. Wie 1.: Wie vielen Bediensteten der Kommission und deren Familien wurden im Jahr 2012 die Umzugskosten an ihren Arbeitsort in die EU/an ihren Arbeitsort in Drittstaaten erstattet? Wie viele Personen waren das?

5. Wie 2.: Für Umzüge aus welchen Drittstaaten fielen die höchsten Umzugskosten an? Für wie viele Begünstigte?

6. Wie 3.: Für Umzüge in welche Drittstaaten fielen die höchsten Umzugskosten an? Für wie viele Begünstigte?

Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(31. Oktober 2013)

Der außerhalb der Organe funktionierende Link, über den die von der Frau Abgeordneten erbetenen Informationen abrufbar sind, lautet wie folgt: www.ec.europa.eu/budget/library/biblio/documents/2014/DB2014_WD_VI_en.pdf

Da die Fragen der Frau Abgeordneten noch eingehender sind, ist die Kommission derzeit nicht in der Lage, die zu Beantwortung erforderlichen Nachforschungen durchzuführen.

Im Übrigen möchte die Kommission die Frau Abgeordnete darauf hinweisen, dass sich mit Inkrafttreten des neuen Statuts am 1. Januar 2014 die derzeit auf die Bediensteten der europäischen Organe anwendbaren Vorschriften zu den Umzugskosten ändern werden.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009714/13
to the Commission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: Follow-up: Answer relating to removal expenses; Question E-006329/2013

In its answer to Question E-006329/2013 in connection with removal expenses, the Commission provides a link which does not work. Furthermore, the 2014 draft budget working document referred to by the Commission does not contain all the information asked for. I therefore again put the following questions:

1. How many members of Commission staff and their families received reimbursement for expenses for relocation within the EU in 2012? How many individuals did this involve?

2. For relocation from which Member States were the costs the highest? For how many persons?

3. For relocation to which Member States were the costs the highest? For how many persons?

4. As for question 1.: How many members of Commission staff and their families received reimbursement for expenses for relocation to their place of work in the EU / in non-EU countries in 2012? How many individuals did this involve?

5. As for question 2.: For relocation from which non-EU countries were the costs the highest? For how many persons?

6. As for question 3.: For relocation to which non-EU countries were the costs the highest? For how many persons?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Šefčovič au nom de la Commission
(31 octobre 2013)

Le lien accessible à l'extérieur des institutions permettant de trouver les informations demandées par l'Honorable parlementaire est le suivant: www.ec.europa.eu/budget/library/biblio/documents/2014/DB2014_WD_VI_en.pdf

S'agissant des questions plus détaillées posées par l'Honorable parlementaire, la Commission n'est pas en mesure d'entreprendre actuellement les recherches que cela nécessiterait.

Par ailleurs, la Commission se permet d'appeler l'attention de l'Honorable parlementaire sur le fait que l'entrée en vigueur du nouveau statut le 1er janvier 2014 modifiera les règles applicables actuellement au personnel des institutions européennes en matière de frais de déménagement.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-009715/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(29 Αυγούστου 2013)

Θέμα: Εκμετάλλευση κυπριακών κοιτασμάτων υδρογονανθράκων

Στην απάντηση του κ. Oettinger εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής στο ερώτημά μου με αριθμό E-007674/2013, αναφέρεται πως η διευθέτηση του Κυπριακού θα ανοίξει ένα ευρύ φάσμα επιλογών για την εκμετάλλευση των κοιτασμάτων υδρογονανθράκων με τον πλέον συμφέροντα από οικονομική άποψη τρόπο, προς όφελος όλων των Κυπρίων.

Καλείται η Επιτροπή όπως επεξηγήσει πιο αναλυτικά και πιο συγκεκριμένα:

1. Ποιο είναι αυτό το «ευρύ φάσμα επιλογών»;

2. Ποιος είναι, κατά την άποψή της ο πιο συμφέρων τρόπος από οικονομικής άποψης για εκμετάλλευση των κοιτασμάτων υδρογονανθράκων;

3. Πώς είναι δυνατή μια σωστή, δίκαιη και βιώσιμη διευθέτηση του Κυπριακού, όταν η κατοχική Τουρκία καιροφυλαχτεί να εκμεταλλευτεί τα κοιτάσματα υδρογονανθράκων προς δικό της όφελος και απειλεί ασύστολα και διαρκώς την Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία;

4. Έχει πειστεί ο κ. Oettinger πως θα αφεθεί απρόσκοπτα η Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία να αξιοποιήσει τα κοιτάσματα υδρογονανθράκων προς όφελος των Κυπρίων, χωρίς υπόσκαψη από τρίτους που τα επιβουλεύονται; Πώς μπορεί η ΕΕ να διασφαλίσει κάτι τέτοιο;

Απάντηση του κ. Oettinger εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(15 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Η εξερεύνηση των κοιτασμάτων φυσικού αερίου και πετρελαίου στην περιοχή της Ανατολικής Μεσογείου θα μπορούσε να μεταβάλει την κατάσταση που επικρατεί στη συγκεκριμένη περιοχή από γεωπολιτική και οικονομική άποψη.

Τα επιβεβαιωμένα κοιτάσματα και οι ανακαλύψεις που βρίσκονται υπό αξιολόγηση δηλώνουν αφενός ότι υπάρχει αρκετό αέριο για την κάλυψη των εγχώριων ενεργειακών αναγκών και αφετέρου ότι ορισμένες χώρες έχουν τη δυνατότητα να εξάγουν πετρέλαιο και φυσικό αέριο στις παρακείμενες χώρες της περιοχής και στην ΕΕ.

Οι ανακαλύψεις αυτές είχαν ως αποτέλεσμα την εκπόνηση σχεδίων εξαγωγής υγροποιημένου φυσικού αερίου (LNG), πλωτού υγροποιημένου φυσικού αερίου (FLNG) και πετρελαιαγωγών τόσο από το Ισραήλ όσο και από την Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία με πολλούς διαφορετικούς τρόπους. Η εκτίμηση του οικονομικά αποδοτικότερου τρόπου επαφίεται στην ευχέρεια των ενδιαφερόμενων χωρών αφού πρώτα λάβουν υπόψη όλες τις παραμέτρους και τα πιθανά σενάρια.

Ένας σημαντικός παράγοντας για την τελική επιλογή των «τρόπων μεταφοράς και των διαδρομών» θα είναι το κατά πόσο οι εταιρείες παραγωγής φυσικού αερίου έχουν επαρκή βεβαιότητα, ώστε να επενδύσουν σημαντικά κεφάλαια σε έργα που σχετίζονται με υποδομές για την εξαγωγή αερίου προς την Ευρώπη ή προς τις χώρες της περιοχής.

Η ΕΕ εκδηλώνει έντονο ενδιαφέρον για την ασφαλή, βιώσιμη και ειρηνική εκμετάλλευση των ενεργειακών πόρων στην περιοχή αυτή. Η ΕΕ θα καταβάλει κάθε δυνατή προσπάθεια για να εξασφαλίσει ότι οι εξελίξεις στον τομέα της ενέργειας στην περιοχή αυτή προάγουν την εποικοδομητική συνεργασία μεταξύ των χωρών της περιοχής, τα κοινά έργα και την αμοιβαία εμπιστοσύνη.

Σχετικά με τη θέση της ΕΕ όσον αφορά τις σχέσεις της Κυπριακής Δημοκρατίας με την Τουρκία στο πλαίσιο της εξερεύνησης υδρογονανθράκων, η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου στις απαντήσεις της στις γραπτές ερωτήσεις E-007674/2013 και E-001320/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009715/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: Exploitation of Cypriot hydrocarbon resources

In his answer given on behalf of the Commission to my Question E-007674/2013, Mr Oettinger indicates that a settlement in Cyprus would open up a range of options for the exploitation of hydrocarbon resources in the economically most advantageous way for the benefit of all Cypriots.

Can the Commission provide more detailed and specific information in order to clarify the following:

1. What does the wide range of options comprise?

2. What does it consider to be the most economically advantageous way of exploiting the hydrocarbon resources?

3. How is a proper, fair and sustainable settlement in Cyprus possible, given that the Turkish occupiers are simply awaiting an opportunity to exploit the hydrocarbon resources for their own ends, openly and continually seeking to intimidate the Republic of Cyprus?

4. Is Mr Oettinger satisfied that the Republic of Cyprus will be able to exploit its hydrocarbon resources for the benefit of Cypriots unhindered by third parties with designs on these resources? How can the EU guarantee that this would be the case?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(15 October 2013)

The exploration of the gas and oil deposits in the East Mediterranean region could change the situation in this region geopolitically and economically.

Proven reserves and discoveries currently under appraisal in the region indicate enough gas to cover domestic energy needs and the potential for some countries to export volumes to adjacent countries in the region and to the EU.

This has prompted the drafting of LNG, FLNG and pipeline export plans from both Israel and the Republic of Cyprus through many different paths. Which of them is the most economically efficient way is up to the countries concerned to assess after having taken into account all parameters and possible scenarios.

An important factor for the final choice of the 'transportation means and routes' will be whether gas producing companies have the confidence to make major capital investments in projects linked with gas exporting infrastructure towards Europe or towards the countries in the region; unsolved political problems within or between countries of the region make the scale and costs of the investments even higher.

The EU has a keen interest in the safe, sustainable and peaceful exploitation of energy resources in this region. The EU will do all it can to ensure that energy developments in this region build upon constructive collaboration between the countries in the region, joint projects and mutual trust.

Regarding the EU position concerning to the relations of the Republic of Cyprus with Turkey in the context of the exploration of hydrocarbons, the Commission refers the Honourable Member to its answers to Written Questions E-007674/2013 and E-001320/2013.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-009716/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(29 Αυγούστου 2013)

Θέμα: Κυπριακό πρόβλημα

Έχω παρατηρήσει πως σε αρκετές απαντήσεις της Επιτροπής σε ερωτήματα που έχω υποβάλει αναφορικά με το Κυπριακό και τις διαρκείς παραβιάσεις ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων από την κατοχική Τουρκία στη χώρα μου, είθισται να επαναλαμβάνεται μια στερεότυπη αναφορά πως: «Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος σε πρότερες απαντήσεις όπου τονίζεται η ανάγκη ταχείας και ολοκληρωμένης διευθέτησης του Κυπριακού, μεταξύ των ηγετών της ελληνοκυπριακής και τουρκοκυπριακής κοινότητας, υπό την αιγίδα των Ηνωμένων Εθνών».

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Θεωρεί το Κυπριακό πρόβλημα δικοινοτική διαφορά ή θέμα εισβολής και κατοχής της Τουρκίας κατά της Κυπριακής Δημοκρατίας, χώρας μέλους του ΟΗΕ, του ΣτΕ, της ΕΕ και άλλων διεθνών οργανισμών;

2. Ποιος ευθύνεται, κατά τη γνώμη της, για τη μη επίλυση του Κυπριακού, 39 χρόνια μετά την τουρκική εισβολή κατά της Κύπρου;

3. Γιατί τηρεί μια τόσο ανεκτική στάση απέναντι στην κατοχική Τουρκία, που ουσιαστικά ισοδυναμεί με αποενοχοποίηση της τελευταίας, για σωρεία εγκλημάτων κατά της Κυπριακής Δημοκρατίας;

4. Γιατί άφησε την Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία έρμαιο της τουρκικής βουλιμίας, που στην πράξη σημαίνει δημογραφική αλλοίωση των κατεχομένων, παράνομο εποικισμό και τουρκοποίηση;

Απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(22 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή υποστηρίζει θερμά τόσο από πολιτική όσο και από τεχνική άποψη τις προσπάθειες που καταβάλλουν οι ηγέτες των δύο κοινοτήτων στην Κύπρο και τα Ηνωμένα Έθνη για συνολική διευθέτηση του Κυπριακού.

Επίσης, η Επιτροπή ενθαρρύνει όλα τα μέρη να συμβάλουν ώστε να εδραιωθεί θετικό κλίμα μεταξύ των κοινοτήτων. Τα οφέλη της επανένωσης υπερισχύουν των τυχόν παραχωρήσεων που θα χρειαστεί να γίνουν προς αυτόν τον σκοπό.

Επιπλέον, η Επιτροπή έχει ζητήσει επανειλημμένως από την Τουρκία να συμβάλει θετικά και με συγκεκριμένο τρόπο στη συνολική διευθέτηση του Κυπριακού.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009716/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: The Cyprus problem

It has come to my attention that a number of the Commission's answers to questions I have tabled regarding the Cyprus problem and the continual human rights violations committed by the Turkish occupying forces in my country repeat a routine statement along the following lines : 'The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to previous answers which emphasised the need for a rapid and comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem between the leaders of the Greek Cypriot and the Turkish Cypriot communities, under the auspices of the United Nations.'

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Does it believe that the Cyprus problem is a bi-communal dispute or a matter of the invasion and occupation by Turkey of the Republic of Cyprus, a state which is a member of the UN, the CoE, the EU and other international organisations?

2. Who is responsible, in its opinion, for the failure to reach a settlement of the Cyprus problem, 39 years after the Turkish invasion of Cyprus?

3. Why does it maintain such a forbearing attitude towards the occupying power, Turkey, which is essentially tantamount to absolving it from culpability for a host of crimes against the Republic of Cyprus?

4. Why has it left the Republic of Cyprus a prey to Turkish rapaciousness, which in practice means an alteration of the demographic situation in the occupied territories, illegal colonisation and Turkification?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(22 October 2013)

The Commission strongly supports politically and technically the efforts of the leaders of the two communities in Cyprus and the UN to reach a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus issue.

The Commission also encourages all parties to contribute to establishing a positive climate between the communities. The benefits of reunification will outweigh any concessions that will need to be made to this end.

The Commission, at various instances, has also called on Turkey to contribute in concrete terms and positively to a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus issue.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-009717/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(29 Αυγούστου 2013)

Θέμα: Αύξηση φόρων

Η Γαλλία έχει φτάσει σε σημείο που δεν μπορεί πλέον να αυξήσει φόρους χωρίς να βλάψει την ανάπτυξη και να οδηγεί σε μείωση θέσεων εργασίας, δήλωσε στην εβδομαδιαία εφημερίδα Le Journal du Dimanche ο Επίτροπος Οικονομικών και Νομισματικών Υποθέσεων, Όλι Ρεν.

Τα σχέδια του Φρανσουά Ολάντ για φόρους 6 δισ. ευρώ το 2014 έχουν εξοργίσει τις επιχειρήσεις και τα νοικοκυριά και έχουν ωθήσει το ΔΝΤ να προειδοποιήσει ότι περαιτέρω αυξήσεις στους φόρους θα εμπόδιζαν την εύθραυστη οικονομική ανάκαμψη της χώρας.

Ερωτηθείς εάν οι αυξήσεις φόρων θα πρέπει να σταματήσουν, ο κ. Ρεν δήλωσε:

«Απολύτως. Οι αυξήσεις φόρων στη Γαλλία έχουν φτάσει στο μοιραίο σημείο τους. Η επιβολή νέων φόρων θα έσπαζε την ανάπτυξη και θα επιβάρυνε την απασχόληση. Η πειθαρχία στον προϋπολογισμό πρέπει να προέλθει από μείωση των δημοσίων δαπανών και όχι από νέους φόρους».

Ερωτάται λοιπόν ο Επίτροπος:

1. Γιατί δεν έχει προβεί σε παρόμοιες δηλώσεις για την Ελλάδα και την Κύπρο;

2. Δεν έχουν φτάσει σε μοιραίο σημείο τα μέτρα λιτότητας και οι φόροι στις χώρες αυτές;

3. Δεν έχουν καταστραφεί οι προοπτικές τους για ανάπτυξη;

4. Δεν έχουν καταστραφεί οι προοπτικές τους για απασχόληση;

5. Τι προτείνει η Επιτροπή; πιο συγκεκριμένα; για αναστροφή του αρνητικού κλίματος και επανεκκίνηση της οικονομίας των χωρών αυτών;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(25 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Η Γαλλία, όπως άλλωστε οι περισσότερες ευρωπαϊκές χώρες, αντιμετωπίζει την πρόκληση που συνιστά η μείωση του αυξανόμενου δημόσιου χρέους. Ωστόσο, οι χώρες του προγράμματος, όπως η Ελλάδα και η Κύπρος, αντιμετωπίζουν μια σειρά ιδιαίτερων προβλημάτων, γεγονός που καθιστά δύσκολη τη σύγκριση μεταξύ των χωρών που δεν υπάγονται στο πρόγραμμα και των χωρών του προγράμματος. Σε αυτό οφείλονται οι ριζικές διαφορές όσον αφορά τις διαδικασίες επιτήρησης και την παροχή συμβουλών σε θέματα πολιτικής.

Οι συστάσεις προς τη Γαλλία που πρότεινε η Επιτροπή και ενέκρινε το Συμβούλιο δεν προτρέπουν σε αύξηση των φόρων, αλλά σε μετατόπιση της φορολογικής επιβάρυνσης από την εργασία στην περιβαλλοντική φορολογία ή την κατανάλωση, καθώς και σε διεύρυνση των φορολογικών βάσεων.

Παρά την εκτεταμένη χρήση φορολογικών μέσων για την εξυγίανση των δημόσιων οικονομικών Ελλάδας και Κύπρου, ο δείκτης φορολογίας προς το ΑΕΠ των χωρών αυτών εκτιμάται σε περίπου 33% και 34% αντίστοιχα για το 2013, σύμφωνα με τις εαρινές προβλέψεις της Επιτροπής για το 2013, ενώ ο μέσος όρος της ζώνης του ευρώ παραμένει περίπου 41%. Αντίθετα, ο δείκτης φορολογίας προς το ΑΕΠ της Γαλλίας υπερβαίνει το 46% και αποτελεί έναν από τους πιο υψηλούς δείκτες στη ζώνη του ευρώ. Οι έμμεσοι φορολογικοί συντελεστές στην Ελλάδα και την Κύπρο, οι οποίοι μετρούν την μέση φορολογική επιβάρυνση σε διάφορα είδη οικονομικών εσόδων ή δραστηριοτήτων (δηλαδή στην εργασία, την κατανάλωση και το κεφάλαιο), είναι επίσης σαφώς χαμηλότεροι από το μέσο όρο της ΕΕ.

Για την αποκατάσταση υγιών δημόσιων οικονομικών και την οικονομική ανάκαμψη των οικονομιών τους, τόσο η Ελλάδα όσο και η Κύπρος οφείλουν να εφαρμόσουν, εκτός των μέτρων για την εξυγίανση των δημόσιων οικονομικών τους, διαρθρωτικές μεταρρυθμίσεις για τη στήριξη της ανταγωνιστικότητας και της βιώσιμης και ισόρροπης ανάπτυξης, όπως περιγράφεται στο μνημόνιο συμφωνίας που υπεγράφη από τον ΕΜΣ και τις δύο χώρες.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009717/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: Tax increases

In an interview with the French weekly 'Le Journal du Dimanche', Olli Rehn, Commissioner for economic and monetary affairs, warned that France could now no longer increase taxes without destroying economic growth and employment prospects.

Companies and households alike are incensed by the EUR 6 billion tax package announced by François Hollande for 2014, prompting the IMF to caution against further tax increases the grounds that they will compromise the country's fragile economic recovery.

Asked whether tax increases must be halted, Mr Rehn replied that this was indeed the case, adding that tax levels in France had reached a fateful point and that new taxes would destroy growth and undermine job creation. He argued that budgetary discipline must come from a reduction in public spending and not from new taxes.

In view of this:

1. Why has the Commissioner not issued similar statements in respect of Greece and Cyprus?

2. Have austerity measures and tax levels not reached a 'fateful point' in these countries also?

3. Have their growth prospects not been destroyed?

4. Have their employment prospects not been destroyed?

5. What specific measures does the Commission intend to take to revive the flagging economies of these two countries?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(25 October 2013)

France, — as most EU countries — faces the challenge of reducing mounting public debt. However, programme countries such as Greece and Cyprus face a very distinct set of problems, which makes a comparison of non-programme and programme countries difficult. That is why both surveillance procedures and policy advice differs fundamentally.

The recommendations proposed by the Commission and adopted by the Council for France do not favour tax hikes but rather a shift in taxation from labour to environmental taxation or consumption and a broadening of tax bases.

Although tax instruments were extensively used in Greece and Cyprus for restoring the health of their public finances, the tax-to-GDP ratio in Greece and Cyprus is estimated at around 33% and 34% for 2013 respectively according to Commission 2013 spring forecast, while the euro-area average is set to remain at around 41%. In contrast, the tax-to-GDP ratio in France is above 46%, among the very highest in the euro-area. The implicit tax rates in Greece and Cyprus, which measure the effective average tax burden on different types of economic income or activities (i.e. on labour, consumption and capital), are also clearly below the EU average.

For restoring sound public finances and reviving their economies both Greece and Cyprus need to implement — in addition to measures to consolidate their public finances — structural refoms to support competitiveness and sustainable and balanced growth, as outlined in the memorandum of understanding signed by the ESM with both countries.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009718/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(29 août 2013)

Objet: Différend automobile franco allemand

Antonio Tajani, commissaire chargé de l'industrie et de l'entrepreneuriat, a engagé une procédure de précontentieux contre l'Allemagne à la mi-juin et a donné dix semaines aux autorités allemandes pour se mettre en règle, à savoir jusqu'en septembre.

La France aurait violé l'article 34 sur la libre circulation en décidant d'interdire l'immatriculation des modèles Mercedes Classe A, Classe B et CLA produits depuis juin avant que la Commission n'ait statué, a-t-on souligné de source communautaire.

Néanmoins, la Commission estime que le groupe Daimler est lui aussi en infraction, car tous les nouveaux modèles commercialisés en 2013 doivent être équipés depuis le 1er janvier d'un nouveau gaz réfrigérant moins polluant pour les systèmes de climatisation.

1. Quelle est la position de la Commission?

2. Comment compte-t-elle régler le différend?

3. Le litige est-il quantifiable?

Réponse donnée par M. Tajani au nom de la Commission
(17 octobre 2013)

La Commission examine actuellement la réponse présentée par les autorités allemandes à sa lettre «PILOT» en ce qui concerne la mise en œuvre de la directive 2006/40/CE sur les systèmes de climatisation mobiles. Si des éléments attestant de la violation du droit de l'UE devaient apparaître, la Commission prendrait alors les mesures qu'elle jugerait appropriées.

S'agissant de la mesure de sauvegarde notifiée par la France le 26 juillet 2013 au titre de l'article 29 de la directive 2007/46/CE, la Commission est en train de consulter les parties concernées conformément à la procédure prévue au dit article. Le 1er août 2013, elle a envoyé un courrier à la France, à l'Allemagne et à la société Daimler pour demander des informations complémentaires, qu'elles a entretemps reçues, puis, le 6 septembre 2013, elle a consulté d'autres États membres au sein du comité technique pour les véhicules à moteur. La Commission tirera ses conclusions sur la base de ces concertations et informera les parties concernées en conséquence.

La Commission estime que la situation actuelle de non-conformité à la directive sur les systèmes de climatisation mobiles cause un double préjudice, à la fois en termes d'incidence sur le climat (l'objectif de la directive) et de distorsion de la concurrence vis-à-vis des fabricants qui respectent la directive. Cet aspect n'a pas encore été chiffré.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009718/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: Franco-German dispute over car air-conditioning coolant

In mid-June Antonio Tajani, Commissioner with responsibility for industry and entrepreneurship, instituted preliminary infringement proceedings against Germany and gave the country 10 weeks (i.e. until September) to come into line.

According to EU sources, France has acted in breach of Article 34 on freedom of movement in refusing to register Mercedes A-, B- and CLA-Class cars manufactured since June 2013 until such time as the Commission has ruled on the matter.

The Commission nonetheless takes the view that the Daimler group is also in breach of EC law, which requires new models placed on the market since 1 January 2013 to be fitted with air-conditioning systems using a new, more environment-friendly coolant.

1. What is the Commission's position on this matter?

2. How does it intend to settle the dispute between France and Germany?

3. How much money is at stake here?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(17 October 2013)

The reply submitted by the German authorities to the Commission's PILOT letter in respect of the enforcement of Directive 2006/40/EC on mobile air-conditioning (MAC), is currently under assessment by the Commission. Should evidence of a breach of EC law emerge, the Commission would then take any action deemed appropriate.

On the notification of a safeguard measure by France on 26 July 2013, under Article 29 of Directive 2007/46/EC, in accordance with the procedure provided in the same Article, the Commission is consulting the parties concerned. It sent on 1 August 2013 a letter to France, Germany and Daimler for additional information, which it has now received, and consulted other Member States at the Technical Committee-Motor Vehicles on 6 September 2013. The Commission will draw its conclusions based on these discussions and will inform the concerned parties accordingly.

The Commission considers that the current situation of non-compliance with the MAC Directive is provoking dual damage in terms of the impact on our climate (the objective of the directive) and the competitive distorsion that has ensued in relation with the manufacturers that comply with the directive. This has not yet been monetised.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-009719/13
a Bizottság számára
Tabajdi Csaba Sándor (S&D), Göncz Kinga (S&D), Gurmai Zita (S&D) és Herczog Edit (S&D)
(2013. augusztus 29.)

Tárgy: A Magyarország számára folyósítandó kohéziós források felfüggesztésének okai

A magyar közvélemény aggodalommal értesült 2013. augusztus közepén a Magyarország számára folyósítandó uniós támogatások felfüggesztéséről. Az Európai Unió kohéziós forrásai – különösen a gazdasági válság idején – kiemelt jelentőséggel bírnak a magyar gazdaság és társadalom fejlődésében, uniós átlaghoz való felzárkózásában. Az Európai Bizottság szerint Magyarországon 2009 óta az állami beruházások 97%-a valósult meg uniós támogatásból.

Lázár János illetékes államtitkár nyilatkozata szerint az Európai Bizottság egy 2012-es vizsgálatra hivatkozva a Magyarországon működő 15 operatív programból 13 esetében befagyasztotta a kifizetéseket. A magyar közvélemény azonban nem rendelkezik elegendő információval az Európai Bizottság döntését illetően.

A magyar közvélemény teljes joggal várja el mind az Európai Bizottságtól, mind a magyar kormánytól a hiteles tájékoztatást. Az Európai Bizottság döntéseinek átláthatósága fontos a lakosság bizalmának megnyerése érdekében. Erre hivatkozva felelős európai parlamenti képviselőkként a következő kérdésekre várjuk az Európai Bizottság sürgős válaszát:

1. Pontosan milyen szabálytalanságok merültek fel az uniós vizsgálat során, mekkora összeget érinthet az Európai Bizottság döntése?

2. Mely operatív programok esetében függesztették fel a kifizetéseket?

3. Mikor és milyen formában tájékoztatták és értesítették hivatalosan a magyar kormányzatot a hiányosságokról és a pénzek befagyasztásáról?

4. A talált szabálytalanságok arányban állnak-e a felfüggesztett támogatások, illetve a büntetés mértékével?

5. Milyen eszközei és lehetőségei vannak a Bizottságnak a magyar közvélemény minél szélesebb körének hiteles tájékoztatására, amelyekkel elősegítheti, hogy ezekről az ügyekről hamarabb értesüljön a lakosság? Élt-e a Bizottság ezekkel az eszközökkel?

Johannes Hahn válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2013. október 23.)

1. A Bizottság súlyos megkülönböztető gyakorlatokat tárt fel a közbeszerzési eljárásokban, amelyek jelentősen korlátozták a magyarországi piaci versenyt. Ez súlyos hiányosságot jelent a magyarországi programok irányítási és kontrollrendszerében, ezért a Bizottság 10 program ([1]) esetében korrekciós intézkedésekre kötelezte Magyarországot.

Azonnali hatállyal 157 millió EUR értékű pénzügyi korrekciót kellett végrehajtani, és a jövőbeni kifizetésekből további összegeket kell levonni. Ezek az összegek azonban ugyanazon program keretében más projektekre újra felhasználhatóak.

2. Az érintett magyarországi programokra folyósított kifizetéseket nem függesztették fel, hanem ideiglenesen leállították azokat. Mivel Magyarország végrehajtotta az előírt korrekciókat, a Bizottság 2013. szeptember 13-án úgy döntött, megkezdődhet a korábban visszatartott kifizetések Magyarország számára történő folyósítása.

3. Miután 2012 októberében súlyos megkülönböztető gyakorlatokat tárt fel a közbeszerzési eljárásokban, a Bizottság 2012 novemberében, illetve későbbi leveleiben tájékoztatta Magyarországot a kifizetések megszakításának okairól és a kapcsolódó következtetésekről.

([1]) A környezetvédelemre és az energiára, a közlekedésre, illetve a szociális infrastruktúrára vonatkozó operatív program, továbbá 7 regionális operatív program.

4. A talált szabálytalanságok természetével és súlyával a pénzügyi korrekció szintjének kell arányban állnia. A javasolt pénzügyi korrekció arányos, és mértékének meghatározása a pénzügyi korrekciókra vonatkozó iránymutatások ([2]) alapján történt.

5. Miután a Bizottság és Magyarország 2013. szeptember 9-én megállapodásra jutott a korrekciós intézkedésekről, egy sajtótájékoztató keretében azonnal tájékoztatták erről a nyilvánosságot. A Bizottság hivatalos párbeszédet folytat a tagállamokkal, és a programhatóságok számára előírja az érdekelt harmadik felek tájékoztatását.

([2]) A Bizottság 2011. október 19-i COM(2011) 7321 határozata az 1083/2006/EK rendelet 99. cikkének (2) bekezdése szerinti pénzügyi korrekciók meghatározása során a bizottsági szolgálatok által alkalmazandó alapelvekre, kritériumokra és javasolt értékhatárokra vonatkozó iránymutatásokról.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009719/13
to the Commission
Csaba Sándor Tabajdi (S&D), Kinga Göncz (S&D), Zita Gurmai (S&D) and Edit Herczog (S&D)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: Reasons for the suspension of Cohesion Fund payments to Hungary

In mid-August 2013, the Hungarian public learned with concern that EU support for Hungary was being suspended. Particularly at a time of economic crisis, cohesion funding from the EU is extremely important to the development of the Hungarian economy and society and in helping to bring them up to the EU average. According to the Commission, since 2009, 97% of State investment in Hungary has been made by drawing on EU support.

According to a statement by János Lázár — the state secretary responsible — the Commission froze payments in 13 cases in the 15 operative programmes being carried out in Hungary, invoking an investigation conducted in 2012. However, Hungarian public opinion does not have sufficient information concerning the Commission's decision.

Hungarian public opinion quite rightly expects both the Commission and the Hungarian Government to provide reliable information. Transparency of Commission decisions is important in order to gain the confidence of the population. As responsible Members of the European Parliament, therefore, we urgently seek from the Commission answers to the following questions.

1. Exactly what kind of irregularities were identified during the EU investigation, and how large a sum may be affected by the Commission decision?

2. In the case of which operational programmes have payments been suspended?

3. When and in what form was the Hungarian Government officially informed of the shortcomings and of the freezing of the funds?

4. Are the irregularities which have been identified proportionate to the amount of support which has been suspended, i.e. to the punishment?

5. What means and instruments does the Commission have at its disposal to provide trustworthy information to the broadest possible spectrum of Hungarian public opinion, so that the population can obtain information about these matters more swiftly? Has the Commission used these instruments?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(23 October 2013)

1. The Commission detected serious discriminatory practices in public procurement procedures which significantly limited competition on the market in Hungary. This constitutes a serious deficiency in the management and control system of the Hungarian programmes and therefore the Commission required corrective measures from Hungary on 10 programmes ([1]).

A financial correction of approximately EUR 157 million has to be applied immediately and further amounts will have to be deducted from future expenditure. These amounts can however be reused for other projects within the same programmes.

2. The payments to the Hungarian programmes concerned were not suspended, but temporarily put on hold. As Hungary implemented the required corrections, the Commission decided on 20 September 2013 that the payments withheld earlier can be resumed to Hungary.

3. Following the detection of the serious discriminatory practice in public procurement procedures in October 2012, the Commission communicated the reasons and the conclusion of the interruption of payments to Hungary in November 2012 and in subsequent letters.

4. It is the level of the financial correction which shall be proportionate to the nature and gravity of the irregularities found. The proposed financial correction is proportionate and established on the basis of the Guidelines on financial corrections ([2]).

([1]) Environment and Energy OP, Transport OP, Social Infrastructure OP, 7 Regional OPs.
([2]) Commission decision C(2011) 7321 of 19 October 2011, on the approval of guidelines on the principles, criteria and indicative scales to be applied by Commission in determining financial corrections under Article 99 (2) of Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006.

5. After agreement on the corrective measures was reached between the Commission and Hungary on 9 September 2013, this was immediately reported to the public in a press conference. The Commission communicates officially with the Member States and requires that the programme authorities inform interested third parties.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-009720/13
aan de Commissie
Peter van Dalen (ECR)
(29 augustus 2013)

Betreft: Luchtkwaliteit en rook in vliegtuigen

In Nederland dient deze week voor het eerst een juridische procedure over de gevolgen van giftige stoffen in de lucht van vliegtuigcabines. Een piloot daagt zijn werkgever, onder meer over zijn gezondheidsklachten die volgens de piloot zijn veroorzaakt door langdurige blootstelling aan giftige stoffen (TCP's) in de cabinelucht. Het proces wordt nauwgezet gevolgd door nationale en internationale media, omdat wereldwijd meer vliegtuigpersoneel gezondheidsklachten wijt aan blootstelling aan giftige stoffen in de cabinelucht. Tegelijkertijd is in Duitsland bekend geworden dat zich op twee vluchten incidenten hebben voorgedaan doordat het cabinepersoneel onwel werd van de cabinelucht. Voorts zijn in de afgelopen weken diverse vliegtuigen naar hun vertrekhaven teruggekeerd vanwege rook in de cabine en de cockpit.

1. Heeft de Commissie kennis genomen van de juridische procedure in kwestie bij de Rechtbank Amsterdam, alsmede van de uitkomsten van het onderzoek van het Duitse Federale Luchtvaartbureau over de oorzaken van twee luchtvaartincidenten?

2. Heeft de Commissie in kaart gebracht hoeveel Europese werknemers in de luchtvaart gezondheidsklachten toedichten aan giftige stoffen in de cabinelucht? En hoe vaak een incident in de luchtvaart zich voordoet als gevolg van de slechte luchtkwaliteit en rook in cockpit en cabine? Zo nee, is de Commissie bereid deze cijfers in kaart te brengen?

3. Is de Commissie bereid onderzoek te doen naar de luchtkwaliteit in vliegtuigen, met name naar de mogelijke aanwezigheid van een schadelijke hoeveelheid giftige stoffen? En is de Commissie bereid onderzoek te doen naar de oorzaken van de incidenten met rook in de cabine en de cockpit? Zo nee, waarom niet?

Antwoord van de heer Kallas namens de Commissie
(10 oktober 2013)

Het Europees Agentschap voor de veiligheid van de luchtvaart (EASA) oefent toezicht uit op de door het Duitse federale Bureau voor onderzoek van luchtvaartongevallen (BFU) uitgevoerde onderzoeken aan de hand van de door het BFU ingediende rapporten. Noch de Commissie, noch het EASA beschikken op dit moment over specifieke informatie over de lopende juridische procedure in Amsterdam.

De Commissie is niet op de hoogte van gezondheidsklachten door de luchtkwaliteit in de cabine of cockpit. Het EASA ziet toe op de rapportering van incidenten op basis van informatie uit verschillende bronnen, waaronder rapporteringssystemen en evaluaties van vliegtuig- en motorenfabrikanten. Hoewel er verschillen zijn naargelang het land, het type toestel en de exploitant, blijft het aantal incidenten in het algemeen zeer laag en gaat het meestal niet om ernstige incidenten. Slechts enkele gevallen waarin bemanningsleden onwel werden, zijn officieel onderzocht door instanties voor onderzoek naar vliegtuigongevallen. Het totale aantal gerapporteerde incidenten (met inbegrip van alle kleine incidenten) wordt door het EASA op één of minder per 100 000 vlieguren geraamd.

Hoewel geen enkele van de tot dusver afgeronde studies gezondheidsproblemen door de luchtkwaliteit in de cabine aan het licht heeft gebracht, onderzoekt de Commissie op dit moment op basis van een voorstel van het EASA of het thema luchtkwaliteit in de cabine kan worden opgenomen in het meerjarig werkprogramma Horizon 2020. Dit voorstel omvat onder meer de ontwikkeling en het testen van systemen voor de monitoring van de lucht en de verwijdering van schadelijke stoffen, die gemakkelijk in bestaande toestellen zouden kunnen worden ingebouwd.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009720/13
to the Commission
Peter van Dalen (ECR)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: Air quality and harmful fumes on aircraft

This week a court case, the first of its kind, is being heard in the Netherlands concerning the harmful effects of aircraft cabin fumes, proceedings having been brought by a pilot against his employers for health problems allegedly caused by long-term exposure to such fumes (TCPs). The details of the case have caught the attention of the national and international media, particularly in view of concerns being expressed by airline crews worldwide regarding health problems arising in this connection. In Germany there have been two reported incidents of cabin crews being adversely affected and in recent weeks a number of aircraft have had to return to their airport of departure because of cabin and cockpit fumes.

1. Is the Commission aware of the legal proceedings taking place in Amsterdam and the findings of the German Federal Aviation Bureau regarding the causes of the above incidents?

2. Does the Commission know how many European airline staff members are suffering from health problems attributed to cabin and cockpit fumes and poor air quality on aircraft? Does it know how frequently air traffic is disrupted by such incidents? If not, will it compile the relevant statistics?

3. Will the Commission call for an investigation into air quality on aircraft and possibly harmful levels of contamination by cabin and cockpit fumes? Will it investigate the reasons for such incidents? If not, why not?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(10 October 2013)

The investigations conducted by the German Federal Bureau of Aircraft Accident Investigation (BFU) are monitored by the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) on the basis of the reports transmitted by BFU. With regard to the legal proceeding taking place in Amsterdam neither the Commission nor EASA have specific information at this stage.

The Commission is not aware of a health case that was demonstrated as being caused by occupational exposure to cabin or cockpit air. EASA is already monitoring the reporting of incidents based on information available from various sources including reporting systems and reviews made with aeroplane and engine manufacturers. Although there are variations depending on the country, the aircraft type, the operator, globally the rate of events remains very low and the majority of reported events are of low severity. Only few cases involved a reporting of crew impairment and were subject to official investigation by aircraft accident investigation boards. The overall rate of reported events (including all the minor events) is still estimated by EASA to be of the order of magnitude of one event or less per 100.000 flight hours.

Although none of the studies completed so far have revealed an occupational health issue from cabin air exposure, the Commission, following an EASA proposal, is currently examining the possibility to include a thematic area on cabin air quality in the Horizon 2020 multiannual work programme. The development and testing of systems for air monitoring and removal of potential contaminants, which could be easily integrated into the design of existing aircraft, are part of this proposal.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009721/13
to the Commission
Marta Andreasen (ECR)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: Presentation of budget information in spreadsheet format

The 2014 draft budget for the institutions, as presented in Doc 2, consists of more than 1 800 lines, and this excludes the many subtotals which appear in the published versions.

When euro cents are included — as they are in outcome data — the numbers presented can run into 14 digits. The maximum number of digits commonly available on a desktop calculator is 12.

Moreover, the budget goes through a number of draft phases as it proceeds through the legislative process.

Could the Commission explain why the EU general budget is not available for download in spreadsheet format from the Commission website?

The budget is only available in PDF format to the general public. Before final adoption it is only distributed as a Word file within Parliament. The budget is clearly prepared in spreadsheet format, and so in the interest of transparency and in order to compare budgets across different years more easily, the presentation of data in Excel or other spreadsheet formats would be very useful.

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(4 October 2013)

The web publication of the EU annual budget is a joint activity of the Commission, the Council and the Parliament for which the Office of Publication (OP) is in charge. OP manages a specific software application (CIBA) containing all the data which is regularly updated and reflects each stage of the budget negotiations (updates following each amending budget and/or letter, positions the respective institutions). Upon request the Office of Publication can provide an excel version of the budget. A copy of such excel file, which was generated by Office of Publication through the CIBA application following a request of a citizen, is enclosed.

OP is currently improving the Budget-online web page and plan to provide such tables through a new Open Data Portal.

The Commission publishes a downloadable excel version of the executed budget, which comes as a complementary document of the annual financial report. In order to increase the possibility of comparisons the data for the present Multiannual Financial Framework are presented in an interactive form on the following web address:
http://ec.europa.eu/budget/figures/interactive/index_en.cfm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009722/13
to the Commission
Marta Andreasen (ECR)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: Commission's financial transparency system

The Commission's financial transparency system contains the following caveats in annex to the 2012 financial data released:

'Please note that important changes had to be implemented in the Financial Transparency System (FTS) following the entry into force of the EU new Financial Regulation and its rules of application. These have an impact on the publication of financial year 2012 data onwards. The main changes are as follows:

No information on public procurement contracts lower than EUR 15 000 will be published. In practice the number of items may decrease substantially. It may happen that information on a given beneficiary was provided through FST in 2011, but it is not provided for 2012 even though the sums contracted by the same beneficiary were similar in volume on both occasions.

There will be no more confidential names of beneficiaries, where the text "confidential" or "natural person" appeared instead of the beneficiary's name. The publication shall be waived if the disclosure risks threatening the rights and freedoms of individuals concerned as protected by the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union or harm the commercial interests of the beneficiary'.

The data for 2011 totalled 83 346 rows and amounted to EUR 20 208 249 724. The data for 2012 totalled 55 329 rows and amounted to EUR 20 493 684 889. There was a small increase in financial terms over the previous year but the level of transactions reported decreased considerably (by 33.6 %).

Could the Commission please state:

1. The number and value of payments excluded on the grounds of being for public procurement contracts with a value of less than EUR 15 000;

2. The number and total value of payments excluded on confidentiality grounds;

3. The number and value of payments excluded because both of the above conditions apply.

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(16 October 2013)

Through FTS the Commission publishes information on amounts committed and not on payments, except in the case of provisional commitments where both amounts are published. Indeed, changes had to be implemented following the entry into force of the EU new Financial Regulation and its rules of application (RAP) as of 1 January 2013. See details of amounts published in 2011 and 2012 in Table I of the annex.

1. 17 579 commitments worth EUR 41 867 537.66, along with payments worth EUR 49 489 722.59 (corresponding to 20 284 lines of detail), were excluded on the grounds of being related to procurement contract with a value of less than EUR 15 000. See details in Table II of the annex.

2. 174 commitment positions worth EUR 59 453 246.37 were excluded from publication on confidentiality grounds.

3. Among contracts excluded from FTS publication based on the EUR 15 000 threshold, 310 commitment positions worth EUR 581 283.51 were encoded as 'publication waived'.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009723/13
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(29. August 2013)

Betrifft: Nachfolgefrage E-005136/2013

Die Kommission ist in Ihrer Antwort auf die Anfrage E-005136/2013 nicht auf die 4. Frage eingegangen, deswegen wird nochmals um die Beantwortung folgender Frage gebeten:

Wie viel Geld erhalten Bulgarien und Rumänien jährlich von der EU, um im Rahmen von EU-Projekten in diesen Ländern vor Ort die Lebenssituation der Roma- und Sinti-Bevölkerung zu verbessern?

Antwort von Johannes Hahn im Namen der Kommission
(23. Oktober 2013)

Über die finanzielle Unterstützung der EU für Rumänien und Bulgarien zur Verbesserung der Lebensbedingungen der Gemeinschaften von Roma und Sinti liegt uns keine jährliche Kostenaufstellung vor.

In Bulgarien wurden für den gesamten Zeitraum 2007-2013 10 Mio. EUR aus den EU-Fonds (7 Mio. EUR aus dem EFRE und 3 Mio. EUR aus dem ESF) für ein Pilotvorhaben zur sozialen Eingliederung marginalisierter Gemeinschaften, darunter der Gemeinschaft der Roma, bereitgestellt. Die Pilotinitiative basiert auf einem integrierten Konzept, das den Bau moderner Sozialwohnungen für benachteiligte Gruppen sowie die Durchführung von Programmen für Bildung, Qualifizierung und Beschäftigung mit dem Ziel der langfristigen und nachhaltigen Integration dieser Gruppen umfasst.

In Rumänien werden voraussichtlich neun Pilotprojekte zur Entwicklung von Wohnraum, sozialen Zentren, Bildung-/Gesundheits- und Beschäftigungsinfrastruktur für die Roma-Bevölkerung im Rahmen des regionalen operationellen Programms Unterstützung aus dem EFRE erhalten. Das Gesamtbudget für diese Pilotprojekte, die in drei Gebieten (Cluj, Braila, Galati) durchgeführt werden, beläuft sich auf etwa 11 Mio. EUR.

Schließlich profitiert die Roma-Bevölkerung in den beiden Ländern auch von anderen Investitionen, z. B. in die Verbesserung der sozialen Infrastruktur, sowie von integrierten Stadtentwicklungsmaßnahmen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009723/13
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: Follow-up question in connection with Question E-005136/2013

In its answer to Question E-005136/2013, the Commission did not address question 4.

Accordingly how much money do Bulgaria and Romania receive every year from the EU to improve the Roma and Sinti communities' living conditions there through EU projects?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(23 October 2013)

As regards the EU financial support for Romania and Bulgaria to improve the Roma and Sinti communities' living conditions, a yearly breakdown is not available.

In Bulgaria EUR 10 million of EU funds (EUR 7 million ERDF and EUR 3 million ESF) has been allocated for the whole 2007-2013 period for a pilot exercise targeting the social inclusion of marginalised communities, including Roma. The pilot initiative is based on an integrated approach, which includes the construction of modern social housing for disadvantaged groups together with the implementation of education, qualification and employment programmes aimed at the long-term sustainable integration of these groups.

In Romania, nine pilot projects for developing housing, social centres, educational/health and employment infrastructure, targeting Roma population are expected to receive ERDF support through the Regional Operational Programme. These pilots have an estimated total budget of EUR 11 million and will be implemented in three areas (Cluj, Braila, Galati).

Finally, the Roma population in the two countries is also benefiting from other investments such as the improvement of social infrastructure and integrated urban development actions.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009724/13
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(29. August 2013)

Betrifft: Nachfolgefrage E-002690/2013

Die Kommission hat in ihrer Antwort auf die Anfrage E-002690/2013 auf den EU-Rahmen für nationale Strategien hingewiesen. In diesem Zusammenhang wird um die Beantwortung folgender Zusatzfragen gebeten:

1. Wie viel Geld fließt insgesamt aus dem ESF und dem EFRE für die Integration der Roma bzw. Unterstützung konkreter Projekte für Roma-Gemeinschaften an die einzelnen Mitgliedstaaten, aufgeschlüsselt nach den jeweiligen Ländern?

2. Wie viele EU Fördermittel bekommt Österreich für die Unterstützung der Roma in Österreich?

Antwort von Herrn Andor im Namen der Kommission
(21. Oktober 2013)

1. Im Europäischen Struktur- und Investitionsfonds (ESIF) gibt es keine ausdrücklich den Roma vorbehaltene Kategorie; daher erstatten die Mitgliedstaaten auch nicht Bericht über die Unterstützung aus dem ESIF, die speziell den Roma zugute kommt. In manchen Mitgliedstaaten ist es sogar verboten, die ethnische Herkunft zu erfassen. Auf der Grundlage der Berichte der Mitgliedstaaten zu der weiter gefassten Priorität „Konzepte für die Eingliederung oder Wiedereingliederung von benachteiligten Personen in das Erwerbsleben; Bekämpfung von Diskriminierung beim Zugang zum Arbeitsmarkt und beim Vorankommen auf dem Arbeitsmarkt und Förderung der Akzeptanz von Unterschiedlichkeit am Arbeitsplatz“ könnte man eine ungefähre Summe im Rahmen des ESF schätzen, da die meisten Programme zur Integration der Roma in diese Priorität fallen; allerdings gehören dazu auch andere Programme. Dieser Priorität sind bis Ende 2012 insgesamt 7,8 Mrd. EUR zugewiesen. Zusätzlich wäre die Finanzierung von Maßnahmen zu berücksichtigen, die benachteiligten Personengruppen allgemein — d. h. auch den Roma — zugutekommen; allerdings gehören zu den Begünstigten auch hier wieder nicht ausschließlich die Roma. Was die Unterstützung aus dem EFRE betrifft, so wurden 17,9 Mrd. EUR für Infrastrukturinvestitionen in den Bereichen Bildung, Gesundheit, Wohnung, Kinderbetreuung und Soziales bereitgestellt, wodurch der Zugang der Roma-Gemeinschaften zu Grundversorgungsleistungen verbessert werden könnte.

2. Wie oben ausgeführt, liegen für den derzeitigen Programmplanungszeitraum (2007-2013) keine genauen Zahlen zur Unterstützung der Roma in Österreich aus dem ESF vor. Es gibt Unterstützung für Migranten, insbesondere im Rahmen der Prioritäten „Aktive Einbeziehung der arbeitsmarktfernsten Menschen“ und „Territoriale Beschäftigungspakte“ des operationellen Beschäftigungsprogramms, allerdings werden die Roma nicht ausdrücklich als Zielgruppe genannt.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009724/13
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: Follow-up question in connection with Question E-002690/2013

In its answer to Question E-002690/2013, the Commission made reference to the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies. In that connection:

1. What ESF and ERDF funding is received, in total, by the Member States, broken down by country, for Roma integration and/or for support for specific projects for Roma communities?

2. How much EU funding does Austria receive for Roma support there?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(21 October 2013)

1. No specific category of the European Structural and Investment Funds, ESIF support is earmarked for Roma people. The Member States do not report on ESIF funding for Roma and some Member States even prohibit the registration of people's ethnic origin. An approximate ESF figure could be deduced from Member State reports on the broader priority Pathways to integration and re-entry into employment for disadvantaged people; combating discrimination in accessing and progressing in the labour market and promoting acceptance of diversity at the workplace, which includes most Roma inclusion programmes, but not to the exclusion of others. Up to the end of 2012, EUR 7.8 billion was committed to that priority. In addition, the funding of measures benefiting disadvantaged people in general, of whom Roma are one target group, should be taken into account, though the beneficiaries include non-Roma. Concerning the ERDF support EUR 17.9 billion has been allocated to education-, health-, housing-, childcare-, and social infrastructure investments, which may contribute to better access to basic services by Roma communities.

2. As explained above, no precise figures are available for ESF support for Roma in Austria for the current programming period (2007-13). Although Roma are not mentioned as a specific target group, there is support for migrants, in particular under the Employment operational programme priorities Integration of persons furthest from the labour market and Territorial Employment Pacts.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-009725/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE)
(29 Αυγούστου 2013)

Θέμα: Χρηματοδότηση από το ΕΣΠΑ προγραμμάτων απασχόλησης σε Δήμους της Ελλάδας

Η ελληνική κυβέρνηση ανακοίνωσε πρόγραμμα συνολικού κόστους 216 εκ. ευρώ, για την πρόσληψη 50 000 ανέργων στους Δήμους της χώρας και σε δημόσιες υπηρεσίες, με σύμβαση 5 μηνών, μέσω του Οργανισμού Απασχόλησης Εργατικού Δυναμικού, η οποία θα χρηματοδοτηθεί από κονδύλια του ΕΣΠΑ και περιλαμβάνεται στο ελληνικό πρόγραμμα δημοσίων επενδύσεων. Σύμφωνα με δημοσιεύματα στον ελληνικό Τύπο, ήδη από τις 16 Απριλίου, μέσω e-mail, η τρόικα ζητούσε από την ηγεσία του Υπουργείου Εργασίας να ξεκινήσει «*μέχρι τις αρχές του καλοκαιριού*» το πρόγραμμα κοινωφελούς εργασίας σε δήμους (ως τον … *ύστατο εργοδότη*). *Είναι χαρακτηριστικό ότι η τρόικα θεωρεί ότι «τα προγράμματα αυτά μπορούν να εφαρμοστούν σε τομείς όπως η κοινωνική εργασία, η παιδοκομία και οι περιβαλλοντικές βελτιώσεις σε τουριστικές περιοχές και αποτελούν κεντρική συνιστώσα του ευρύτερου προγράμματος οικονομικής προσαρμογής, ιδίως δε στο πλαίσιο της αντιμετώπισης των αυξανόμενων οικονομικών και κοινωνικών προβλημάτων που προκαλεί η ανερχόμενη μακροχρόνια ανεργία απουσία ενός γενικού δικτύου ασφαλείας» και ζητά την «κατά το δυνατόν συντομότερη έναρξη ενός προγράμματος αυτού του είδους»*, υπογραμμίζοντας ότι «*θα στηρίξει σε σημαντικό βαθμό πολλά άτομα και νοικοκυριά, τη στιγμή που ο ιδιωτικός τομέας δεν είναι ακόμη σε θέση να δημιουργήσει επαρκή αριθμό εργασιακών θέσεων*».

Με βάση τα ανωτέρω ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Υιοθετεί τις ανωτέρω απόψεις, και ιδίως την άποψη ότι ο ιδιωτικός τομέας δεν είναι σε θέση να δημιουργήσει επαρκή αριθμό θέσεων εργασίας και, αν ναι, τι κάνει για την ενίσχυση του ιδιωτικού τομέα ο οποίος πληρώνει εξωφρενικά, σε σχέση με την υπόλοιπη Ευρώπη, επιτόκια και υπερφορολογείται;

Με ποια κριτήρια επελέγη αυτό το πρόγραμμα, αντί για τη διάθεση του ποσού αυτού για την ανάπτυξη πρόσθετων αντίστοιχων προγραμμάτων στον ιδιωτικό τομέα της ελληνικής οικονομίας, που θα είχαν μεγαλύτερη προστιθέμενη αξία στο ΑΕΠ, θα οδηγούσαν σε ουσιαστική βελτίωση των γνώσεων και δεξιοτήτων των ανέργων για υπαρκτές στο άμεσο μέλλον θέσεις εργασίας και πιθανότητα μετατροπής μέρους των προσωρινών αυτών θέσεων σε μόνιμες θέσεις εργασίας;

Με ποια κριτήρια η επιδότηση των συγκεκριμένων εργασίας θεωρείται δημόσια επένδυση;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(24 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή συμφωνεί με το Αξιότιμο Μέλος ότι η ενίσχυση του ιδιωτικού τομέα αποτελεί βασικό στοιχείο για την εξασφάλιση της διατηρήσιμης ανάπτυξης και της δημιουργίας θέσεων απασχόλησης στην Ελλάδα και η ΕΕ στηρίζει ευρύ φάσμα μεταρρυθμίσεων προς την κατεύθυνση αυτή. Αυτές περιλαμβάνουν μέτρα για τη διευκόλυνση της χρηματοδότησης των ΜΜΕ, όπως η σταθεροποίηση του τραπεζικού συστήματος, η χρηματοδότηση των κεφαλαίων κίνησης μέσω των διαρθρωτικών ταμείων και των διάφορων μέσων της ΕΤΕ και ένα νέο μη τραπεζικό χρηματοπιστωτικό ίδρυμα. Επιπλέον, το ελληνικό πρόγραμμα προσαρμογής περιλαμβάνει μέτρα για τη βελτίωση του επιχειρηματικού περιβάλλοντος, μεταξύ άλλων μέσω της μείωσης του χρόνου και του κόστους που απαιτείται για τη σύσταση εταιρείας, της απλούστευσης των διαδικασιών αδειοδότησης, της διευκόλυνσης των εμπορικών συναλλαγών, καθώς και μέσω βελτιώσεων του δικαστικού συστήματος.

Το πρόγραμμα δημοσίων έργων που αναφέρει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος, το οποίο χρηματοδοτείται από τα διαρθρωτικά ταμεία, δεν αντικαθιστά όλες αυτές τις δράσεις, αλλά έχει εγκριθεί επιπρόσθετα προς αυτές. Η Επιτροπή πιστεύει ότι ένα καλοσχεδιασμένο πρόγραμμα δημοσίων έργων, που απευθύνεται στους μακροχρόνια ανέργους και το οποίο θα ανταποκρίνεται στις ανάγκες του δημόσιου τομέα για την υλοποίηση βραχυπρόθεσμων έργων σε τομείς όπως η ψηφιοποίηση δεδομένων ή το εκπαιδευτικό σύστημα, αποτελεί χρήσιμο μέτρο προσωρινής φύσεως σε ένα πλαίσιο στο οποίο η ζήτηση παραμένει υποτονική ενώ ο πλήρης αντίκτυπος των διαρθρωτικών μεταρρυθμίσεων στην απασχόληση και την παραγωγικότητα δεν έχει γίνει ακόμη πλήρως αισθητός. Η συμμετοχή στο πρόγραμμα θα προσφέρει ευκαιρίες εργασίας για τους μακροχρόνια ανέργους και θα περιλαμβάνει κατάρτιση σε συγκεκριμένες δεξιότητες ανάλογα με τη φύση της εκάστοτε θέσης, οι οποίες μπορούν να προστεθούν στα ήδη υπάρχοντα προσόντα του εργαζομένου.

Η Επιτροπή παρακολουθεί εκ του σύνεγγυς την εφαρμογή του προγράμματος και θα εξακολουθεί να το πράττει ώστε να εξασφαλιστεί ότι ο σχεδιασμός του προγράμματος και η επιλογή των έργων και των δικαιούχων είναι απολύτως διαφανής και βασίζεται σε αντικειμενικά κριτήρια ([1]).

([1]) Το πρόγραμμα υλοποιείται μέσω μιας σειράς ξεχωριστών προσκλήσεων. Στον δικτυακό τόπο του Οργανισμού Απασχόλησης Εργατικού Δυναμικού (ΟΑΕΔ), το Αξιότιμο Μέλος μπορεί να βρει περισσότερες πληροφορίες, καθώς και τις προσκλήσεις, οι οποίες έχουν ήδη δημοσιευθεί: http://www.oaed.gr/index.php?lang=el

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009725/13
to the Commission
Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: The financing by the NSRF of employment programmes in municipalities in Greece

The Greek Government has unveiled a programme costing a total of EUR 216 million to hire 50 000 unemployed persons in Greek municipalities and public services on five-month contracts through the Greek Manpower Employment Organisation; it will be financed from NSRF funds and included in the Greek public investment programme. According to reports in the Greek press, as early as 16 April the Troika had asked the heads of the Ministry of Labour, by email, to launch 'by early summer' a community service programme in municipalities (as the …employer of last resort). Typically, the Troika believes that 'these programmes can be applied to fields such as social work, childcare and environmental improvements in tourist areas and will be a key component of the broader economic adjustment programme, particularly in the context of addressing the growing economic and social problems caused by rising long-term unemployment in the absence of a general safety net' and calls for 'a programme of this kind to be launched as soon as possible', stressing that 'it will provide extensive support for many individuals and households, since the private sector is not yet in a position to generate a sufficient number of jobs.'

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

Does it espouse the above views, especially the notion that the private sector is not in a position to create a sufficient number of jobs? If so, what is it doing to strengthen the private sector which is paying interest rates that are astronomically high compared to the rest of Europe and is being overtaxed?

According to which criteria was this programme selected? Instead, an equivalent amount could have been spent on developing more similar programmes in the private sector of the Greek economy: this would have generated greater added value in terms of the GDP and have led to a substantial improvement in the knowledge and skills of the unemployed relevant to shortly-to-be-available jobs; some of these temporary jobs could then have been converted into permanent ones.

According to which criteria is the subsidisation of such work considered a public investment?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(24 October 2013)

The Commission agrees with the Honourable Member that strengthening the private sector is key to ensure sustainable growth and employment creation in Greece and the EU is supporting a wide range of reforms in this direction. This includes measures to facilitate SME financing, such as the stabilisation of the banking system, the financing of working capital with structural funds and different EIB instruments and a new non-bank financial institution. In addition, the Greek adjustment programme includes measures to improve the business environment, including through the reduction of time and costs to create a company, simplification of licensing, trade facilitation and improvements in the judicial system.

The public works scheme funded with structural funds mentioned by the Honourable Member does not replace, but has been adopted in addition to all these actions. The Commission believes that a well-designed public works scheme targeted to the long-term unemployed and addressing the needs of the public sector to realise short-term projects in such areas like data digitalisation or the education system, is a useful measure of a temporary nature in a context where demand is still sluggish and the full impact of structural reforms on jobs and productivity has not yet fully materialised. Participation in the scheme will provide a job opportunity for the long-term unemployed involving training on job-specific skills that would add to the employee's qualifications.

The Commission is closely monitoring the implementation of the programme and will continue to do so in order to ensure that the design of the programme and the selection of projects and beneficiaries are fully transparent and based on objective criteria ([1]).

([1]) The programme is being implemented through a number of separate calls. The Honourable Member will find additional information and the calls already published in the website of the Greek manpower agency OAED: http://www.oaed.gr/index.php?lang=el

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-009726/13
do Komisji
Ryszard Antoni Legutko (ECR)
(29 sierpnia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Dyskryminacja Polaków na rynku pracy Unii Europejskiej

Art. 45 traktatu o funkcjonowaniu Unii Europejskiej mówi o fundamentalnych swobodach UE, w tym o swobodzie przepływu osób. Uzupełnieniem art. 45 jest dyrektywa o prawie obywateli Unii i członków oraz ich rodzin do swobodnego przemieszczania się i pobytu na terytorium państw członkowskich.

Niestety to fundamentalne prawo jest coraz częściej podważane przez polityków poszczególnych państw Unii Europejskiej; i tak 9 września br. na wniosek holenderskiego ministerstwa pracy i polityki społecznej ma odbyć się szczyt, na którym będą poszukiwane rozwiązania mające na celu ograniczenie możliwości zatrudniania obywateli Unii Europejskiej pochodzących z części wschodniej wspólnoty.

Te zinstytucjonalizowane działania realizowane w Holandii przez lewicową Partię Pracy niestety nie są odosobnione. Podobne działania cechujące się niechęcią do obywateli Polski są prowadzone przez Partię Pracy w Wielkiej Brytanii, o czym głośno było na Wyspach na początku sierpnia br., kiedy politycy tej partii skrytykowali brytyjskie sieci handlowe za przyjęcie do pracy 800 polskich pracowników.

W związku z powyższym zwracam się z pytaniem:

Jakie działania zamierza podjąć Komisja w obronie art. 45 traktatu o funkcjonowaniu Unii Europejskiej?

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-009848/13
do Komisji
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(3 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Polityka wobec imigrantów w niektórych krajach UE

Unia Europejska umożliwia obywatelom zamieszkiwanie i podejmowanie pracy we wszystkich krajach członkowskich. Komisja także (m.in. w odpowiedzi na jedno z moich wcześniejszych zapytań) podkreśla, że prawo do swobodnego przepływu jest jednym z najważniejszych i najcenniejszych praw w Unii. Tymczasem w kilku państwach wciąż dają się zaobserwować działania wymierzane przeciwko zagranicznym pracownikom. Sytuacja taka dotyczy w zasadniczym stopniu obywateli Polski.

Przykładowo w Holandii, z inicjatywy tamtejszego resortu pracy i polityki społecznej, niebawem ma się odbyć szczyt poświęcony sprawom imigrantów z krajów postkomunistycznych. Wicepremier Lodewijk Asscher domaga się ograniczenia zatrudniania obcokrajowców. Partia na rzecz Wolności postuluje natomiast m.in. zakaz osiedlania się imigrantów w Hadze.

Również w Wielkiej Brytanii minister ds. imigracji miał potępiać krajowe sieci handlowe za zatrudniane w dużej liczbie polskich pracowników, choć sytuacja taka wynika głównie z braku chęci podejmowania podobnej pracy ze strony Brytyjczyków. Burmistrz Londynu pytał zaś, dlaczego w punktach gastronomicznych nie pracują londyńczycy.

W obliczu coraz bardziej widocznej antyimigracyjnej nagonki w tych krajach, zwracam się z prośbą o odpowiedź:

1. Czy Komisja rozważa podjęcie stosownej interwencji, celem zastopowania przywołanych wyżej oraz podobnych działań dyskryminacyjnych ze strony przedstawicieli władz krajów członkowskich?

2. Jakie stanowisko zajmuje Komisja wobec zorganizowania przez władze Holandii wydarzenia politycznego o wymiarze wyraźnie nakierowanym przeciwko zagranicznym obywatelom?

Wspólna odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza László Andora w imieniu Komisji
(21 października 2013 r.)

Komisja nie może podjąć bezpośrednich działań wobec wspomnianych polityków w związku z wypowiedziami na temat zatrudniania pracowników z innych państw UE. Wielokrotnie podkreślała jednak, że swobodny przepływ pracowników jest korzystny zarówno dla gospodarki, jak i rynku pracy, ponieważ pozwala dopasować podaż umiejętności do popytu na rynku na pracy. Ponadto regularnie wzywa, by przedstawić twarde dowody w postaci danych statystycznych na poparcie takich negatywnych publicznych oświadczeń. Komisja wielokrotnie potwierdzała, że swoboda przemieszczania się jest jedną z podstawowych wolności, której nie można ograniczać. Jeżeli zostaną wprowadzone jakiekolwiek ograniczenia niezgodne z unijnymi przepisami, jako strażnik Traktatu Komisja podejmie niezbędne kroki.

Komisja pragnie również odesłać szanownego Pana Posła do odpowiedzi udzielonej na pytanie E-9936/2013([1]) w podobnej sprawie.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009726/13
to the Commission
Ryszard Antoni Legutko (ECR)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: Discrimination against Poles on EU labour market

Article 45 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union establishes a number of fundamental freedoms, including freedom of movement for persons. Those provisions are supplemented by the directive on the right of citizens of the Union and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States.

This fundamental right is, regrettably, increasingly being undermined by national politicians. For example, on a proposal from the Dutch Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, a summit is to be held on 9 September 2013 to look for ways of restricting access to the Dutch labour market for EU citizens from eastern Member States.

Institutionalised discrimination of this kind is not the sole preserve of the Dutch Labour Party, however. Similar behaviour, indicative of a negative attitude to Polish citizens, has also been shown by the UK Labour Party, which sparked off a controversy in the country in early August when politicians from the party criticised large British retailers for taking on 800 Polish workers.

In view of the above, how does the Commission intend to uphold Article 45 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union?

Question for written answer E-009848/13
to the Commission
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: Policy on immigrants in certain EU countries

The European Union allows citizens to live and work in any Member State. The Commission (including in its answer to a previous question of mine) has also emphasised that the right to free movement is one of the most important and most precious rights in the EU. Despite this, however, foreign workers are still encountering discrimination in some countries. This is a situation that particularly affects Polish citizens.

In the Netherlands, for example, a summit — the brainchild of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment — is apparently soon to be held, devoted to issues surrounding immigrants from the former Communist countries. Deputy Prime Minister Lodewijk Asscher has called for a curb on the employment of foreigners, while the Party for Freedom is calling for immigrants to be prevented from moving to The Hague.

In the UK, the Minister for Immigration has apparently hit out at British businesses for employing large numbers of Polish workers, even though the main reason the vacancies exist is because not enough British people are willing to take on the kinds of jobs concerned. The Mayor of London, for his part, has asked why there are no Londoners working in restaurants and cafés.

Given the increasingly blatant witch-hunt that is being conducted against immigrants in these countries:

1. Is the Commission considering taking appropriate steps to put a stop to discrimination such as that mentioned above on the part of representatives of the authorities in the Member States?

2. What stance is the Commission taking with regard to the fact that the authorities in the Netherlands are organising a political event the focus of which is clearly anti-foreigner?

Joint answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(21 October 2013)

The Commission cannot take direct action against the politicians in question for their statements on the recruitment of workers from other EU countries. It has, however, repeatedly stressed that the free movement of workers benefits both the economy and the labour market by allowing the skills available to be matched with labour market demand. It also regularly asks for hard statistical evidence to be produced to back up such negative public statements. The Commission has repeatedly confirmed that free movement is a fundamental freedom which cannot be restricted. Should any restriction be introduced which is not in line with EC law, the Commission would take the necessary steps as the Guardian of the Treaty.

The Commission would also refer the Honourable Member to the answer it gave to Question E-9936/2013 ([1]) on a similar matter.

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

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-009728/13
do Komisji
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(29 sierpnia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Zaostrzenie rosyjskiej kontroli produktów spożywczych importowanych z Polski

Rosyjska Federalna Służba Nadzoru Weterynaryjnego i Fitosanitarnego zarządziła ścisłą kontrolę wszystkich partii mięsa wieprzowego importowanych z Polski. Wyraziła również zastrzeżenia odnośnie produktów rolnych, w tym owoców miękkich. Jest to procedura, po którą rosyjskie władze sięgają po raz kolejny w ostatnich latach.

Kontrole miały wykryć bakterie w produktach mięsnych pochodzących z Hiszpanii. Odnośnie owoców zaś, zastrzeżenia dotyczą holenderskich malin. Towary te były jedynie dostarczone przez polskie firmy handlowe i spedycyjne. Perspektywa objęcia embargiem polskich producentów wydaje się zatem kuriozalna. Tymczasem rosyjskie media wieszczą początek wojny handlowej z Polską.

Wobec powyższego proszę o informacje w następujących kwestiach:

1. Czy Komisja potwierdza zastrzeżenia rosyjskich służb sanitarnych, dotyczące nieprawidłowości w zakwestionowanych produktach spożywczych pochodzących z Hiszpanii i Holandii? Czy ich obecność na europejskim rynku nie stanowi zagrożenia dla obywateli UE?

2. Jakie stanowisko względem Rosji zajmuje Komisja w przedmiotowej sprawie?

3. Czy zakwestionowanie, przez kraj trzeci, produktu spożywczego pochodzącego z któregokolwiek państwa członkowskiego, nie powinno być traktowane jako zastrzeżenie wobec całej Wspólnoty, w której obowiązuje przecież swobodny przepływ towarów? Jaka jest argumentacja Komisji w tym zakresie?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Tonio Borga w imieniu Komisji
(14 października 2013 r.)

Władze polskie poinformowały, że przedstawiły władzom rosyjskim gwarancje w zakresie przeprowadzania w Polsce ścisłych kontroli mięsa wieprzowego i produktów z wieprzowiny wywożonych do Rosji w konsekwencji jednego stwierdzonego przypadku niezatwierdzonego załadunku i etykietowania produktów z Hiszpanii, które nie zostały dopuszczone do wywozu na terytorium Rosji, a także kilku innych nieprawidłowości, które wystąpiły ostatnio i zostały uznane przez Polskę. Brak kwalifikowalności przedmiotowych produktów z Hiszpanii związany jest z restrykcjami nałożonymi przez Rosję, wobec których Komisja zgłosiła sprzeciw, ponieważ Rosja nie wskazała powiązanego zagrożenia dla bezpieczeństwa żywności.

Zgodnie z wiedzą Komisji, do tej pory władze rosyjskie nie podjęły środków ograniczających wobec wieprzowiny z całego terytorium Polski ani nie zastosowały w tym zakresie ścisłych kontroli. W czerwcu 2013 r. władze niderlandzkie powiadomiły za pośrednictwem systemu wczesnego ostrzegania o niebezpiecznej żywności i paszach (RASFF) o wykryciu podczas kontroli wewnętrznej w przedsiębiorstwie norowirusa w partii mrożonych malin z Polski przetwarzanych w Niderlandach. Dzięki RASFF powiadomiono o tym fakcie państwa, które otrzymały przedmiotowe produkty, w tym Rosję, tak aby mogły podjąć odpowiednie działania ze względu na możliwe zagrożenie dla bezpieczeństwa żywności. Nie zgłoszono żadnego przypadku choroby wywołanej norowirusem u ludzi w powiązaniu z tą sprawą. Komisja nie posiada informacji o środkach podjętych przez Rosję w odniesieniu do wszystkich owoców z Polski na skutek tego przypadku.

System bezpieczeństwa żywności w UE opiera się na wspólnych zasadach w celu utrzymania tego samego poziomu bezpieczeństwa i jednocześnie zapewnienia swobodnego przepływu towarów na terytorium UE. Na powyższym przykładzie można stwierdzić, że istnieje wysoki poziom współpracy między państwami członkowskimi w przypadku ostrzeżenia o zagrożeniu dla bezpieczeństwa żywności, co jest istotnym elementem skuteczności systemu bezpieczeństwa żywności w UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009728/13
to the Commission
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: Tightening up of Russian controls on food products imported from Poland

The Russian Federal Service for Veterinary and Phytosanitary Surveillance has ordered strict controls to be carried out on all consignments of pork imported from Poland. It has also expressed reservations about other agricultural products, including soft fruits. This is a tactic which the Russian authorities have used repeatedly in recent years.

The checks were apparently to detect bacteria in meat products coming from Spain. And the reservations to do with fruit concern Dutch raspberries. Yet these are products which are merely supplied by Polish trading and freight forwarding companies. So the prospect of an embargo against Polish producers seems strange. At the same time the Russian media are talking about the start of a trade war with Poland.

1. Can the Commission confirm the reservations expressed by Russia's health authorities concerning problems with certain foods from Spain and the Netherlands? Does their presence on the EU market not also present a danger to EU citizens?

2. What is the Commission's position in this matter with respect to Russia?

3. When a third country raises questions about a food product originating in any Member State, should this not be treated as a reservation regarding the entire EU, since the free movement of goods applies? What is the Commission's stance in this regard?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(14 October 2013)

The Polish authorities informed that they have provided guarantees to the Russian authorities on reinforced controls in Poland over pork and pork products exported to Russia following one case of non-approved loading and labelling of products from Spain, which were not allowed for export to Russia, as well as several other recent irregularities which Poland recognised. The lack of eligibility of the concerned products from Spain is linked to restrictions imposed by Russia, which the Commission disputes as Russia has not identified the related food safety risk.

To the knowledge of the Commission, to date, the Russian authorities have not taken restrictive measures or applied reinforced controls on pork from the whole territory of Poland.

In June 2013, the Dutch authorities, through the EU Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF), notified the detection, during a company's own check, of norovirus in a batch of frozen raspberries from Poland, processed in The Netherlands. Thanks to the RASFF, this finding was communicated to countries which have received the products, including Russia, so that appropriate action could be taken considering the food safety issue at stake. No case of norovirus type illness in humans associated to this case was reported. The Commission is not aware of measures taken by Russia regarding all fruits from Poland following this episode.

The EU food safety system is based on common rules in order to maintain the same level of safety while allowing free circulation of goods in the EU territory. As illustrated by the above example, there is a high level of cooperation between Member States in case of food safety alert, which is an essential element for the efficiency of the EU food safety system.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-009729/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(29 sierpnia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Informacje dotyczące tajnego porozumienia saudyjsko-rosyjskiego

Brytyjski dziennik „The Telegraph" opublikował informacje dotyczące niejawnych rozmów prezydenta Rosji Władimira Putina z szefem wywiadu Arabii Saudyjskiej w sprawie interesów naftowych. Według ujawnionych informacji, Saudyjczycy mieli zaoferować kremlowskim partnerom porozumienie przewidujące kontrolę nad globalnym rynkiem ropy i zabezpieczenie rosyjskich kontraktów gazowych, w zamian za wycofanie poparcia Moskwy dla syryjskiego reżymu Bashara al-Assada. Gospodarz Kremla miał rzekomo ofertę odrzucić.

Mając na uwadze znaczenie produktów energetycznych, wprost przekładających się na sprawy związane z polityką i gospodarką, również krajów Wspólnoty, proszę o informacje:

1. Czy, zdaniem Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel, wzmiankowane porozumienie mogło stanowić realne zagrożenie dla bezpieczeństwa energetycznego krajów UE?

2. Czy i w jaki sposób ESDZ monitoruje działania Arabii Saudyjskiej w zakresie światowego handlu ropą naftową? Czy Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel jest na bieżąco informowana odnośnie strategii Rijadu w tej kluczowej kwestii?

3. Saudyjski wysłannik, w przytoczonej rozmowie z rosyjskim prezydentem, miał powoływać się również na pełne poparcie Stanów Zjednoczonych dla swojej misji. Czy i w jaki sposób ewentualne potwierdzenie tego faktu może rzutować na relacje Bruksela-Waszyngton? Czy europejska dyplomacja jest uprzedzana o podobnych krokach podejmowanych przez administrację prezydenta Baracka Obamy?

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

Unia z uwagą śledzi rozwój sytuacji w Arabii Saudyjskiej, m.in. za pośrednictwem swojej delegatury w Rijadzie, w szczególności w odniesieniu do kwestii związanych z energią.

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca jest na bieżąco informowana o aktualnych wydarzeniach w Arabii Saudyjskiej, a jej spotkania z urzędnikami tego kraju, w tym w ramach spotkań na szczeblu ministerialnym między UE a Radą Współpracy Państw Zatoki, dają możliwość podjęcia kwestii dwustronnych, regionalnych i globalnych.

Wysokiej przedstawiciel/wiceprzewodniczącej znane są doniesienia prasowe dotyczące możliwego porozumienia między Arabią Saudyjską i Rosją. Fakty te nie zostały jednak jeszcze potwierdzone a, jak szanowny Pan Poseł wie, Unia nie komentuje doniesień prasowych.

W odniesieniu do stanowiska krajów partnerskich, które nie jest znane UE, zachęca się szanownego Pana Posła, by skierował pytanie do odnośnych krajów.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009729/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Reports of a secret deal between Saudi Arabia and Russia

The British newspaper *The Telegraph* has reported that Russian President Vladimir Putin and Saudi Arabia's intelligence chief have held secret talks about oil interests. The revelations suggest that the Saudis offered the Kremlin a deal to control the global oil market and safeguard Russia's gas contracts in exchange for withdrawing its backing from the Assad regime in Syria. Mr Putin is said to have rejected the offer.

Given the vital significance of energy products, in that they have a direct impact on politics and economics, as well as on the EU Member States themselves:

1. Does the Vice-President/High Representative take the view that a deal such as that mentioned above could pose a real threat to the EU Member States' energy security?

2. Does the EEAS monitor Saudi Arabia's activities in connection with the global trade in oil? If so, how? Is the Vice-President/High Representative kept informed as to the Saudi strategy on this extremely important issue?

3. During his talks with the Russian President, the Saudi envoy allegedly claimed that he was speaking with the full backing of the United States. If this were to be confirmed, could it have an effect on relations between Brussels and Washington? If so, in what way? Is the European diplomatic service aware of any similar steps taken by the Obama administration?

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

The EU is attentively following the situation in Saudi Arabia, including through its Delegation in Riyadh, in particular with respect to energy issues.

The HR/VP is kept informed of developments as regard Saudi Arabia and her meetings with Saudi officials, including in the framework of the EU-Gulf Cooperation Council Ministerial Meetings, are an opportunity to address bilateral, regional and global issues.

The HR/VP is aware of press reports regarding a possible deal between Saudi Arabia and Russia but these facts have not been confirmed and, as the Honourable Member would know, it is an EU policy not to comment on press reports.

In addition, with respect to positions taken by partner countries the EU is not aware of, the EU invites the Honourable Member to direct his questions to the concerned countries.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009730/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(29 août 2013)

Objet: Commission récupère ses aides agricoles

La Commission réclame 180 000 000 d'euros d'aides agricoles à plusieurs États membres en règlement de "dépenses irrégulières effectuées par ceux-ci au titre de la politique agricole de l'Union". L'impact financier réel s'élève à 169 000 000 d'euros, certains remboursements ayant déjà été réalisés.

1. De quels pays s'agit-il?

2. Quelle est la ventilation de ces sommes?

3. Quelles sont les raisons principales?

4. Les sommes récupérées sont-elles reversées au budget de l'Union? Spécifiquement au budget lié à l'agriculture? Si non, pourquoi?

Réponse donnée par M. Cioloş au nom de la Commission
(15 octobre 2013)

1. La décision d'exécution de la Commission 2013/433/UE ([1]) concerne quinze États membres: la Belgique, le Danemark, l'Allemagne, l'Irlande, la Grèce, l'Espagne, la France, l'Italie, la Lituanie, le Luxembourg, la Hongrie, la Pologne, la Slovénie, la Finlande et le Royaume-Uni.

2. La ventilation du montant des corrections financières par État membre figure dans le tableau 1.

3. Les raisons de ces corrections financières peuvent être consultées dans l'annexe à la décision 2013/433/UE.

4. Toutes les recettes provenant des corrections financières imposées aux États membres sont reversées au budget (agricole) de l'UE. Ces recettes sont considérées comme des recettes affectées au financement des dépenses du FEAGA. Dans le budget 2013, les recettes affectées au financement des dépenses du FEAGA étaient estimées à 1 533 000 000 euros. Sur cette somme, 500 000 000 euros ont été alloués au financement de dépenses relatives au marché, et notamment aux fonds opérationnels des organisations de producteurs, et 1 033 000 000 euros ont été affectés au financement d'aides directes découplées, et notamment au régime de paiement unique.

([1]) JO L 219 du 15.8.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009730/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: Recovery of agricultural aid by the Commission

The Commission is claiming back EUR 180 million in agricultural aid from a number of Member States in settlement of 'EU agricultural policy funds, unduly spent by Member States'. The real financial impact amounts to EUR 169 million, some of the amounts having already been reimbursed.

1. Which countries are involved?

2. What is the breakdown of these amounts?

3. What are the main reasons for this?

4. Will the amounts recovered be paid back into the EU budget? Is so, specifically into the agriculture budget? If not, why?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(15 October 2013)

1. The Commission Implementing Decision 2013/433/EU ([1]) concerns fifteen Member States: Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Italy, Latvia, Luxembourg, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia, Finland and the United Kingdom.

2. The breakdown of the amount of financial correction by Member States is shown in the Table 1.

3. The reasons for the financial corrections can be found in the annex to the decision 2013/433/EU.

4. All receipts originating from financial corrections imposed on Member States are paid back into the EU (agricultural) budget. These receipts are designated as revenue assigned to the financing of EAGF expenditure. In the 2013 budget, assigned revenue of EUR 1 533 million was estimated to be available for EAGF expenditure. Out of this amount, EUR 500 million was allocated to the funding of market related expenditure and specifically to the operational funds for producer organisations and EUR 1 033 million to the funding of decoupled direct aids and specifically to the single payment scheme.

([1]) OJ L 219 of 15.8.2013.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009731/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(29 août 2013)

Objet: Quotas de pêche 2013

Comme tous les ans, la Commission européenne vient de réactualiser les quotas de pêche accordés aux États membres pour l'année 2013 à la lumière de la surpêche de l'année précédente.

1. Combien de flottes ont dépassé leurs quotas en 2012?

2. Quelles sont-elles?

3. Quelles sont les pénalités pour chacune d'entre elles?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Damanaki au nom de la Commission
(3 octobre 2013)

1. 14 États membres ont dépassé leurs quotas en 2012.

2. Les États membres concernés sont les suivants: Belgique, Chypre, Allemagne, Danemark, Espagne, France, Royaume-Uni, Grèce, Irlande, Lituanie, Pays-Bas, Pologne, Portugal et Roumanie.

3. Les déductions de quotas, qui ne sont pas des sanctions mais des mesures de conservation, sont mentionnées, pour chaque pays, dans le règlement d'exécution (UE) n° 770/2013 tel que publié au Journal officiel L 215 du 10 août 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009731/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: Fishing quotas for 2013

As it does every year, the Commission has just updated the fishing quotas allocated to Member States for the year 2013 in the light of overfishing in the previous year.

1. How many fleets exceeded their quotas in 2012?

2. Which ones are they?

3. What are the penalties for each of them?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(3 October 2013)

1. 14 Member States have overfished their quotas in 2012.

2. The Member States concerned are : Belgium, Cyprus, Germany, Denmark, Spain, France, United Kingdom, Greece, Ireland, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal and Romania.

3. The individual deductions of quotas, which are not penalties but conservation measures, are mentioned in Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 770/2013 as published in Official Journal L 215 dated 10 August 2013.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009733/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(29 août 2013)

Objet: Subventions versées aux fabricants chinois de panneaux solaires

La liste des subventions chinoises examinées par la Commission européenne s'étale sur de nombreuses pages. Elles peuvent prendre la forme de rabais sur l'achat de matières premières et d'électricité, de subventions à la vente ou de financements bancaires, ce qui a créé une énorme surcapacité de production et soutient des entreprises qui ne seraient pas concurrentielles sans cela, affirme EU ProSun dans un communiqué.

Quelle est la réaction de la Commission?

Réponse donnée par M. De Gucht au nom de la Commission
(27 septembre 2013)

La Commission a mené une enquête sur l'octroi de telles subventions dans le cadre de la procédure antisubventions concernant les importations de modules photovoltaïques en silicium cristallin et leurs composants essentiels originaires de la République populaire de Chine. Cette enquête a été ouverte le 8 novembre 2012.

La Commission a examiné dans le détail toutes les allégations formulées par ProSun, envoyé des questionnaires et des courriers additionnels au gouvernement chinois et aux exportateurs et vérifié leurs réponses lors de contrôles sur place, en Chine. Après analyse de toutes les informations contenues dans le dossier, la Commission a publié ses premières conclusions le 27 août 2013. Toutes les parties intéressées (y compris le gouvernement chinois, les exportateurs, les producteurs de l'Union européenne, les importateurs, les fournisseurs et les utilisateurs) disposent d'un délai pour présenter leurs observations sur ces conclusions. La Commission prendra en considération ces observations pour déterminer les mesures définitives à prendre dans le cadre de cette enquête. Ces mesures seront proposées au Conseil, qui prendra la décision finale. Le règlement établissant celle-ci doit être publié au *Journal officiel de l'Union européenne* le 5 décembre 2013 au plus tard.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009733/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: Subsidies paid to Chinese solar manufacturers

The list drawn up by the Commission of the subsidies granted by China to its solar panel manufacturers runs to several pages. These subsidies may take the form of discounts on the purchase price of raw materials and electricity, subsidies on sales or financing by banks, and this has created a huge overcapacity in production and shores up companies that otherwise would not be competitive, according to a statement by EU ProSun.

What is the Commission's response to this?

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

The Commission investigated the provision of subsidies in its anti-subsidy proceeding concerning imports of concerning imports of crystalline silicon photovoltaic modules and key components originating in the People's Republic of China. This investigation was initiated on 8 November 2012.

The Commission thoroughly examined all the allegations made by ProSun, dispatched questionnaires and additional letters to Chinese Government and exporters and verified their responses during on-the-spot verification visits in China. After analysing all the information contained in the file, the Commission on 27 August 2013 published its preliminary findings. All interested parties (including the Government of China, exporters, EU producers, importers, suppliers and users) have a period of time to comment on these findings. The Commission will then consider these comments and determine what definitive action should be taken in the investigation. This action will be proposed to the Council, which will take the final decision. The final decision must be published in the *Official Journal of the European Union* by 5 December 2013 at the latest.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009734/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(29 août 2013)

Objet: L'Union cautionne le dumping chinois

La Commission européenne a annoncé mercredi avoir bouclé son enquête anti-dumping et anti-subventions concernant les exportations de panneaux solaires chinois.

Soucieuses d'éviter une guerre commerciale, la Commission européenne et les autorités chinoises sont parvenues fin juillet à un accord provisoire sur le volet anti-dumping de cette enquête.

1. L'accord a permis de mettre fin aux taxes anti-dumping provisoires imposées depuis début juin par l'Union aux exportateurs chinois. Ce n'est pas une bonne nouvelle a priori. Qu'a obtenu la Commission en échange pour protéger les emplois européens?

2. Qu'en est-il du fait que les producteurs chinois n'ont toujours pas accepté de s'acquitter de droits anti-dumping de 47,6 %?

3. Cet accord ne résout en rien ce problème de subventions, car rien dans le texte n'oblige le gouvernement chinois à y mettre fin. Comment réagit la Commission à notre suggestion d'appeler l'Union à imposer des taxes douanières pour compenser les effets de ces subventions et inciter la Chine à mettre fin à ces pratiques anti-commerciales?

Réponse donnée par M. De Gucht au nom de la Commission
(23 octobre 2013)

1. La Commission est parvenue à une solution avec la Chine dans le volet antidumping de l'enquête concernant les exportations de panneaux solaires. En juillet, les fournisseurs chinois ont offert un engagement de prix volontaire consistant à maintenir leurs prix au-dessus d'un certain seuil ne causant pas de préjudice à l'industrie de l'UE. En échange, en deçà d'un certain niveau, les importations des entreprises participant à ce mécanisme sont exemptées des droits antidumping qui ont été imposés le 6 juin. Cette solution est bonne pour l'emploi et la croissance dans l'Union européenne et respectueuse des règles du commerce international. Elle rétablira la stabilité sur le marché européen en maintenant un niveau de prix stable.

2. L'acceptation de l'engagement de prix ne signifie pas la fin des droits antidumping provisoires. Les importations des entreprises chinoises qui n'ont pas offert d'engagement de prix resteront soumises à des droits antidumping. Les droits provisoires actuels seront en vigueur pendant six mois et la décision de les maintenir définitivement doit être prise par le Conseil avant le 5 décembre prochain.

3. En ce qui concerne l'enquête antisubventions parallèle, la Commission analysera soigneusement toutes les informations recueillies et les prendra en considération dans sa proposition au Conseil. Pour autant que toutes les conditions légales soient remplies et que l'existence de subventions soit confirmée, la Commission proposera des mesures visant à compenser les effets préjudiciables des subventions chinoises sur l'industrie de l'UE. Le Conseil devra aussi prendre une décision finale sur le volet antisubventions de cette affaire d'ici au 5 décembre prochain.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009734/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: The European Union endorses dumping by China

The European Commission announced on Wednesday that it has completed its anti-dumping and anti-subsidy investigation in respect of Chinese solar panel exports.

Anxious to avoid provoking a trade war, the Commission and the Chinese authorities reached a provisional agreement on the anti-dumping aspect of this investigation at the end of July.

1. Under this agreement, the provisional anti-dumping duties imposed on Chinese exporters by the EU from the start of June were ended. In itself this is not necessarily good news. What has the Commission secured in return from the Chinese in order to protect jobs in Europe?

2. What will be done about the fact that Chinese producers have still not agreed to pay the 47.6% anti-dumping duties that were imposed?

3. As for the subsidies issue, the agreement resolves nothing since there is no requirement in the text for the Chinese Government to put an end to subsidies. What does the Commission think of our proposal to call on the European Union to impose customs duties so as to offset the effect of these subsidies and encourage China to terminate these anti-free trade practices?

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

1. The Commission has reached a solution with China on the solar panels anti-dumping case. In July the Chinese suppliers offered a voluntary price undertaking — a commitment to keep their prices above a certain floor that does not unfairly harm the EU industry. In return, within a certain level, imports from the companies participating in this arrangement do not have to pay the anti-dumping duties which were imposed on 6 June. This solution is good for EU jobs and growth, and respectful of international trade rules. It will restore stability in the European market with a sustainable price level.

2. The acceptance of the price undertaking does not mean that the provisional anti-dumping duties have ended. Imports from Chinese firms who did not offer an undertaking will still have to pay the anti-dumping duties. The current provisional duties will be in force for 6 months, and a decision on whether to continue with duties definitively has to be taken by the Council before 5 December this year.

3. With regard to the ongoing parallel anti-subsidy investigation, the Commission will carefully analyse all the information gathered and will take it into consideration in its proposal to the Council. Provided all the legal conditions are met and the existence of subsidisation is confirmed, the Commission will propose measures to offset the injurious effect of Chinese subsidies on the EU industry. A final decision on the anti-subsidy element of this case has also to be taken by the Council by 5 December this year.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009735/13
à la Commission (Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante)
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(29 août 2013)

Objet: VP/HR — Madagascar: dégel des aides européennes

La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante s'est réjouie des progrès récents accomplis à Madagascar, après la publication par la Cour électorale spéciale de la liste définitive des candidats à l'élection présidentielle et de l'adoption, par la Commission électorale nationale indépendante pour la transition (CENIT), d'un nouveau calendrier électoral permettant d'organiser les élections présidentielles et législatives cette année.

Le porte-parole de la vice-présidente de la Commission déclare par ailleurs qu'elle «félicite les acteurs malgaches qui ont permis de débloquer le processus électoral», tout en affirmant le soutien de l'Union européenne à la médiation pour la sortie de crise menée par Joaquim Chissano, ancien président du Mozambique, et Ramtane Lamamra, Haut commissaire du Conseil de paix et de sécurité de l'Union africaine.

Principal bailleur de fonds du programme d'appui au processus électoral à Madagascar (PACEM), l'Union européenne a gelé ses aides dans l'attente du dénouement du blocage politique des élections.

1. Pourquoi, dès lors, à l'heure de la rédaction de cette question, les fonds européens destinés au PACEM n'auraient-ils toujours pas été «dégelés», et ce malgré les affirmations de la vice-présidente de la Commission? Cette information a été d'ailleurs relayée par les autorités malgaches.

2. La Commission estime-t-elle qu'une renégociation de ces fonds s'impose à présent? La première attribution des fonds de l'Union est l'impression du bulletin unique. Étant donné que l'impression des bulletins de vote sera prise en charge par la Commission électorale nationale indépendante d'Afrique du Sud, il faudrait réaffecter les fonds de l'Union à d'autres domaines techniques, comme l'éducation électorale.

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009736/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(29 août 2013)

Objet: Madagascar: dégel des aides européennes

La Commission s'est réjouie des progrès récents accomplis à Madagascar après la publication par la Cour électorale spéciale de la liste définitive des candidats à l'élection présidentielle et de l'adoption, par la Commission électorale nationale indépendante pour la transition (CENIT), d'un nouveau calendrier électoral permettant d'organiser les élections présidentielles et législatives cette année.

Le porte-parole de la vice-présidente de la Commission déclare par ailleurs qu'elle "félicite les acteurs malgaches qui ont permis de débloquer le processus électoral", tout en affirmant le soutien de l'Union européenne à la médiation pour la sortie de crise menée par Joaquim Chissano, ancien président du Mozambique, et Ramtane Lamamra, Haut commissaire du Conseil de paix et de sécurité de l'Union africaine.

Principal bailleur de fonds du programme d'appui au processus électoral à Madagascar (PACEM), l'Union européenne a gelé ses aides dans l'attente du dénouement du blocage politique des élections.

1. Pourquoi, dès lors, à l'heure de la rédaction de cette question, les fonds européens destinés au PACEM n'auraient-ils toujours pas été "dégelés", et ce malgré les affirmations de la vice-présidente de la Commission? Cette information a été d'ailleurs relayée par les autorités malgaches.

2. La Commission estime-t-elle qu'une renégociation de ces fonds s'impose à présent? La première attribution des fonds de l'Union est l'impression du bulletin unique. Étant donné que l'impression des bulletins de vote sera prise en charge par la Commission électorale nationale indépendante d'Afrique du Sud, il faudrait réaffecter les fonds de l'Union à d'autres domaines techniques, comme l'éducation électorale.

Réponse commune donnée par Mme Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission

(10 octobre 2013)

Le versement des fonds européens octroyés au PNUD/PACEM, qui avait été gelé en raison du manque de progrès constaté dans le processus électoral entre début mai 2013 et le milieu du mois d'août 2013, est entièrement revenu à la normale. Ainsi que le porte-parole de la haute représentante/vice-présidente l'a indiqué, l'UE a confirmé son plein soutien au processus électoral, tant politiquement que sur le plan financier.

Une renégociation de l'accord de contribution conclu avec le PNUD en faveur du PACEM n'est pas nécessaire. L'impression des bulletins est en effet financée par le PACEM (grâce à des fonds de l'UE), la promesse de financement de l'Afrique du Sud ne s'étant pas concrétisée.

L'UE n'a jamais suspendu son soutien financier au PACTE (Projet d'appui à la crédibilité et à la transparence des élections), géré par un consortium d'organisations non gouvernementales (ONG), qui a poursuivi ses activités dans le domaine du suivi des médias et de la prévention des conflits.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009735/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Madagascar: unfreezing of EU aid

The Vice-President/High Representative welcomed the recent progress in Madagascar following the publication by the Special Electoral Court of the final list of candidates for the presidential election and the adoption by the Independent National Electoral Commission for the Transition (CENIT) of a new electoral timetable to hold presidential and legislative elections this year.

The spokesperson for the Commission Vice-President also said that she 'commends the Malagasy stakeholders who helped unlock the electoral process', and expressed the EU's support for the mediation efforts to end the crisis headed by Joaquim Chissano, the former President of Mozambique, and Ramtane Lamamra, the High Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union.

The European Union, which is the major donor of funding for the programme to support the electoral process in Madagascar (PACEM), froze its aid pending the outcome of the political deadlock over the elections.

1. Why, then, at the time of writing, has EU funding for the PACEM not been unfrozen, despite the statements by the Commission Vice-President? The relevant information was reported by the Malagasy authorities.

2. Does the Commission believe there is now a need to renegotiate these funds? The first allocation of EU funds was for printing the single ballot paper. Given that the printing of the ballot papers will be handled by the Independent National Electoral Commission of South Africa, the EU funds concerned should be reallocated to other technical areas, such as electoral education.

Question for written answer E-009736/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: Madagascar: unfreezing of EU aid

The Commission welcomed the recent progress in Madagascar following the publication by the Special Electoral Court of the final list of candidates for the presidential election and the adoption by the Independent National Electoral Commission for the Transition (CENIT) of a new electoral timetable to hold presidential and legislative elections this year.

The spokesperson for the Commission Vice-President also said that she 'commends the Malagasy stakeholders who helped unlock the electoral process', and expressed the EU's support for the mediation efforts to end the crisis headed by Joaquim Chissano, the former President of Mozambique, and Ramtane Lamamra, the High Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union.

The European Union, which is the major donor of funding for the programme to support the electoral process in Madagascar (PACEM), froze its aid pending the outcome of the political deadlock over the elections.

1. Why, then, at the time of writing, has EU funding for the PACEM not been unfrozen, despite the statements by the Commission Vice-President? The relevant information was reported by the Malagasy authorities.

2. Does the Commission believe there is now a need to renegotiate these funds? The first allocation of EU funds was for printing the single ballot paper. Given that the printing of the ballot papers will be handled by the Independent National Electoral Commission of South Africa, the EU funds concerned should be reallocated to other technical areas, such as electoral education.

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

The implementation of the EU funding provided to UNDP/PACEM, put on hold due to the lack of positive progress of the electoral process from early May 2013 until mid of August 2013, has been fully normalised. As stated by the HR/VP Spokesperson, the EU has confirmed its full support to the electoral process both politically and financially.

There is no need to renegotiate the contribution agreement with the UNDP for the PACEM. The printing of ballot papers is financed by the PACEM (with EU funding) as the South African intention to cover the cost did not materialise.

The EU funding to PACTE (Programme d'Appui à la Credibilité et Transparence des Elections) managed by a Consortium of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) has never been put on hold and has continued its activities in the field of media monitoring and conflict prevention.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009737/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(29 août 2013)

Objet: Politique catastrophique du tout-charbon

Un nouveau conflit, révélé le 22 août par Euractiv, vient du fait que la Pologne envisage de construire deux nouvelles unités de production dans une centrale à charbon, et que celle-ci n'a pas été évaluée selon les critères du CSC (captage et stockage du carbone), technologie qui a fait l'objet d'une directive et sur laquelle s'appuie la Commission pour décarboner les sources d'énergies européennes d'ici 2050.

1. Quelle est la réaction de la Commission?

2. Selon la Commission, par cette décision de construire deux nouvelles unités dans la centrale d'Opole, le pays ne compromet-il pas l'évolution de son mix énergétique?

3. Dès lors, n'y a-t-il pas un risque de nouvelles procédures d'infraction?

4. La Commission compte-t-elle inciter les autorités à se conformer aux règles de l'UE?

Opole est un test pour vérifier si nos politiques sont valables ou si elles n'existent que sur le papier. De fait, si la Commission n'intervient pas, le droit européen en matière d'objectifs énergétiques en serait certainement affaibli.

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Hedegaard au nom de la Commission
(21 octobre 2013)

1-3-4. La Commission a été saisie d'une plainte à ce sujet et recueille actuellement des informations pour déterminer les éléments factuels et juridiques liés au projet de construction de deux nouvelles unités dans la centrale électrique d'Opole. En outre, une procédure d'infraction à l'encontre de la Pologne pour non-communication des mesures nationales de transposition de la directive CSC ([1]) est en cours depuis juillet 2011. Pour de plus amples informations, l'Honorable Parlementaire est invité à se référer à la réponse de la Commission à la question du PE E-009110/2013 ([2]).

2. La Commission ne se prononce pas sur la question du bouquet énergétique de la Pologne. Les États membres ont le droit de choisir les sources d'énergie qu'ils exploitent sur leur territoire et la structure générale de leur approvisionnement énergétique.

([1]) Directive 2009/31/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 23 avril 2009.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/fr/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009737/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: Disastrous coal-only energy policy

On 22 August 2013, EurActiv reported the existence of a new conflict, arising from Poland's plan to build two new production units in a coal-powered energy plant and the fact that the project has not been assessed according for carbon capture and storage (CCS) readiness. CCS technology has been addressed in a directive and forms the basis for the Commission's efforts to decarbonise Europe's energy sources by 2050.

1. What is the Commission's response to this news?

2. Does the Commission agree that by deciding to build two new units in the Opole energy plant, Poland is compromising the development of its energy mix?

3. Does this make the launch of further infringement procedures likely?

4. Does the Commission intend to urge the authorities to comply with EU rules?

The Opole plant is a test of whether our policies are enforceable, or exist only on paper. If the Commission fails to intervene in this case, European law relating to energy targets will undoubtedly be weakened by it.

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(21 October 2013)

1, 3, 4. The Commission has received a complaint on this issue and is currently gathering information to determine facts and law concerning the case of the planned two new units at the Opole power plant. In addition, there is an ongoing infringement case for non-communication of national measures transposing the CCS Directive ([1]) against Poland, which was launched in July 2011. For additional details the Honourable Member is referred to the Commission's reply to the EP Question E-009110/2013 ([2]).

2. The Commission does not comment on the issue of Poland's energy mix.. Member States have the right to choose which energy sources they exploit on their territory and the general structure of their energy supply.

([1]) Directive 2009/31/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of 23 April 2009.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html#sidesForm

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009740/13
à la Commission (Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante)
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(29 août 2013)

Objet: VP/HR — Putschiste récompensé

Amadou Haya Sanogo, auteur du coup d'État du 22 mars 2012 qui a mis fin au régime d'Amadou Toumani Touré, semble avoir récolté le fruit de son putsch. Du grade de capitaine, il vient de se voir «bombardé» au grade de général de corps d'armée. D'aucuns estiment que lui et ses éléments récoltent ainsi les fruits de leur putsch, bien qu'il s'agisse d'un crime imprescriptible en République du Mali.

1. Les autorités européennes n'estiment-elles pas que cette promotion constitue un précédent dangereux au Mali, puisqu'il s'agit d'une récompense accordée à quelqu'un qui a renversé un président démocratiquement élu et l'ensemble des autres institutions de la République?

2. Quelle est la position des autorités européennes?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(25 novembre 2013)

D'importants progrès politiques ont été réalisés au Mali depuis le début des opérations militaires internationales en janvier 2013: l'adoption, fin janvier, d'une feuille de route pour la transition, qui a permis la reprise progressive de la coopération au développement; la signature avec les groupes armés du nord du Mali d'un accord préliminaire de paix le 18 juin et la large victoire électorale d'Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta en août, illustrant la volonté de changement politique des Maliens.

Dans ce contexte, l'UE reste déterminée à continuer à soutenir le retour complet à l'ordre constitutionnel, à la paix et à la sécurité, par la tenue d'élections législatives le 24 novembre 2013 ainsi que par l'instauration de pourparlers de paix et la mise en œuvre d'une réconciliation nationale qui englobent l'ensemble de la société. Elle continuera également à soutenir la réforme du secteur de la sécurité et la consolidation des bases démocratiques des forces de défense dans le cadre de la mission militaire de formation de l'UE et d'autres initiatives complémentaires.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009740/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Reward for mounting a coup d'état

Amadou Haya Sanogo, who led the coup d'état on 22 March 2012 that put an end to Amadou Toumani Touré's regime, appears to have benefited from his actions. He was recently catapulted from the rank of captain to lieutenant-general. Some take the view that he and his followers are now benefiting from their coup despite its being a crime not subject to the statute of limitations in Mali.

1. Do the EU authorities not take the view that this promotion is a dangerous precedent in Mali, since it represents a reward to an individual who overthrew a democratically elected president and all other institutions in Mali?

2. What is the position of the EU authorities?

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

Important political progress has been made in Mali since international military operations started in January 2013: a Transition Road Map was adopted in late January which enabled the gradual resumption of development cooperation; a preliminary peace agreement was signed with armed groups from the north of Mali on 18 June; Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta's clear electoral victory at the presidential elections in August showed the Malian people's wish for political change.

In this context, the EU remains determined to continue its support to full return to constitutional order, peace and security through the holding of legislative elections on 24 November 2013 and inclusive peace talks and national reconciliation. It will also continue to support the security sector reform and the consolidation of the democratic foundations of the defence forces through the EU military Training Mission and other complementary initiatives.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009741/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(29 août 2013)

Objet: Daimler: fluide réfrigérant

Le gouvernement allemand a salué mercredi dernier la décision, en France, du Conseil d'État de suspendre l'interdiction dans l'Hexagone de la commercialisation de certains modèles du constructeur automobile allemand Daimler (DAI.XE).

1. La Commission s'est-elle assurée de la sûreté du nouveau fluide réfrigérant pour climatisation recommandé en Europe, à l'origine du litige entre Daimler et Paris?

2. Dans l'affirmative, qu'en est-il?

Réponse donnée par M. Tajani au nom de la Commission
(17 octobre 2013)

La Commission renvoie l'Honorable Parlementaire à la réponse qu'elle a donnée à la question E-008870/2013 sur le même sujet.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009741/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: Daimler: air-conditioning coolant

The German Government has welcomed the recent suspension by France's Council of State of the ban on sales of some Daimler cars in France.

1. Has the Commission satisfied itself that the new air-conditioning coolant recommended for use in the EU, which was the cause of the dispute between Daimler and the French authorities, is safe?

2. If it has, can it provide further details?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(17 October 2013)

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to the reply to Question E-008870/2013 on the same subject.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009742/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(29 août 2013)

Objet: 2014 — Année de l'agriculture familiale

La déclaration de l'ONU fera de 2014 l'Année internationale de l'agriculture familiale.

Que prévoit la Commission dans ce cadre?

Réponse donnée par M. Cioloş au nom de la Commission
(7 octobre 2013)

La Commission organise le 29 novembre 2013 à Bruxelles une conférence intitulée «Agriculture familiale: un dialogue en faveur d'une agriculture plus durable et plus résiliente en Europe et dans le monde». Cette conférence a pour principal objectif de valoriser l'agriculture familiale en tant que modèle rural durable et d'aborder certains des problèmes essentiels auxquels sont confrontées les exploitations familiales, ainsi que de déterminer la meilleure manière de soutenir ce modèle agricole. Elle s'adresse aux agriculteurs, aux organisations d'agriculteurs, à la société civile et aux organisations non gouvernementales d'Europe. Les résultats de la conférence viendront alimenter les nombreuses manifestations qui seront organisées en Europe et dans le monde durant l'année internationale de l'agriculture familiale 2014.

La Commission a lancé en août 2013 une consultation en ligne sur le «Rôle de l'agriculture familiale: principaux enjeux et priorités pour l'avenir». Les citoyens, les organisations non gouvernementales et les pouvoirs publics de l'Union européenne et d'ailleurs sont invités à contribuer à cette consultation qui sera clôturée le 11 octobre 2013.

La Commission entend participer activement aux nombreuses manifestations en rapport avec l'agriculture familiale prévues en 2014, et notamment la Conférence régionale européenne de la FAO qui se tiendra du 1er au 4 avril 2014 à Bucarest (Roumanie).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009742/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: 2014 — International Year of Family Farming

The United Nations has declared 2014 to be the International Year of Family Farming.

How does the Commission intend to mark this event?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(7 October 2013)

The Commission is organising a conference 'Family Farming: A dialogue towards more sustainable and resilient farming in Europe and the world' on 29 November 2013 in Brussels. Its main objective is to highlight the value of family farming as a sustainable rural model and to delve into some key challenges for family farms as well the best means of supporting this agricultural model. The target audience are farmers, farmers' organisations, civil society and non-governmental organisations from Europe. The Conference event will feed into the many events which will be organised in Europe and beyond during the International Year of Family Farming 2014.

The Commission launched in August 2013 an e-consultation on 'The role of family farming, key challenges and priorities for the future'. Citizens, non-governmental organisations and public authorities in the European Union and beyond are invited to contribute to this consultation which closes on 11 October 2013.

The Commission intends to be an active contributor to the numerous events related to family farming that will be organised in 2014, notably the FAO European Regional Conference which will be held between 1-4 April 2014 in Bucharest, Romania.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009743/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(29 août 2013)

Objet: Costa Concordia à Venise

D'immenses bateaux de croisière frôlent le littoral de la lagune de Venise. Vu les récents événements liés à la catastrophe du Costa Concordia et les nombreuses victimes de cette tragédie, la Commission compte-t-elle réagir?

La Commission a-t-elle détecté d'autres endroits où une fréquentation trop proche des côtes constitue un réel danger?

Quelles compagnies sont dans le collimateur de la Commission?

Réponse donnée par M. Kallas au nom de la Commission
(1er octobre 2013)

Les questions relatives aux navires évoluant à proximité ou, le cas échéant, trop près du littoral relèvent, par définition, de la compétence de l'État côtier concerné.

Au lendemain de l'accident du Costa Concordia, les autorités italiennes ont introduit des dispositions nationales applicables aux eaux territoriales et aux zones côtières sensibles telles que la lagune de Venise, en ce compris des mesures de restriction du traffic. La Commission croit savoir que, si la législation nationale interdit de façon générale aux navires de plus de 40 000 tonnes de naviguer dans la lagune de Venise (bassin de Saint-Marc et canal de la Giudecca), il y est prévu par ailleurs que cette interdiction ne devienne effective que lorsque les autorités auront trouvé d'autres solutions de transit. En attendant, les autorités locales définiront des mesures minimales de sécurité au cas par cas (par exemple, obligation d'utiliser deux remorqueurs et de disposer de deux pilotes locaux à bord).

La Commission ne dispose pas d'informations concernant des lieux particuliers où des navires s'approcheraient trop du littoral.

La Commission ne surveille aucune compagnie maritime en particulier à cet égard. Le secteur des croisières maritimes s'est engagé à se conformer à la planification obligatoire du voyage suite à l'accident du Costa Concordia, parallèlement à d'autres changements opérationnels liés à la sécurité. Ces avancées se sont par la suite traduites par une modification des dispositions pertinentes de l'Organisation maritime internationale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009743/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: Costa Concordia in Venice

Huge cruise liners come in very close to the coastline of the lagoon around Venice. In view of the recent case of the Costa Concordia disaster and its many victims, what action does the Commission intend to take to respond to this state of affairs?

Has the Commission detected other places where real danger is posed by ships coming in too close to the shore?

What shipping companies is the Commission focusing its sights on?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(1 October 2013)

By definition, any question of vessels sailing close or possibly too close to the shore is an issue within the competence of the coastal state concerned.

In the aftermath of the Costa Concordia accident the Italian authorities have introduced national provisions in territorial waters and sensitive coastal areas such as the lagoon of Venice which include traffic restrictions. The Commision understands that while the national legislation provides in general for the prohibition of navigation in the lagoon of Venice (San Marco basin and Giudecca channel) for vessels over 40.000 tonnes, it also specifies that the prohibition will be effective only when the authorities have identified alternative transit solutions. Meanwhile local authorities will define the minimum safe measures on a case by case (e.g. compulsory use of two tugs and two local pilots on board).

The Commission does not have any information regarding particular places where vessels are reportedly sailing too close to the shore.

The Commission does not focus on any particular shipping company in this regard. The cruise ship industry has committed to mandatory route planning following the Costa Concordia accident along with other safety related operational changes and this has subsequently been enacted by a change of the relevant provisions of the International Maritime Organisation.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009744/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(29 août 2013)

Objet: Fusion AMR/US Airways

1. Quelle est la position de la Commission sur la fusion d'American Airlines et d'US Airways?

2. Le monopole ainsi obtenu sur certaines lignes n'est-il pas de nature potentiellement toxique?

Réponse donnée par M. Almunia au nom de la Commission
(11 octobre 2013)

La Commission a approuvé sous conditions la concentration des compagnies aériennes US Airways et American Airlines le 5 août 2013 ([1]). L'évaluation de la Commission a principalement porté sur l'incidence de la concentration sur les consommateurs européens, raison pour laquelle ce sont les liaisons transatlantiques au départ ou à destination de l'EEE qui ont été examinées.

Après une étude approfondie, la Commission a estimé que la concentration soulevait de sérieux doutes en ce qui concerne la liaison Londres (Heathrow)-Philadelphie, pour laquelle seules US Airways et American Airlines ([2]) proposaient des vols sans escale. Afin de dissiper ces doutes sérieux, les parties se sont notamment engagées à céder un créneau par jour à un autre transporteur sur la liaison Londres (Heathrow)-Philadelphie et à conclure des accords de portée étendue concernant le transport de passagers en transit afin d'inciter un nouveau concurrent à entrer sur le marché de cette liaison. Compte tenu de ces engagements importants, la Commission est arrivée à la conclusion que la transaction proposée n'entraverait pas de manière significative l'exercice d'une concurrence effective dans l'EEE ou dans une partie substantielle de celui-ci.

Le 13 août 2013, le ministère américain de la justice a déposé une plainte visant à empêcher l'opération de concentration. D'une part, celle-ci diminuerait substantiellement la concurrence sur le marché du transport aérien commercial aux États-Unis pour plus de mille liaisons intérieures sans escale et avec une escale sur lesquelles les parties sont en concurrence. D'autre part, elle aboutirait à une augmentation du prix des billets d'avion et à une réduction de l'offre. Un procès opposant les compagnies aériennes au ministère américain de la justice et à plusieurs États américains doit avoir lieu le 25 novembre 2013.

([1]) La version non confidentielle de la décision, dans laquelle figurent également les engagements, peut être consultée sur le site de la Commission : http://ec.europa.eu/competition/mergers/cases/decisions/m6607_20130805_20212_3270644_EN.pdf (en anglais seulement). Le communiqué de presse est disponible à l'adresse suivante : http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-764_fr.htm

([2]) Par le biais de vols assurés par son partenaire British Airways.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009744/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(29 August 2013)

Subject: Merger between American Airlines and US Airways

1. What is the Commission's position on the merger between American Airlines and US Airways?

2. Would not the resulting monopoly on some routes be potentially toxic?

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

The Commission conditionally approved the merger of US Airways and American Airlines on 5 August 2013 ([1]). The Commission's assessment focused on the impact the merger would have on European consumers, so the routes under scrutiny were the transatlantic routes having one end in the EEA.

After a thorough review, the Commission concluded that the merger raised serious doubts as regards the London (Heathrow) — Philadelphia route, where only US Airways and American Airlines ([2]) were offering non-stop services. To address these serious doubts, the parties committed, among others, to release a daily slot for another carrier to operate on the London (Heathrow) — Philadelphia route and to provide far-reaching feeder arrangements to induce entry by a new competitor on the route. In light of these comprehensive commitments, the Commission concluded that the proposed transaction would not significantly impede effective competition in the EEA or a substantial part of it.

On 13 August 2013, the US Department of Justice (DoJ) filed a complaint to block the merger on the basis that it would substantially lessen competition for commercial air travel on more than a thousand non-stop and one-stop domestic routes throughout the US on which the parties compete, as well as result in higher airfares and less service. A trial pitting the airlines against the DoJ and several US states is scheduled for 25 November 2013.

([1]) The non-confidential version of decision including the commitments can be found on the Commission website at http://ec.europa.eu/competition/mergers/cases/decisions/m6607_20130805_20212_3270644_EN.pdf
The Press Release can be found at http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-764_en.htm

([2]) By means of flights operated by its partner British Airways.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-009746/13
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(30 augustus 2013)

Betreft: Bescherming van de rechten en vrijheden van kinderen

In haar antwoord op schriftelijke vraag E-003127/2011 stelt commissaris Reding dat de bescherming en bevordering van de rechten van het kind voor de Commissie een prioriteit is. Voorts verzekert de commissaris dat zij veel aandacht zal besteden aan de situatie van bijzonder kwetsbare kinderen, zoals in de steek gelaten of ouderloze kinderen.

1. Welke stappen onderneemt de Commissie om ervoor te zorgen dat alle rechten en vrijheden van kinderen, zoals gewaarborgd door het Europees Verdrag tot bescherming van de rechten van de mens, worden geëerbiedigd?

2. Kan de Commissie bevestigen dat zij zich verzet en optreedt tegen elke vorm van onrecht en misbruik ten aanzien van kinderen die haar ter kennis komt?

3. Is de Commissie van oordeel dat de vrijheden van de EU-burgers, zoals de vrijheid van meningsuiting en de vrijheid van godsdienst, op het hele grondgebied van de EU afdoende gewaarborgd zijn?

4. Is de Commissie van mening dat door EU-burgers geadopteerde kinderen dezelfde rechten genieten als kinderen die van geboorte EU-burger zijn? Geldt het Europees Verdrag tot bescherming van de rechten van de mens evenzeer voor geadopteerde kinderen, ook al komen ze uit een derde land?

Antwoord van mevrouw Reding namens de Commissie
(5 november 2013)

1. Binnen de grenzen van haar bevoegdheden maakt de Commissie gebruik van alle tot haar beschikking staande instrumenten om de eerbiediging van de rechten van het kind te bevorderen en om ervoor te zorgen dat de belangen van het kind centraal staan in alle maatregelen en in elk beleid van de EU overeenkomstig het EU-Handvest van de grondrechten.

2. Binnen haar bevoegdheden is de Commissie sterk begaan met de bescherming van kinderen en jongeren tegen alle vormen van geweld ([1]). De Unie heeft ten aanzien van de rechten van het kind echter geen algemene bevoegdheden en kan niet in alle individuele gevallen tussenbeide komen.

3. De vrijheid van meningsuiting is een onderdeel van de belangrijkste pijlers van onze democratische samenlevingen. Het derde jaarverslag over de toepassing van het Handvest geeft een overzicht van de toepassing ervan door de instellingen van de EU en de lidstaten.

4. Kinderen die uit derde landen zijn geadopteerd, genieten dezelfde rechten als kinderen die door geboorte EU-burgers zijn. De toepasselijkheid van de meeste fundamentele rechten in het Handvest is niet afhankelijk van de nationaliteit van de betrokken persoon. Doordat adoptiebeslissingen die niet in het kader van het Verdrag van Den Haag van 1993 inzake interlandelijke adoptie worden uitgevoerd, niet wederzijds worden erkend, kan het voor een kind echter moeilijk zijn het staatsburgerschap te verwerven van de adoptieouders die in een lidstaat verblijven, of dat van hun gewone verblijfplaats (waarvan zij niet het staatsburgerschap bezitten).

([1]) Zie: Een EU-agenda voor de rechten van het kind, COM(2011) 60, definitief, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=celex:52011dc0060:nl:NOT.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009746/13
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(30 August 2013)

Subject: Protection of children's rights and freedoms

Commissioner Reding, in her answer to Written Question E-003127/2011, states that the protection and promotion of the rights of children is a priority of the Commission. The Commissioner further ensures Members that she will pay considerable attention to the situation of children who are particularly vulnerable, such as those who have been abandoned or orphaned.

1. What steps is the Commission taking in order to ensure that all the rights and freedoms of children, as guaranteed by the European Charter of Human Rights, are respected?

2. Can the Commission confirm that it speaks out and acts against all injustice and abuse of children, of which it becomes aware?

3. Does the Commission think that the freedoms of EU citizens, such as the freedom of speech and the freedom of religion, are guaranteed properly throughout the whole territory of the EU?

4. Does the Commission think that the children adopted by EU citizens enjoy the same rights as those children who are EU citizens by birth? Is the European Charter of Human Rights applicable to adopted children in the same way, even if they come from a third country?

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

1. Within the boundaries of its competences the Commission uses all the instruments at its disposal to promote the respect for the rights of the child, to ensure that the child's best interests are at the centre of all relevant EU actions and policies, in line with the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.

2. Within its competences, the Commission is strongly committed to the protection of children and young people against all forms of violence ([1]). However, the Union does not have general powers in respect of the rights of the child nor can it intervene in all individual cases.

3. Freedom of expression and freedom of speech constitute part of the essential foundations of our democratic societies. The third Annual Report on the Application of the Charter provides an overview of its implementation by EU institutions and Member States.

4. Children adopted from third countries enjoy the same rights of children who are EU citizens by birth. The applicability of most of the fundamental rights contained in the Charter does not depend on the nationality of the person concerned. It may however happen that, due to the lack of mutual recognition of adoption decisions not carried out under the legal framework of the 1993 Hague Convention on Inter-country adoption, it could be difficult for the child to acquire the citizenship of the adoptive parents resident in a Member State or the citizenship of the adoptive parents' habitual residence (of which they do not have citizenship).

([1]) See: An EU Agenda for the Rights of the Child COM/2011/0060 final, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52011DC0060:en:NOT

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009747/13
to the Commission
Glenis Willmott (S&D)
(30 August 2013)

Subject: European School Milk Scheme

The European School Milk Scheme is intended to encourage children to consume healthy dairy products containing important vitamins and minerals, and to develop a lasting habit of doing so. Milk and yoghurt are supplied to school children at reduced prices.

In 2011 the UK Government, or its agents, Multi Resource Marketing Ltd, returned to the Commission GBP 2 641 271.08 in funds that had been claimed under this scheme, as is noted in Hansard of the House of Commons, 22 Apr 2013 — Column 771W.

— Bearing this in mind, how much aid is available to each Member State under the European School Milk Scheme?

— How much aid was paid and/or claimed by each Member State under the European School Milk Scheme in each of the last 10 years?

— What communication was received from the UK Government or its agents prior to, or following, the reimbursement of GBP 2 641 271.08 to the Commission?

— What steps is the Commission taking to increase the uptake of this scheme by Member States?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(7 October 2013)

The EU aid for the School Milk Scheme (SMS) is not fixed as an envelope per Member State, but is set according to Art. 102 of Council Reg.(EC) 1234/2007 at the level of EUR 18.15/100 kg of milk with a maximum of 0.25 l of milk equivalent per pupil per school day.

The amounts paid per Member State are displayed in the annex. They differ from the annual notifications received from Member States, because payments refer to the financial year, while Member States' notifications refer to the school year. In addition, claims can be submitted after the end of a school year and payments usually occur around two months after the claims are lodged.

When a Member State during its regular control/audit of the implementation of a shared management CAP instrument, such as the SMS, finds out that payments have to be recovered for non-respect of the rules in force, this is done on a regular basis and included in the monthly declarations for reimbursements from the EAGF. A Member State is not obliged to inform the Commission in advance of such corrections.

The SMS's Regulation ([1]) was changed in 2008, extending the list of eligible products and the target group. The programme is currently being evaluated by an external contractor. The results are expected to be published in October/November 2013. Besides, an impact assessment is being conducted on the general framework of school programmes (School Milk and School Fruit Schemes). It is expected to be finalised at the earliest at the end of 2013.

([1]) Commission Regulation (EC) No 657/2008 of 10 July 2008 laying down detailed rules for applying Council Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 as regards Community aid for supplying milk and certain milk products to pupils in educational establishments.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009748/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(30 de agosto de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Juicio de extradición del refugiado político Alexander Pavlov

La etapa final del juicio de extradición del ciudadano y refugiado político kazajo, Alexander Pavlov, antiguo jefe de seguridad del disidente kazajo Mujtar Abliazov, se celebró ante la Audiencia Nacional en Madrid el 18 de julio de 2013. El 22 de julio de 2013 se adoptó la decisión de conceder la extradición de Alexander Pavlov a Kazajistán. Esta decisión ha sido recurrida.

El caso de Alexander Pavlov reviste una importancia particular ya que se inscribe en una operación de caza y captura más amplia de miembros de la oposición organizada por el Gobierno de Kazajistán que se está registrando en toda Europa. Los opositores políticos del Presidente kazajo, Nursultan Nazarbayev, que se han visto obligados a huir al extranjero para escapar de la persecución política, están siendo llevados ante los tribunales europeos para ser extraditados. Las autoridades kazajas se sirven de acusaciones de delitos tales como actividades terroristas, tentativas de derrocamiento del gobierno y fraude financiero como pretexto devolver al país a los refugiados políticos y a sus familias, donde corren peligro de verse sometidos a torturas, tratos inhumanos y a un juicio injusto.

El Sr. Pavlov solicitó asilo político en España. Lamentablemente, le fue denegado alegando la decisión del Centro Nacional de Inteligencia (CNI). La decisión de denegar el asilo político ha sido recurrida para poder tener en cuenta los hechos y la información que no examinaron en el marco de la decisión del CNI.

Teniendo en cuenta lo anteriormente expuesto, y sobre la base de los casos registrados recientemente en Italia en relación con la deportación de Alma Shalabayeva y Alua Abliazova a Kazajstán, y en Polonia, donde Muratbek Ketebayev, un opositor político del régimen kazajo y antiguo colega de Mujtar Abliazov, fue detenido y contra quién Kazajstán también ha presentado una orden de detención de Interpol, ¿podría indicar la Vicepresidenta / Alta Representante si está al tanto del caso de Alexander Pavlov y si el Servicio Europeo de Acción Exterior (SEAE) tiene intención de adoptar medidas para evitar su extradición a Kazajistán?

En caso afirmativo, ¿qué medidas tiene intención de adoptar el SEAE para velar por que Alexander Pavlov no sea extraditado a Kazajistán, país en el que corre el riesgo de verse sometido a torturas y malos tratos?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(22 de octubre de 2013)

La Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta ha tomado buena nota de los temas planteados en la pregunta y está muy atenta a la evolución del asunto de Aleksandr Pavlov, antiguo jefe de seguridad de Mukhtar Ablyazov. La Comisión recuerda que hay dos procesos pendientes, uno referido al asunto de extradición y otro a al recurso contra la decisión de denegar la solicitud de asilo del Sr. Pavlov.

La Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta continúa muy atenta a este asunto y a otros similares. Se aprovechan todas las ocasiones oficiales y oficiosas para alentar a Kazajistán a respetar sus obligaciones internacionales y, en especial, la Convención contra la Tortura y Otros Tratos o Penas Crueles, Inhumanos o Degradantes y su Protocolo facultativo, en los que es parte Kazajistán.

La UE plantea, y lo seguirá haciendo, las cuestiones relacionadas con los derechos humanos en su diálogo político con Kazajistán de forma coherente y a todos los niveles y, en particular, en el marco del diálogo anual sobre derechos humanos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009748/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(30 August 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Extradition trial of political refugee Aleksandr Pavlov

The final stage of the extradition trial of the Kazakh citizen and political refugee, Aleksandr Pavlov, former security chief to the Kazakh dissident Mukhtar Ablyazov took place before the Audiencia Nacional (Spanish National Court) in Madrid on 18 July 2013. On 22 July 2013, the decision was taken to grant the extradition of Aleksandr Pavlov to Kazakhstan. This decision to grant extradition is currently being appealed.

Aleksandr Pavlov's case is of particular importance because it is part of the wider hunt for opposition members initiated by the Kazakh Government, which is taking place throughout Europe. Political opponents of Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev who have been forced to run abroad to escape political persecution are now being taken to European courts for extradition. Kazakh authorities use allegations of offences such as terrorist activity, attempted overthrow of government, and financial fraud as pretexts to bring political refugees and their families back to the country, where they are in danger of torture, inhumane treatment and unfair trial.

Mr Pavlov requested political asylum in Spain. Unfortunately his efforts were denied, based on the decision of the Centro Nacional de Inteligencia (CNI — National Intelligence Centre). The decision to deny political asylum is currently being appealed in order to allow for the facts and information that were not considered in the CNI's decision to be analysed and addressed.

In light of the above information, and taking into account recent cases in Italy regarding the deportation of Alma Shalabayeva and Alua Ablyazova to Kazakhstan, and in Poland, where Muratbek Ketebayev, a political opponent of the current Kazakh regime and former colleague of Mukhtar Ablyazov, was arrested and against whom Kazakhstan has also presented an Interpol arrest warrant, is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the case of Aleksandr Pavlov and does the European External Action Service (EEAS) intend to take any actions in order to prevent his extradition to Kazakhstan?

If so, what actions does the EEAS intend to take to make sure that Aleksandr Pavlov is not extradited to Kazakhstan; a country in which he is at risk of torture and ill-treatment?

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

The HR/VP has taken good note of the issues raised in the question, and is following closely the developments of the case of Mr Aleksandr Pavlov, former security chief of Mukhtar Ablyazov. The Commission notes that there are two procedures pending, in the extradition case and against the decision to decline Mr Pavlov's request for asylum.

The HR/VP continues to monitor very closely this and other similar cases. Formal and informal opportunities are used to encourage Kazakhstan to respect its international obligations, notably the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and its Optional Protocol that Kazakhstan is a state party to.

The EU raises and will continue to raise human rights issues in its political dialogue with Kazakhstan consistently and at all levels and in particular, in the framework of the annual Human Rights Dialogue.

(Slovenska različica)

Vprašanje za pisni odgovor E-009749/13
za Komisijo
Mojca Kleva Kekuš (S&D)
(30. avgust 2013)

Zadeva: Ženske na vodilnih medijskih položajih

Zadnja študija Evropskega inštituta za enakost spolov je pokazala, da v EU ženske v javnih medijih zasedajo le 22 odstotkov vodilnih položajev, v zasebnih medijskih ustanovah pa le 12 odstotkov. Sicer predstavljajo skoraj polovico zaposlenih, vendar prevlada moških v medijih ne ovira samo tistih žensk, ki si želijo napredovati v svojem poklicu, ampak zmanjšuje tudi možnost, da bi vplivale na vsebino v sektorju, ki ima tako pomembno vlogo, kot je oblikovanje javnega mnenja. Stalna premajhna zastopanost žensk namreč lahko vpliva na vse, kar vidimo, slišimo ali preberemo v medijih.

Kaj namerava Komisija narediti, da bi ob upoštevanju nedavnih ugotovitev spodbudila enakost spolov v medijskem sektorju in povečala ozaveščenost o vlogi žensk na najvišjih medijskih položajih?

Odgovor Viviane Reding v imenu Komisije
(29. oktober 2013)

Ena od prednostnih nalog strategije Komisije za enakost žensk in moških (2010–2015) ([1]) je spodbujanje enake zastopanosti pri odločanju. Komisija podpira zadevne akterje pri izboljševanju razmer, in sicer s političnim dialogom, razvojem skupnih kazalnikov na ravni EU za merjenje napredka, dejavnostmi ozaveščanja, spodbujanjem in izmenjavo dobre prakse ter finančno podporo. Poleg tega je Komisija za izboljšanje nizke zastopanosti žensk v upravnih odborih 14. novembra 2012 sprejela predlog direktive o zagotavljanju uravnotežene zastopanosti spolov med neizvršnimi direktorji družb, ki kotirajo na borzi ([2]). Komisija tudi spremlja razmere na različnih področjih, zajetih v njeni zbirki podatkov o ženskah in moških na vodilnih položajih ([3]).

Kar zadeva sektor informacijskih in komunikacijskih tehnologij (IKT), je Komisija nedavno objavila poročilo o ženskah, dejavnih v sektorju IKT, ki utemeljuje gospodarske in druge prednosti večje udeležbe žensk v digitalnem sektorju, ter se skupaj z deležniki s kampanjami ozaveščanja dejavno zavzema za njihovo večjo zastopanost.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/document/index_en.htm
([2]) COM(2012)0614 final.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/gender-decision-making/database/index_en.htm; http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/index_sl.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009749/13
to the Commission
Mojca Kleva Kekuš (S&D)
(30 August 2013)

Subject: Women in top media jobs

The recent study of the European Institute for Gender Equality shows that women hold only 22% of management positions in the public media, and only 12% of such positions in the private media organisations in the EU. Despite the fact that women make up for nearly half of the workforce, the dominance of men in the media not only presents an obstacle to women who want to advance in their profession, it also restricts women's ability to influence content in a sector with such an important role — shaping the public opinion. The continued under-representation of women namely has the potential to influence everything we see, hear or read in the media.

Following the recent findings, how is the Commission planning to promote gender equality in the media business and raise awareness about the role of women in top media jobs?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(29 October 2013)

The Commission's Strategy for Equality between Women and Men (2010-2015) ([1]) has amongst its priorities the promotion of equal representation in decision-making. The Commission supports the various actors involved to improve the situation through political dialogue, development of common indicators at EU level to measure progress, awareness-raising activities, promotion and exchange of good practices, financial support. Moreover, to address the particular under-representation of women on corporate boards, the Commission adopted a proposal for a directive on improving the gender balance among non-executive directors of companies listed on stock exchanges on 14.11.2012 ([2]). The Commission also monitors the situation in the various fields covered by its database on women and men in decision-making ([3]).

As regards the ICT (information and communication technologies) sector in particular, the Commission has recently published a report on 'women active in the ICT sector', providing a business and policy case for an increased participation of women in digital jobs, and actively promotes the issue, with stakeholders, in awareness-raising campaigns.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/document/index_en.htm
([2]) COM(2012) 614 final.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/gender-decision-making/database/index_en.htm; http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/index_en.htm

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009750/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(30 août 2013)

Objet: La liberté des médias en danger

Alan Rusbridger, rédacteur en chef du quotidien *The Guardian* à l'origine des divulgations du lanceur d'alerte américain, Edward Snowden, a révélé dans sa tribune la semaine dernière que les autorités britanniques avaient obligé son journal à détruire des documents fournis par l'ancien employé de la CIA, dont les révélations ont mis en lumière un gigantesque programme américain d'écoutes et de surveillance qui a choqué le monde entier et donné lieu à des réactions de colère en Europe.

Quelle est la réaction de la Commission?

Réponse commune donnée par M^me^ Reding au nom de la Commission
(20 novembre 2013)

La liberté d'expression et d'information ainsi que le pluralisme des médias sont des droits consacrés dans l'article 11 de la Charte des droits fondamentaux de l'Union européenne. L'article 51, paragraphe 1, de la Charte prévoit que ses dispositions s'adressent aux institutions et organes de l'Union, ainsi qu'aux États membres uniquement lorsqu'ils mettent en œuvre le droit de l'Union.

Concernant les programmes de surveillance des États-Unis, la Commission renvoie l'Honorable Parlementaire à sa réponse à la question écrite E-009773/13.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-011758/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(15. októbra 2013)

Vec: Britské vládne útoky na slobodu médií

V uplynulom období vyšlo najavo, že významný britský denník bol pod tlakom britskej vlády niekoľko mesiacov. Stalo sa tak potom, ako denník písal o programe PRISM. Jeden z novinárov bol dokonca zadržiavaný a vypočúvaný deväť hodín, než bol bez obvinenia prepustený. Možno povedať, že je minimálne hanbou, ak britské úrady zastrašujú významný mienkotvorný denník a zároveň robia nátlak na nezávislých novinárov.

Aké kroky môže podniknúť Komisia, aby bolo možné takémuto nekalému konaniu adekvátnym a účinným spôsobom zabrániť?

Spoločná odpoveď pani Redingovej v mene Komisie
(20. novembra 2013)

Sloboda prejavu a právo na informácie, ako aj pluralita médií sú hodnoty chránené článkom 11 Charty základných práv Európskej únie. Podľa článku 51 ods. 1 uvedenej charty sú jej ustanovenia určené pre inštitúcie a orgány Únie a tiež pre členské štáty výlučne vtedy, ak vykonávajú právo Únie.

Pokiaľ ide o programy sledovania zo strany USA, Komisia si dovolí váženú pani poslankyňu odkázať na svoju odpoveď na písomnú otázku E-009773/13.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009750/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(30 August 2013)

Subject: Media freedom in danger

Alan Rusbridger, editor of *The Guardian* newspaper, which spearheaded revelations by US whistleblower Edward Snowden, last week revealed in a column that the British authorities forced his newspaper to destroy material leaked by the former CIA employee whose revelations uncovered a massive American eavesdropping programme that shocked the world and triggered angry reactions from Europe.

What is the Commission's reaction?

Question for written answer E-011758/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(15 October 2013)

Subject: UK Government attacks on media freedom

It recently emerged that an important UK daily newspaper has come under pressure from the UK Government for some months. This happened after the newspaper wrote about the PRISM programme. One journalist was even detained and interrogated for nine hours before being released without charge. It is at the very least shameful for the UK authorities to be threatening an important opinion-forming daily newspaper and to be putting pressure on independent journalists.

What steps can the Commission take to adequately and effectively prevent such dishonourable behaviour?

Joint answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(20 November 2013)

Freedom of expression and information as well as media pluralism are values protected by Article 11 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. According to Article 51(1) of the said Charter, its provisions are addressed to the institutions and bodies of the Union and to the Member States only when they are implementing Union law.

On US surveillance programmes, the Commission refers the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-009773/13.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009751/13
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(30 de agosto de 2013)

Asunto: Situación en Siria y conflicto bélico global

Vista la evolución del conflicto sirio y los acontecimientos ocurridos estas últimas semanas en la guerra civil en Siria, como el aparente uso de armas químicas, algunos analistas han levantado voces de alarma indicando que podemos estar a las puertas de un conflicto bélico a nivel global ([1]).

Señalan dichos analistas que una intervención en Siria por parte de potencias como EE.UU. y/o miembros de la Unión Europea como Francia y Gran Bretaña implica un enfrentamiento directo con Rusia y, probablemente, con China. Y, con mucha posibilidad, un enfrentamiento global y, quizás, nuclear con esos países.

En vista de que el conflicto sirio se está desarrollando en las fronteras de la Unión y que su evolución puede poner en peligro a la ciudadanía de la misma Unión, ¿comparte la Comisión la opinión de dichos analistas en el sentido de que la guerra civil siria podría convertirse en un conflicto bélico global?

¿Qué pasos concretos está dando la Unión para intentar evitar que el conflicto civil sirio devenga en un conflicto global que pueda poner en peligro a la ciudadanía de la Unión?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009752/13
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(30 de agosto de 2013)

Asunto: Situación en Siria y posición de la Comisión

Los acontecimientos ocurridos estas últimas semanas en la guerra civil en Siria, como el aparente uso de armas químicas, han producido un gran cambio en la situación.

Países como EE.UU. y algunos miembros de la Unión Europea, como Gran Bretaña o Francia, amenazan con intervenir directamente en el conflicto si se demuestra que el Gobierno sirio ha utilizado armas químicas. Estas amenazas están creciendo en intensidad e incluso en la prensa se citan supuestos planes de intervención.

En vista al agravamiento de la situación en Siria y teniendo en cuenta que la evolución del conflicto puede poner en riesgo la seguridad de la Unión Europea al estar desarrollándose en sus fronteras, ¿está la Comisión, y concretamente la Alta Representante de la Unión para Asuntos Exteriores y Política de Seguridad, Catherine Ashton, realizando algún tipo de consulta entre los Estados miembros de cara a consensuar una posición común ante una posible intervención militar en Siria por parte de terceros países y/o miembros de la Unión Europea?

¿Considera la Comisión que una intervención militar podría facilitar la resolución del conflicto y la consecución de un Estado democrático donde todas las minorías culturales, lingüísticas y religiosas fuesen respetadas?

¿Cuáles considera la Comisión que deberían ser las condiciones mínimas que pudiesen justificar de alguna manera una intervención militar en Siria?

Respuesta conjunta de la alta representante y vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(25 de octubre de 2013)

El 17 de septiembre de 2013, la alta representante y vicepresidenta expuso el punto de vista de la UE, acordado en la reunión informal de los Ministros de Asuntos Exteriores de la UE de 7 de septiembre de 2013, en el sentido de que la Unión se mantiene unida en su condena con la mayor firmeza de los ataques químicos, los cuales constituyen violaciones del Derecho internacional y crímenes de guerra y contra la humanidad. También hizo hincapié en que no pueden dejarse impunes y en que sus responsables deben responder por ellos.

([1]) http://www.scribd.com/doc/163141949/Geo-estrategia-AL-BORDE-DEL-ABISMO-Es-Geo-Strategy-AT-THE-EDGE-OF-THE-ABYSS-Es-Geo-Estrategia-AMILDEGI-ERTZEAN-Es

La alta representante y vicepresidenta se ha congratulado del acuerdo entre los Estados Unidos y Rusia y ha reiterado su llamamiento para que el Consejo de Seguridad de las Naciones Unidas asuma sus responsabilidades llegando a un rápido acuerdo sobre una resolución eficaz que autorice el proceso. La Unión Europea apoya plenamente la aplicación inmediata del plan acordado.

La Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta insta a todos los interlocutores de la comunidad internacional a aprovechar esta oportunidad para alcanzar un mayor consenso en torno a una solución política negociada del conflicto que ponga fin al sufrimiento del pueblo sirio.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009760/13
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin)
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(30. August 2013)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Syrien-Konflikt und EU-Beteiligung

Medienberichten zufolge bereiten die EU-Mitgliedstaaten Großbritannien und Frankreich einen militärischen Einsatz gegen Syrien vor.

1. Wie bewertet die Hohe Vertreterin die geplanten militärischen Alleingänge Großbritanniens und Frankreichs?

2. Steht den Vorbereitungen Frankreich und Großbritanniens ein gemeinsamer EU-weiter Einsatz entgegen?

3. Falls ja: Würde dieser Einsatz auch ohne UN-Mandat stattfinden?

Gemeinsame Antwort von Frau Ashton — Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin im Namen der Kommission
(25. Oktober 2013)

Am 17. September 2013 brachte die Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin die Auffassung der EU zum Einsatz von Chemiewaffen, auf die sich die EU-Außenminister auf dem informellen Treffen vom 7. September 2013 verständigt hatten, zum Ausdruck und betonte, dass die EU einvernehmlich und auf das Schärfste den Angriff mit Chemiewaffen verurteilt, der eine Verletzung des Völkerrechts, ein Kriegsverbrechen und ein Verbrechen gegen die Menschlichkeit darstellt. Sie bekräftigte erneut, dass es keine Straflosigkeit geben dürfe und die Urheber der Angriffe zur Rechenschaft gezogen werden müssten.

Die Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin begrüßte die Übereinkunft zwischen den Vereinigten Staaten und Russland und appellierte erneut an den UN-Sicherheitsrat, seine Verantwortung zu übernehmen und sich schnell auf eine wirksame Resolution zu verständigen, mit der das weitere Vorgehen gebilligt wird. Die EU unterstützt uneingeschränkt die sofortige Umsetzung des vereinbarten Plans.

Die Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin forderte alle Partner in der internationalen Gemeinschaft dazu auf, die Gelegenheit zu nutzen, um einen breiteren Konsens für eine politische Verhandlungslösung des Konflikts zu erreichen und dem Leiden des syrischen Volkes ein Ende zu setzen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009751/13
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(30 August 2013)

Subject: Situation in Syria and world war

Given the developments of the Syrian conflict and recent events in the civil war in Syria, such as the apparent use of chemical weapons, some analysts have sounded the alarm, saying that we could be on the verge of a global war ([1]).

The analysts point out that intervention in Syria by powers such as the US and/or EU Member States such as France and Britain will involve a direct confrontation with Russia and, probably, China. It is highly likely that this could lead to a global — and perhaps nuclear — confrontation with those countries.

Given that the Syrian conflict is unfolding on the borders of the Union and that its evolution could put EU citizens at risk, does the Commission share the analysts' opinion that the Syrian civil war could become a global war?

What specific steps is the EU taking to try to prevent the Syrian civil war from turning into a world war that would be a threat to EU citizens?

Question for written answer E-009752/13
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(30 August 2013)

Subject: Situation in Syria — Commission's position

The events of recent weeks in the civil war in Syria and the apparent use of chemical weapons have changed the situation considerably.

Countries such as the United States and some members of the European Union, including the United Kingdom and France, are threatening to intervene directly in the conflict if it is proven that the Syrian Government has used chemical weapons. These threats are growing and even the press are reporting alleged engagement plans.

In view of the worsening situation in Syria and given that the evolution of the conflict could jeopardise the security of the European Union, since it is taking place at its borders, is the Commission — and more specifically the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Catherine Ashton — carrying out any kind of consultation among the Member States with a view to agreeing on a common position regarding possible military intervention in Syria by third countries and/or members of the European Union?

Does the Commission believe that military intervention would facilitate the settlement of the conflict and the achievement of a democratic state where all cultural, linguistic and religious minorities are respected?

What, in the Commission's view, should be the minimum conditions that might somehow justify military intervention in Syria?

Question for written answer E-009760/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(30 August 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Conflict in Syria and EU involvement

According to media reports, the United Kingdom and France, which are EU Member States, are preparing to take military action against Syria.

1. What view does the High Representative take of the independent military action being envisaged by the United Kingdom and France?

([1]) http://www.scribd.com/doc/163141949/Geo-estrategia-AL-BORDE-DEL-ABISMO-Es-Geo-Strategy-AT-THE-EDGE-OF-THE-ABYSS-Es-Geo-Estrategia-AMILDEGI-ERTZEAN-Es

2. Are their preparations being countered by a joint EU action?

3. If so, would the action be allowed to go ahead even without a UN mandate?

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

On 17 September 2013 the HR/VP stated the view of the EU, agreed at the informal meeting of the EU foreign ministers of 7 September 2013, that the EU stands united in condemning, in the strongest terms, the chemical attack which constitutes a violation of international law, a war crime, and a crime against humanity. She reiterated that there could be no impunity and perpetrators of the attacks must be held accountable.

The HR/VP has welcomed the agreement between the United States and Russia, and repeated a call on the UN Security Council to assume its responsibilities in agreeing swiftly on an effective resolution that would authorise the process. The EU fully supports the immediate implementation of the agreed plan.

The HR/VP has called on all partners in the international community to seize the momentum to reach a broader consensus for a negotiated political solution to the conflict in order to end the suffering of the Syrian people.

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor P-009753/13
upućeno Komisiji
Dubravka Šuica (PPE)
(30. kolovoza 2013.)

Predmet: Nezaposlenost mladih

S provedbom inicijative usmjerene na povećanje zapošljavanja mladih putem Garancije mladima, Europska će unija imati 6 milijardi EUR dostupnih unutar prve dvije godine predstojećeg financijskog okvira (2014. do 2020.).

Nezaposlenost među mladim ljudima do 29 godina starosti u Hrvatskoj i dalje neprestano raste. U 2009. stopa nezaposlenosti bila je 32 %, dok je u 2012. porasla na 34,6 % te se očekuje da će se ovaj trend nastaviti do kraja 2013. Hrvatska je 1. srpnja 2013. počela provoditi sigurnosne mjere za mlade ljude te su trenutno na snazi 23 mjere usmjerene u pružanje prilika mladim ljudima da poboljšaju svoje vještine i da se pripreme za zapošljavanje.

1. Koji je iznos sredstava predviđenih za Hrvatsku u sklopu ovog programa?

2. S obzirom na trenutnu situaciju i na provedbu Garancije mladima u Hrvatskoj, može li Komisija preporučiti bilo kakve druge mjere koje bi mogle doprinijeti smanjenju nezaposlenosti mladih u Hrvatskoj?

Odgovor g. Andorona u ime Komisije
(26. rujna 2013.)

1.) Suzakonodavci EU-a i dalje raspravljaju o osnovi za utvrđivanje raspodjele proračunskih sredstava po regiji/državi članici u okviru Inicijative za zapošljavanje mladih (YEI). Pregovori o tom pitanju trebali bi završiti krajem rujna. U svakom slučaju, osim moguće dodjele sredstava u okviru Inicijative za zapošljavanje mladih, Hrvatska će moći koristiti znatne iznose iz Europskog socijalnog fonda (ESF) kako bi pridonijela provedbi programa Jamstva za mlade.

2.) Komisija pozdravlja činjenicu da je Hrvatska uvela aktivne političke mjere za tržište rada i donijela program Jamstvo za mlade kako bi riješila pitanje nezaposlenosti mladih.

Mjerama koje mogu pridonijeti smanjenju nezaposlenosti mladih u Hrvatskoj trebala bi se podržati učinkovitija integracija mladih na tržište rada te ublažiti učinak nezaposlenosti mladih.

U okviru programa Jamstvo za mlade trebalo bi se usredotočiti na zapošljavanje mladih i razvoj ljudskog kapitala uz moguće povezivanje s aktivnostima uključivanja u društvo.

Mjere su dogovorene u okviru trenutačnog programskog razdoblja (2007. — 2013.) programa ESF-a te se pregovara da se uključe u buduće okvire gdje će barem tri tematska cilja biti važna za borbu protiv nezaposlenosti mladih: a) promicanje održivog i kvalitetnog zapošljavanja i poticanje mobilnosti radne snage; b) ulaganje u obrazovanje, vještine i cjeloživotno učenje; c) promicanje društvene uključenosti i borba protiv siromaštva.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009753/13
to the Commission
Dubravka Šuica (PPE)
(30 August 2013)

Subject: Youth unemployment

With the implementation of the initiative aimed at increasing youth employment through the Youth Guarantee, the European Union will have EUR 6 billion available within the first two years of the upcoming financial framework (2014 to 2020).

In Croatia, unemployment among young people up to 29 years of age is still steadily growing. In 2009 the unemployment rate was 32% while in 2012 it rose to 34.6%, and it is expected that this trend will continue until the end of 2013. Croatia started to implement safeguards for young people on 1 July 2013, and there are currently 23 measures in place aimed at enabling young people to improve their skills and to prepare for employment.

1. What is the amount of funds earmarked for Croatia under this programme?

2. In view of the present situation and the implementation of the Youth Guarantee in Croatia, can the Commission recommend any other measures that can contribute to reducing youth unemployment in Croatia?

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

1. The EU co-legislators are still discussing the basis for determining the budgetary allocations per region/Member State under the YEI. The negotiations on this issue are expected to be finalised later in September. In any case, besides a possible allocation under the YEI, Croatia will be able to use substantial amounts under the ESF to support the implementation of the Youth guarantee.

2. The Commission welcomes that Croatia introduced several measures addressing young people, in the framework of active labour market policy measures and recently adopted Youth Guarantee schemes.

Measures that can contribute to reducing youth unemployment in Croatia should provide support for more effective youth integration into the labour market as well as mitigate persisting effects of youth unemployment.

Youth guarantee should focus on youth employability and the development of human capital, with possible synergies with social inclusion activities.

Measures have been negotiated within the framework of the current programming period (2007-13) ESF programme and are being negotiated within the future framework, where at least three thematic objectives will be relevant for fighting youth unemployment: (a) promoting sustainable and quality employment and supporting labour mobility; (b) investing in education, skills and lifelong learning; (c) promoting social inclusion and combating poverty.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009754/13
an den Rat
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(30. August 2013)

Betrifft: Dokumentübersetzungen beim Rat

Der Sprachendienst des Rates beschäftigte Ende 2009 mehr als 650 Übersetzer ([1]).

1. Verfügt der Rat über Daten dazu, wie viele Seiten Dokumente in den Jahren 2009, 2010, 2011 und 2012 durch den internen Übersetzungsdienst übersetzt wurden?

2. Verfügt der Rat über Daten dazu, wie viele Seiten Dokumente in den Jahren 2009, 2010, 2011 und 2012 durch externe Übersetzungsdienstleister für den Rat übersetzt wurden?

Antwort
(25. November 2013)

Die Zahl der von der Direktion Übersetzung des Rates übersetzten Seiten ist während dieses Zeitraums kontinuierlich gestiegen und lag im Jahr 2012 bei ungefähr 1 300 000 Seiten.

Die Gesamtzahl der extern übersetzten Seiten belief sich im Jahr 2009 auf beinahe 5 500 Seiten. In der Folge ist diese Zahl kontinuierlich gesunken und betrug im Jahr 2012 rund 250 Seiten.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/contacts/languages-%281%29/the-language-service-of-the-council-general-secretariat.aspx?lang=de

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009754/13
to the Council
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(30 August 2013)

Subject: Document translations at the Council

At the end of 2009, the Council's language service employed more than 650 translators ([1]).

1. Does the Council have figures for the number of pages translated by its in-house translation service in 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012?

2. Does the Council have figures for the number of pages translated for it by external service providers in 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012?

Reply
(25 November 2013)

The number of pages treated by the Translation Directorate of the Council increased continually over this period to reach approximately 1,300,000 pages in 2012.

The total number of pages translated externally was almost 5,500 pages in 2009. Since then, that number has dropped steadily and was approximately 250 in 2012.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/contacts/languages-%281%29/the-language-service-of-the-council-general-secretariat.aspx?lang=en

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009755/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(30. August 2013)

Betrifft: Dokumentübersetzungen bei der Kommission

Im Jahr 2012 arbeiteten 1 474 Übersetzer im Übersetzungsdienst der Europäischen Kommission ([1]).

1. Verfügt die Kommission über Daten dazu, wie viele Seiten Dokumente in den Jahren 2009, 2010, 2011 und 2012 durch den internen Übersetzungsdienst übersetzt wurden?

2. Verfügt die Kommission über Daten dazu, wie viele Seiten Dokumente in den Jahren 2009, 2010, 2011 und 2012 durch externe Übersetzungsdienstleister für die Kommission übersetzt wurden?

Antwort von Androulla Vassiliou im Namen der Kommission
(4. Oktober 2013)

Die nachstehende Tabelle enthält die vom Herrn Abgeordneten gewünschten Angaben. Spalte 2 zeigt die Anzahl der Seiten, die in den jeweiligen Jahren von externen Dienstleistern übersetzt wurden, mit denen die Kommission Verträge geschlossen hat. Spalte 3 enthält die Anzahl der vom Übersetzungsdienst der Kommission übersetzten Seiten.

Jahr	Externe Dienstleister	Übersetzungsdienst	Insgesamt
2009	430 246	1 231 441	1 661 687
2010	516 776	1 343 571	1 860 347
2011	587 481	1 524 453	2 111 934
2012	413 844	1 346 771	1 760 615

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/contacts/languages-%281%29/the-language-service-of-the-council-general-secretariat.aspx?lang=de

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009755/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(30 August 2013)

Subject: Document translations at the Commission

In 2012, 1 474 translators worked in the Commission's translation service ([1]).

1. Does the Commission have figures for the number of pages translated by its in-house translation service in 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012?

2. Does the Commission have figures for the number of pages translated for it by external service providers in 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(4 October 2013)

The Honourable Member will find below a table containing the information requested. The second column gives the number of pages translated in the respective years by external service providers with which the Commission has contracts. The third column gives the number of pages translated by staff in the Commission's translation service.

Year	External service providers	In-house translation	Total
2009	430.246	1.231.441	1.661.687
2010	516.776	1.343.571	1.860.347
2011	587.481	1.524.453	2.111.934
2012	413.844	1.346.771	1.760.615

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/contacts/languages-%281%29/the-language-service-of-the-council-general-secretariat.aspx?lang=en.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009756/13
an den Rat
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(30. August 2013)

Betrifft: Externe Übersetzungsdienstleistungen

Der Sprachendienst des Rates beschäftigte Ende 2009 mehr als 650 Übersetzer ([1]).

1. Reichten die Kapazitäten des internen Übersetzungsdienstes in den Jahren 2009, 2010, 2011 und 2012 aus, um allen Dokumentübersetzungsanforderungen nachzukommen?

2. Wie viel Geld wurde in den Jahren 2009, 2010, 2011 und 2012 für externe Übersetzungsdienstleistungen ausgegeben?

Antwort
(25. November 2013)

Da die Nachfrage nach Übersetzungen stets über der derzeitigen Produktionskapazität liegt, verfolgt die Direktion Übersetzung des Rates eine Politik der „Kerndokumente" mit dem Ziel, den Schwerpunkt hauptsächlich auf die Dokumente zu legen, die für die Interessen der europäischen Bürger und die Beratungen des Rates wesentlich sind.

Im Jahr 2009 war der Betrag, der von der Direktion Übersetzung des Rates für externe Überset-zungen ausgegeben wurde, außergewöhnlich hoch und belief sich auf beinahe 440 000 EUR. In der Folge nahm dieser Betrag kontinuierlich ab und lag im Jahr 2012 bei ungefähr 20 000 EUR. In diesem Betrag sind die Kosten im Zusammenhang mit der Verwaltung und der Qualitätskontrolle von externen Übersetzungen nicht enthalten.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/contacts/languages-%281%29/the-language-service-of-the-council-general-secretariat.aspx?lang=de

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009756/13
to the Council
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(30 August 2013)

Subject: External translations

At the end of 2009, the Council's language service employed more than 650 translators ([1]).

1. In 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012, was the capacity of the in-house translation service sufficient to meet all document translation requests?

2. How much was spent in 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 on external translations?

Reply
(25 November 2013)

As the demand for translation constantly exceeds its current production capacity, the Council's Translation Directorate follows a 'core documents' policy which aims at focusing mainly on the documents essential to the interests of European citizens and to the Council proceedings.

In 2009 the amount spent on external translations by the Translation Directorate of the Council was exceptionally high at almost EUR 440,000. Subsequently, this amount continually decreased and was approximately EUR 20,000 in 2012. This figure does not include costs related to the management and the quality control of external translations.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/contacts/languages-%281%29/the-language-service-of-the-council-general-secretariat.aspx?lang=en

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009757/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(30. August 2013)

Betrifft: Externe Übersetzungsdienstleistungen

Im Jahr 2012 arbeiteten 1 474 Übersetzer im Übersetzungsdienst der Europäischen Kommission ([1]).

1. Reichten die Kapazitäten des internen Übersetzungsdienstes in den Jahren 2009, 2010, 2011 und 2012 aus, um allen Dokumentübersetzungsanforderungen nachzukommen?

2. Wie viel Geld wurde in den Jahren 2009, 2010, 2011 und 2012 für externe Übersetzungsdienstleistungen ausgegeben?

Antwort von Frau Vassiliou im Namen der Kommission
(10. Oktober 2013)

Die Kapazitäten der Generaldirektion Übersetzung der Kommission reichten nicht aus, um das Übersetzungsaufkommen im genannten Zeitraum intern bewältigen zu können. Daher musste ein Teil der Übersetzungsaufträge an externe Dienstleister vergeben werden, insbesondere, um Spitzen aufzufangen.

In der nachfolgenden Tabelle sind die Kosten der im Zeitraum 2009-2012 extern übersetzten Aufträge aufgelistet:

Jahr	EUR
2009	12 865 571
2010	14 938 146
2011	17 236 451
2012	12 704 177

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/contacts/languages-%281 %29/the-language-service-of-the-council-general-secretariat.aspx?lang=de

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009757/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(30 August 2013)

Subject: External translations

In 2012, 1 474 translators worked in the Commission's translation service ([1]).

1. In 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012, was the capacity of the in-house translation service sufficient to meet all document translation requests?

2. How much was spent in 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 on external translations?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(10 October 2013)

The internal resources of the Commission's translation service were not sufficient to cover all translation requests during this period. Therefore, a part of these requests had to be outsourced to external contractors, especially at the busiest periods.

The costs of external translations during the period 2009-12 are summarised below:

Year	EUR
2009	12 865 571
2010	14 938 146
2011	17 236 451
2012	12 704 177

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/contacts/languages-%281%29/the-language-service-of-the-council-general-secretariat.aspx?lang=en

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009758/13
an den Rat
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(30. August 2013)

Betrifft: Streiktage der Beamten des Rates

Für Juni 2013 hatten die Beamten des Rates und der Kommission einen Streik angekündigt.

1. An wie vielen Tagen streikten Teile der Beamtenschaft des Rates jeweils in den Jahren 2010, 2011 und 2012?

2. Wie viele Beamte streikten jeweils an diesen Tagen?

3. An wie vielen Diensttagen streikten einzelne Beamte des Rates durchschnittlich in den Jahren 2010, 2011 und 2012?

Antwort
(5. November 2013)

In den Jahren 2010 und 2011 gab es keine Streiks. Im Jahr 2012 wurde an einem Tag, und zwar am 8. November gestreikt; an diesem Streik beteiligten sich 1 652 Beamte.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009758/13
to the Council
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(30 August 2013)

Subject: Days lost to strikes by Council officials

Council and Commission officials gave notice of strike action in June 2013.

1. How many days were lost to strikes by Council officials, as a body, in 2010, 2011 and 2012 respectively?

2. How many officials took part in strike action on each of those days?

3. How many days were lost to strikes by individual Council officials, on average, in 2010, 20111 and 2012 respectively?

Reply
(5 November 2013)

No strikes took place in 2010 and 2011. In 2012, there was one day of strike action on 8 November, in which 1 652 officials took part.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009759/13
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin)
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(30. August 2013)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Streiktage der Beamten des Europäischen Auswärtigen Dienstes (EAD)

Im Juni 2013 haben die Beamten verschiedener EU-Organe gestreikt.

1. An wie vielen Tagen streikten Teile der Beamtenschaft des EAD jeweils in den Jahren 2011 und 2012?

2. Wie viele Beamte streikten jeweils an diesen Tagen?

3. An wie vielen Diensttagen streikten einzelne Beamte des EAD durchschnittlich in den Jahren 2011 und 2012?

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

1. Im Jahr 2011 gab es keinen Streik. Im Jahr 2012 fand im EAD ein halbtägiger Streik statt, an dem sich 264 Bedienstete (Beamte, Bedienstete auf Zeit, Vertragsbedienstete) beteiligten. Dadurch gingen 132 Arbeitstage verloren.

2. 264.

3. Im Zeitraum 2011-2012 verzeichnete der EAD lediglich einen halbtägigen Streik; daher beträgt die durchschnittliche Streikdauer je teilnehmenden Bediensteten einen halben Tag. Gemessen an der Gesamtzahl der Bediensteten im Juni 2013 betrug die durchschnittliche Streikdauer je Bediensteten im Jahr 2012 0,5 Stunden.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009759/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(30 August 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Days lost to strikes by European External Action Service (EEAS) officials

In June 2013, officials at various EU institutions took strike action.

1. How many days were lost to strikes by EEAS officials, as a body, in 2011 and 2012 respectively?

2. How many officials took part in strike action on each of those days?

3. How many days were lost to strikes by individual EEAS officials, on average, in 2011 and 2012 respectively?

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

1. In 2011 there was no strike. In 2012 the EEAS registered one strike action of half a day with 264 officials (officials, temporary agents, contract agents) participating. The total work time concerned is equivalent to 132 days.

2. 264.

3. The EEAS only registered one half day strike action in the period 2011-2012; therefore the average duration per participating official is half a day. Compared to the overall staff figures of June 2013 the average strike duration is 0.5 hours per staff member in 2012.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009761/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(30. August 2013)

Betrifft: Effekte des indischen Ernährungsprogramms

Die indische Regierung hat ein Ernährungsprogramm aufgesetzt, nach dem zukünftig rund 820 Millionen Inder ein Recht auf bezahlbare Grundnahrungsmittel haben. Dieses Programm soll die Ernährungslage für viele Inder verbessern, die bisher von Nahrungsmittelengpässen bedroht waren. Nach Ansicht der indischen Regierung stellt das Programm einen großen Beitrag zur Bekämpfung des globalen Hungerproblems dar.

1. Ist die Kommission an dem Projekt finanziell, beratend oder anderweitig beteiligt?

2. Welche Effekte erwartet die Kommission für die weltweiten Nahrungsmittelpreise?

3. Welche Effekte erwartet die Kommission für andere Entwicklungsländer mit weniger Finanzkapital? Wird sie besondere Programme auflegen, um in solchen Ländern die Grundversorgung zu unterstützen?

4. Welche Effekte erwartet die Kommission für die Nahrungsmittelpreise in der EU? Wird sie Subventionsprogramme wie insbesondere die Agrarsubventionen überprüfen beziehungsweise neu fokussieren, um einer weltweiten Nahrungsmittelknappheit entgegenzuwirken?

Antwort von Herrn Piebalgs im Namen der Kommission
(16. Oktober 2013)

1) Da Indien sich zu einem Land mit mittlerem Einkommen entwickelt hat, lässt die EU ihre bilaterale Entwicklungshilfe an die indische Regierung auslaufen. Für den Zeitraum 2014-2020 sind keine neuen finanziellen Zusagen vorgesehen. Indien bleibt jedoch weiterhin förderfähig für thematische und regionale Finanzhilfen.

2), 3a) und 4a): Nachdem die indischen Exekutive Anfang Juli 2013 das Gesetz zur nationalen Ernährungssicherheit verabschiedet hat, dürfte sich die Zahl der Menschen erhöhen, die Lebensmittelsubventionen von der Regierung erhalten. Angesichts der großen Zahl unbekannter Faktoren in Bezug auf die genaue Funktionsweise dieses Programms ist es aktuell schwierig für die Kommission, die möglichen Auswirkungen des indischen Gesetzes auf die Nahrungsmittelpreise weltweit und die Preise in bestimmten Regionen der Welt einzuschätzen. Die Kommission beobachtet die Entwicklung jedoch aufmerksam, auch vor dem Hintergrund der Ergebnisse der Ministerkonferenz der Welthandelsorganisation (WTO) auf Bali.

3b) Es ist nicht Politik der Kommission, den Kauf von Grundnahrungsmitteln zu finanzieren. Anstatt Grundnahrungsmittel zu liefern, zielt die Entwicklungshilfe der EU im landwirtschaftlichen Bereich darauf ab, das landwirtschaftliche Potenzial zu entwickeln und die Produktions- und Vermarktungsbedingungen zu verbessern.

4b) Der Rat der EU und das Europäische Parlament erzielten im Juni 2013 eine politische Einigung über das Reformpaket der gemeinsamen Agrarpolitik der EU 2014-2020. Die neu reformierte gemeinsame Agrarpolitik (GAP) dient der Bewältigung globaler Herausforderungen im Bereich der Ernährungssicherheit. Sie fördert die nachhaltige Erzeugung landwirtschaftlicher Produkte, während die Verwendung handelsverzerrender Instrumente mit Sanktionen belegt wird. So können z. B. Ausfuhrsubventionen ausschließlich unter außergewöhnlichen Marktbedingungen verwendet werden.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009761/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(30 August 2013)

Subject: Impact of India's food programme

The Indian Government has drawn up a food programme under the terms of which some 820 million Indians will be entitled to buy basic foodstuffs at affordable prices. The programme aims to increase food security for many Indians who have faced the threat of food shortages in the past. According to the Indian Government, the programme will make a significant contribution to the fight against global hunger.

1. Is the Commission participating in the project in any way, for example by providingfunding or advice?

2. What impact does the Commission expect the programme to have on global food prices?

3. What impact does the Commission expect the programme to have on other, less prosperous developing countries? Does the Commission intend to develop specific programmes to improve the supply of basic foodstuffs in such countries?

4. What impact does the Commission expect the programme to have on food prices in the EU? Will it review and/or refocus subsidy schemes — in particular agricultural subsidies — in an effort to address the problem of a global food shortage?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(16 October 2013)

1) As India has developed to become a middle-income country, the EU is phasing out its bilateral development aid to the Government of India with no new financial commitments foreseen for the 2014-2020 period. India will nevertheless remain eligible to thematic and regional funding.

2), 3a) and 4a) The Indian National Food Security Bill, which was passed by the Indian executive branch early July 2013, is expected to increase the number of people who will receive food subsidies from the Government. Given the large number or unknown factors in relation to the precise functioning of this programme, it is difficult at this stage for the Commission to assess the possible impact of the Indian bill on global food prices, and prices in specific world regions. The Commissions is however monitoring the issue, including in the context of the outcome of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Bali Ministerial Conference.

3b) The Commission policy is not to finance the purchase of basic foodstuffs. Instead of basic foodstuffs supply, EU development aid in the agricultural sector is aimed to develop agriculture potential and to improve production and commercialisation conditions.

4b) The EU Council and Parliament reached a political deal on the reform package of the EU Common Agricultural Policy 2014-2020 in June 2013. The new reformed Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) aims to address global food security challenges. It encourages sustainable production of agricultural products while disciplining the use of trade distorting instruments, like for example export subsidies which can be used under exceptional market condition only.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009762/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(30. August 2013)

Betrifft: Gerechte Verteilung von Nahrungsmitteln

Die Ernährungs- und Landwirtschaftsorganisation der Vereinten Nationen (FAO) hat wiederholt betont, dass es keine globale Nahrungsmittelknappheit gibt, sondern dass die vorhandenen Nahrungsmittel nur besser verteilt werden müssen.

1. Stimmt die Kommission dieser Analyse zu?

2. Bei welchen Grundnahrungsmitteln ist die EU ein Nettoimporteur und bei welchen ein Nettoexporteur?

3. Welche Maßnahmen sieht die Kommission als nötig an, um eine gerechtere Verteilung von Nahrungsmitteln zu erreichen?

4. Welche EU-Politikbereiche fördern die gerechte Verteilung von Nahrungsmitteln und welche könnten möglicherweise zu einer ungleichen Verteilung beitragen? Welchen Effekt haben nach Ansicht der Kommission insbesondere die EU-Agrarsubventionen auf die weltweite Nahrungsmittelproduktion und -nachfrage?

5. Gibt es derzeit außerhalb von Nothilfeprogrammen und Nahrungsmittelspenden EU-Programme, die entweder Maßnahmen entwickeln oder durchführen, um eine gerechte Verteilung der global vorhandenen Nahrungsmittel zu fördern?

Antwort von Herrn Cioloş im Namen der Kommission
(22. Oktober 2013)

1. Die EU arbeitet eng mit der FAO bei allen vier Dimensionen der Ernährungssicherheit zusammen, nämlich Verfügbarkeit von Nahrungsmitteln, Zugang und Qualität sowie Stabilität der Nahrungsversorgung. Die Kommission stimmt mit der FAO in ihrer Analyse überein, dass mangelnde Ernährungssicherheit auch mit einem fehlenden Zugang zu Nahrungsmitteln, einschließlich Problemen ihrer Verteilung, zusammenhängt.

2. An landwirtschaftlichen Grunderzeugnissen ist die EU Nettoexporteur von Fleisch, Milchprodukten und Getreide, wohingegen sie in geringem Maße Nettoimporteur von Frischgemüse und in relativ großem Umfang Importeur von Obst (zumeist tropischen Früchten) ([1]) ist.

3. Der EU-Politikrahmen für Ernährungssicherheit ([2]) konzentriert sich, da die große Mehrheit der Armen und Hungernden der Dritten Welt weiterhin in ländlichen Gebieten lebt, auf die Unterstützung von Kleinbauern, um so einen Beitrag zur Verbesserung von deren Einkommensmöglichkeiten zu leisten und auf diese Weise für die Bevölkerung den Zugang zu Nahrungsmitteln zu erleichtern. Die EU unterstützt in diesem Zusammenhang die von den jeweiligen Ländern betriebenen eigenen Politiken zur Förderung der lokalen kleinbäuerlichen Landwirtschaft, wobei sie die Auffassung vertritt, dass ein geeignetes Gleichgewicht zwischen der Förderung von einheimischer Nahrungsmittelerzeugung sowie der Deckung des Nahrungsbedarfs durch Handel und regionale Integration der Agrarmärkte zu größerer Ernährungssicherheit führen kann.

4. Mit Blick auf die Handels- und Entwicklungsmöglichkeiten der weniger entwickelten Länder beschreibt der EU-Bericht 2011 über die Politikkohärenz im Interesse der Entwicklung ([3]) die kontinuierliche Reform der gemeinsamen Agrarpolitik mit ihrer Abkehr von handelsverzerrenden Maßnahmen und anerkennt die positiven Auswirkungen sowohl der Entkopplung zwischen Beihilfen und Produktion als auch der bedeutenden Verringerung der Exportsubventionen. Derzeit wird ein neuer solcher Bericht erarbeitet.

([1]) Eine Analyse des EU-Agrarhandels im Jahr 2012 ist abrufbar unter: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/trade-analysis/map/2013-1_en.pdf
([2]) Ein EU-Politikrahmen zur Unterstützung der Entwicklungsländer bei der Verbesserung der Ernährungssicherheit, KOM(2010)127 endg.
([3]) EU-Bericht 2011 über die Politikkohärenz im Interesse der Entwicklung, SEK(2011)1627 endg.

5. Die wichtigsten EU-Programme mit dem Ziel eines verbesserten Zugangs zu Nahrungsmitteln in der Europäischen Union sind das Programm zur Nahrungsmittelverteilung an Bedürftige in der EU und das Schulmilch- und Schulobstprogramm. Was die EU-Entwicklungszusammenarbeit anbelangt, so bilden eine nachhaltige Landwirtschaft und die Ernährungssicherheit Schlüsselprioritäten der langfristigen politischen Agenda der EU und werden in den Programmen der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit des nächsten MFR 2014-2020 einen bevorzugten Platz einnehmen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009762/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(30 August 2013)

Subject: Fair distribution of food

The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) has repeatedly pointed out that there is no global food shortage, but that the available food needs to be distributed more fairly.

1. Does the Commission agree with this analysis?

2. The EU is a net importer of some basic foodstuffs and a net exporter of others. Can the Commission say which they are?

3. What steps does the Commission believe should be taken in order to ensure that food is distributed more fairly?

4. Which EU policies foster the fair distribution of food and which could contribute to its unfair distribution? In particular, what impact do EU agricultural subsidies have on global food supply and demand?

5. Apart from emergency aid programmes and food donation schemes, are there currently any EU programmes under which measures to promote the fair distribution of the world's food are being developed or implemented?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(22 October 2013)

1. The EU works closely with FAO on all four dimensions of food security: availability, access, quality and stability. The Commission agrees with the FAO analysis that food insecurity is also linked to lack of access to food, including its distribution.

2. Out of the basic agricultural products, EU is a net exporter of meats, dairy and cereals, a small net importer of fresh vegetables and relatively large importer of fruits (mostly tropical) ([1]).

3. The EU policy framework on food security ([2]) focuses on support for small-scale farmers, as the vast majority of the poor and hungry still live in rural areas, thus helping to improve their income-earning opportunities and enhancing access to food. The EU supports countries' own policies on local small-scale farming and considers that an appropriate balance between support to national production, trade and regional integration can lead to greater food security.

4. With respect to the trade and development opportunities of developing countries, the EU 2011 Report on Policy Coherence for Development ([3]) describes the continuous reform of the common agricultural policy away from trade-distorting measures and acknowledges the positive impact of both decoupling subsidies from production and the major reduction of export subsidies. A new report is currently under preparation.

5. The main EU programmes focusing on access to food in the EU are the Food distribution programme for the most deprived persons in the Union and School Milk and Fruit Schemes. With regard to EU development cooperation, sustainable agriculture and food and nutrition security are key priorities of the EU's long-term agenda and will feature prominently in the development cooperation programmes in the next MFF 2014-2020.

([1]) An analysis of the 2012 EU agricultural trade is available under: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/trade-analysis/map/2013-1_en.pdf
([2]) An EU policy framework to assist developing countries in addressing food security challenges, COM(2010)127 final.
([3]) EU 2011 Report on Policy Coherence for Development, SEC(2011) 1627 final.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009763/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(30. August 2013)

Betrifft: Waldbrandgefahr in der EU

In den USA wüten derzeit, wie bereits in den vergangenen Jahren, gigantische Waldbrände. Innerhalb von zehn Tagen sind allein im Bundesstaat Kalifornien 180 000 Hektar Waldfläche abgebrannt.

1. Besteht auch in der EU die Gefahr ähnlich großflächiger Waldbrände?

2. In welchen europäischen Regionen ist das Risiko von Waldbränden besonders groß?

3. Gibt es EU-weite Maßnahmen wie Kooperationsprogramme, Erfahrungsaustauschprogramme oder eine staatenübergreifende forstwirtschaftliche Koordination, um der Waldbrandgefahr zu begegnen?

4. Welche grenzüberschreitenden Maßnahmen, die derzeit noch nicht oder nicht mehr existieren, sieht die Kommission als notwendig oder wünschenswert an, um Waldbrandgefahren zu begegnen?

Antwort von Herrn Potočnik im Namen der Kommission
(11. Oktober 2013)

Jedes Jahr treten in der EU etwa 50 000 Brände auf, die sich über eine Fläche von rund 500 000 ha ausbreiten. Im Jahr 2013 haben Brände allein in Portugal innerhalb von weniger als zwei Wochen mehr als 80 000 ha erfasst.

In Europa ist die Gefahr von Waldbränden am höchsten im Mittelmeerraum, wo sich beinahe 85 % der gesamten Brandfläche befindet. Die größten Schäden treten in Portugal, Spanien, Italien und Griechenland und in geringerem Umfang in Frankreich auf.

Zwar gibt es bislang keine EU-weiten Forstbewirtschaftungsprogramme, aber das Europäische Waldbrandinformationssystem (EFFIS ([1])) der Europäischen Kommission spielt eine wichtige Rolle bei der Verbesserung der Zusammenarbeit bei der Brandvorbeugung und -bekämpfung in Europa. Es liefert vergleichbare Daten, insbesondere zu Bränden in Grenzgebieten, die den Ländern und dem Notfallabwehrzentrum (ERC) der Kommission zur Verfügung gestellt werden, wodurch die Zusammenarbeit bei Hilfsmaßnahmen im Katastrophenschutz erleichtert wird. Außerdem hat das ERC während der Waldbrandsaison 2013 wöchentlich Videokonferenzen mit den am stärksten waldbrandgefährdeten Mitgliedstaaten abgehalten und ein wöchentliches Rundschreiben zum Thema Waldbrände (Forest Fires Bulletin) herausgegeben. Waldbrandexperten aus den Mitgliedstaaten, die jeden Sommer zum ERC abgeordnet werden, unterstützen die Arbeit des Zentrums und pflegen regelmäßige Kontakte zu den nationalen Katastrophenschutzbehörden. Außerdem arbeiten einige Länder im Rahmen von bilateralen Abkommen über Regelungen zur gegenseitigen Hilfe zusammen.

Die Kommission hat in ihrem Vorschlag für eine Überprüfung des EU-Katastrophenschutzmechanismus ([2]), der sich gegenwärtig in der Abschlussphase der Diskussionen zwischen dem Europäischen Parlament und dem Rat befindet, eine Aufstockung der Mittel vorgeschlagen, um der zunehmenden Häufigkeit und Schwere von Katastrophen und der Notwendigkeit stärkerer Vorbeugungs-, Vorsorge- und Bekämpfungsmaßnahmen Rechnung zu tragen.

([1]) EFFIS ist ein Archiv und eine Plattform für den Erfahrungsaustausch zwischen den Ländern. Die Kommission veranstaltet vor und nach den Brandbekämpfungsmaßnahmen Treffen mit den nationalen Vertreten der für Waldbrand- und Katastrophenschutz zuständigen Behörden, um die bereits bestehende Zusammenarbeit weiter zu stärken und die während der Brandschutz- und Brandbekämpfungseinsätze gesammelten Erfahrungen auszutauschen.

([2]) KOM(2011)0934 endgültig.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009763/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(30 August 2013)

Subject: Risk of forest fires in the EU

As in previous years, massive forest fires are once more ravaging the USA and have destroyed 180 000 hectares of forest within 10 days in the State of California alone.

1. Is the EU also at risk of forest fires on a similar scale?

2. Which regions of Europe are most at risk?

3. Have EU-wide forest management programmes been initiated with a view to promoting cooperation, exchanges of experience or cross-border coordination for the prevention and containment of forest fires?

4. What cross-border forest fire prevention and containment initiatives which have not yet been launched or have now been discontinued does Commission regard as necessary or advisable?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(11 October 2013)

On average there are some 50,000 fires annually in the EU covering around 500,000 ha. So far in 2013, in Portugal only fires have burnt an area of over 80,000 ha in less than two weeks.

In Europe, the Mediterranean region suffers the highest risk of fire and accounts for nearly 85% to the total area burnt. The countries where the damage is highest are Portugal, Spain, Italy and Greece, and to a lesser extent France.

While there have not been any EU-wide forest management programmes, the European Commission's European Forest Fire Information System (EFFIS ([1])) plays an important role in enhancing cooperation in fire prevention and fire fighting in Europe. It provides comparable information, especially on fires taking place in border regions, which is made available to the countries and to the Commission's Emergency Response Centre (ERC), which facilitates cooperation in civil protection assistance interventions. In addition, during the 2013 forest fire season the ERC has organised a weekly videoconference with the most fire-prone Member States and issued a weekly Forest Fires Bulletin. Forest fire experts from Member States who are seconded to the ERC every summer contribute to its work and maintain regular contacts with national civil protection authorities. Moreover, countries also cooperate via bi-lateral agreements setting up mutual assistance schemes.

In its proposal for a revision of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism ([2]), currently in its last steps of discussions between the European Parliament and the Council, the Commission proposed an increase in resources to reflect the increased frequency and intensity of disasters and the need for more robust prevention, preparedness and response policies.

([1]) EFFIS is a repository and a platform for exchanges of experiences among countries. The Commission organises meetings with the national representatives from forest fires and civil protection services before and after the fire campaigns in order to enhance the cooperation already established and to exchange information on the experiences during the fire protection and fire fighting operations.

([2]) COM(2011)0934 final.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-009764/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(30 Αυγούστου 2013)

Θέμα: Φορολογικοί παράδεισοι

Σε συνέχεια της ανακοίνωσης σχετικά με τη χρηστή διακυβέρνηση όσον αφορά τους φορολογικούς παραδείσους και τον επιθετικό φορολογικό σχεδιασμό που πραγματοποιήθηκε από την Επιτροπή τον Δεκέμβριο του 2012, είναι σε θέση η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή, να με ενημερώσει για την πρόοδο όσον αφορά την συλλογή μετρήσιμων συγκριτικών αποτελεσμάτων από τα κράτη μέλη για το ύψος της εκτιμώμενης φοροδιαφυγής εσόδων ευρωπαίων πολιτών σε φορολογικούς παραδείσους; Ποια είναι η περίπτωση της Ελλάδας; Ποια είναι τα επόμενα βήματα της Επιτροπής αναφορικά με την συνεργασία της ΕΕ με τρίτες χώρες που αποτελούν φορολογικούς παραδείσους;

Απάντηση του κ. Šemeta εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(21 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή έχει συζητήσει επανειλημμένα με τα κράτη μέλη σε επίπεδο Συμβουλίου τις συστάσεις της για τον επιθετικό φορολογικό σχεδιασμό ([1]) και για μέτρα που έχουν στόχο την ενθάρρυνση τρίτων χωρών ώστε να εφαρμόζουν τα ελάχιστα πρότυπα χρηστής διακυβέρνησης στον φορολογικό τομέα ([2]).

Η Επιτροπή δεν έχει στη διάθεσή της νέα στοιχεία για τη φοροδιαφυγή ή τον επιθετικό φορολογικό σχεδιασμό, ούτε γενικά ούτε συγκεκριμένα για την περίπτωση της Ελλάδας. Η υλοποίηση των συστάσεων, καθώς και ευρύτερα ζητήματα που σχετίζονται με τον επιθετικό φορολογικό σχεδιασμό και τη χρηστή διακυβέρνηση στον φορολογικό τομέα παρακολουθούνται από την πλατφόρμα για τη χρηστή διακυβέρνηση στον φορολογικό τομέα ([3]), η οποία συνεδρίασε για πρώτη φορά στις 10 Ιουνίου 2013. Η δεύτερη συνεδρίαση της πλατφόρμας πραγματοποιήθηκε στις 16 Οκτωβρίου 2013. Η Επιτροπή θα υποβάλει έκθεση σχετικά με την υλοποίηση των συστάσεων μέχρι το 2015.

([1]) C(2012)8806 τελικό.
([2]) C(2012)8805 τελικό.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/resources/documents/taxation/pr_taxgoods.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009764/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(30 August 2013)

Subject: Tax havens

Following the announcement on good governance in respect of tax havens and the aggressive tax planning undertaken by the Commission in December 2012, can the Commission provide an update on progress in gathering measurable comparative results from Member States regarding the estimated amount of income tax evasion practised by European citizens in tax havens ? What is the situation in Greece? What steps will the Commission take next regarding EU cooperation with third countries that are tax havens?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(21 October 2013)

The Commission has discussed its Recommendations on aggressive tax planning ([1]) and regarding measures intended to encourage third countries to apply minimum standards of good governance in tax matters ([2]), on various occasions with Member States at Council level.

The Commission does not have any new data related to tax evasion or aggressive tax planning, either in general or specifically in relation to Greece. The implementation of the recommendations and wider issues related to aggressive tax planning and tax good governance are being monitored by the Platform for Tax Good Governance ([3]) which met for the first time on 10 June 2013. A second meeting of the Platform took place on 16 October 2013. The Commission will report on the implementation of the recommendations by 2015.

([1]) C(2012) 8806 final.
([2]) C(2012) 8805 final.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/resources/documents/taxation/pr_taxgoods.pdf

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-009765/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(30 Αυγούστου 2013)

Θέμα: Αύξηση της ανεργίας στην Κύπρο

Σύμφωνα με τα στοιχεία του Eurostat, τον Ιούνιο του 2013, οι δείκτες της ανεργίας στην Κύπρο σκαρφάλωσαν στο 17,3%, σε σύγκριση με 11,7% τον αντίστοιχο μήνα του 2012,ποσοστό που είναι το μεγαλύτερο σε όλη την ΕΕ. Εκ πρώτης όψεως αυτό αποδίδεται στην πρωτοφανή οικονομική κρίση που μαστίζει την Κύπρο, ιδιαίτερα μετά τον περασμένο Μάρτιο και την άδικη απόφαση του Eurogroup. Ωστόσο, αυτό οφείλεται και στην αποτυχία να ληφθούν στοιχειώδη απαραίτητα μέτρα για περιορισμό της απασχόλησης ξένου εργατικού δυναμικού (κοινοτικών και υπηκόων τρίτων χωρών) που θα είχαν ως άμεσο επακόλουθο την ταυτόχρονη και ισοδύναμη αύξηση της απασχόλησης χιλιάδων Κυπρίων ανέργων. Την ίδια στιγμή, χώρες όπως η Βουλγαρία, η Ρουμανία και η Πολωνία, με ποσοστό ανεργίας 12,7%, 7,5% και 10% αντίστοιχα, θεωρούν υψηλή την ανεργία τους και εξάγουν ανεμπόδιστα τους υπηκόους τους στην Κύπρο.

Ερωτάται λοιπόν η Επιτροπή:

1. Πώς μπορεί μια χώρα που μαστίζεται από την οικονομική κρίση και της οποίας η ανεργία σημείωσε πρωτοφανείς ρυθμούς αύξησης εντός του 2012-2013, να απασχολεί ταυτόχρονα ένα υψηλό ποσοστό ξένου δυναμικού (που σε πολλές επιχειρήσεις αγγίζει τα όρια του 80-90%) και να μην μπορεί να παρέμβει δραστικά για περιορισμό του φαινομένου;

2. Δεν είναι άδικο στην Κύπρο, με ποσοστό ανεργίας 37,8% μεταξύ των νέων κάτω των 25 ετών, οι επιχειρήσεις, ιδιαίτερα στην τουριστική βιομηχανία και στο εμπόριο, να απασχολούν δεκάδες χιλιάδες νέους προερχόμενους από τρίτες χώρες, αλλά και από χώρες της ΕΕ, ενώ οι νέοι της Κύπρου να αναγκάζονται να ξενιτευτούν για να βρουν εργασία;

3. Πώς ερμηνεύεται το γεγονός ότι τον Ιούλιο του 2013, στο μέσο της τουριστικής περιόδου, είναι εγγεγραμμένοι στον τομέα της ξενοδοχειακής και επισιτιστικής βιομηχανίας 3 706 άνεργοι ενώ οι επιχειρήσεις απασχολούν χιλιάδες ξένων εργαζομένων;

4. Μήπως το Ευρωπαϊκό κεκτημένο, εμπεριέχει πρόνοιες ή προσωρινές αποκλίσεις για αντιμετώπιση τέτοιων ανισοτήτων;

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(22 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Η αρχή της ελεύθερης κυκλοφορίας των εργαζομένων που ορίζεται στο άρθρο 45 της ΣΛΕΕ εγγυάται την ίση μεταχείριση των υπηκόων της ΕΕ και της Κύπρου όσον αφορά την πρόσβαση στην αγορά εργασίας. Δεν υπάρχει δυνατότητα παρέκκλισης από το εν λόγω κανόνα.

Όσον αφορά την πρόσβαση των υπηκόων τρίτων χωρών στις αγορές εργασίας των κρατών μελών, κάθε κράτος μέλος είναι αρμόδιο να καθορίσει τον αριθμό των εισερχόμενων υπηκόων στην επικράτειά του από τρίτες χώρες με σκοπό την αναζήτηση εργασίας, είτε πρόκειται για εργαζομένους είτε για αυτοαπασχολούμενους. Τα κράτη μέλη είναι επίσης αρμόδια να εξασφαλίζουν ότι τηρώνται οι τυπικές διαδικασίες στην αγορά εργασίας και ένα ελάχιστο επίπεδο εργασιακών συνθηκών.

Η Επιτροπή σημειώνει ότι η εισροή ξένων εργαζομένων στην Κύπρο φαίνεται να έχει μειωθεί κατά την πιο πρόσφατη περίοδο ([1]), ακολουθώντας τη μείωση της ζήτησης σε εργατικό δυναμικό.

Τέλος, όπως αποδεικνύεται σε αρκετές εκθέσεις της Επιτροπής ([2]), οι εργαζόμενοι μετανάστες γενικά συμβάλλουν στην άμβλυνση των ελλείψεων στις χώρες υποδοχής, συχνά στη βαθμίδα χαμηλών προσόντων της κλίμακας θέσεων εργασίας. Στην Κύπρο, η επαγγελματική κατανομή των μεταναστών από τρίτες χώρες δείχνει ότι οι μετανάστες έχουν συμπληρωματικό ρόλο στους Κύπριους υπηκόους και δεν τους υποκαθιστούν ([3]).

([1]) Για παράδειγμα, σύμφωνα με στοιχεία της Eurostat, ο αριθμός πρώτων τίτλων διαμονής που εκδόθηκαν για αμειβόμενες δραστηριότητες από την Κύπρο σε υπηκόους τρίτων χωρών, μειώθηκε κατά 43% μεταξύ του 2010 (11 917) και 2012 (6 889). Επιπλέον, τα στοιχεία από την έρευνα εργατικού δυναμικού, υποδηλώνουν ότι ο συνολικός αριθμός υπηκόων της ΕΕ που εργάζεται στην Κύπρο μειώθηκε κατά 9% κατά το τελευταίο έτος (από 55 100 το δεύτερο τρίμηνο του 2012 σε 46 400 το δεύτερο τρίμηνο του 2013).

([2]) Απασχόληση στην Ευρώπη 2008, Κεφάλαιο 2 και 3, απασχόληση και κοινωνικές εξελίξεις στην Ευρώπη Έκθεση 2011, κεφάλαιο 6.

([3]) Σύμφωνα με την έρευνα εργατικού δυναμικού της ΕΕ, το 2012, το 75% των υπηκόων τρίτων χωρών που εργάζονταν στην Κύπρο, απασχολήθηκαν σε στοιχειώδη επαγγέλματα (ISCO 9), ενώ το 80% των Κυπρίων υπηκόων που ήταν άνεργοι είχαν υψηλό (ISCED 5-6) ή μεσαίο (ISCED 3-4) επίπεδο εκπαίδευσης. Επιπλέον, το 66% των υπηκόων των τρίτων χωρών που εργάζονται στην Κύπρο, εργάστηκαν στον τομέα των οικιακών υπηρεσιών (NACE P) ενώ ο τομέας αυτός αντιπροσωπεύει μόνο το 6% της συνολικής απασχόλησης στην Κύπρο και περίπου το 0,2% των Κυπρίων υπηκόων.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009765/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(30 August 2013)

Subject: Increase in unemployment in Cyprus

According to Eurostat data, in June 2013 the unemployment rate in Cyprus rose to 17.3%, compared to 11.7% in the same month of 2012, which is the highest rate in the entire EU. At first glance this is attributable to the unprecedented economic crisis in Cyprus, especially after the unjust decision taken by the Eurogroup last March. However, this it is also due to a failure to take indispensable basic measures to limit the employment of foreign labour (EU and third country nationals) that would directly lead to a simultaneous and equivalent increase in employment so that thousands of unemployed Cypriots would find jobs. At the same time, countries such as Bulgaria , Romania and Poland, with an unemployment rate of 12.7%, 7.5% and 10% respectively, consider their unemployment rates high and freely 'export' their nationals to Cyprus.

In view of the above, will the Commission say :

1. How can a country beset by the economic crisis where unemployment has increased by an unprecedented amount in 2012-2013, employ a high percentage of foreign workers (in many businesses they account for almost 80-90% of the workforce) and be unable to take drastic measures to curb this phenomenon ?

2. It is not unfair to Cyprus, which has an unemployment rate of 37.8 % among young people under 25 years of age, that businesses, especially in the tourist industry and trade, employ tens of thousands of young people from third countries, and also from EU countries, while young Cypriots are forced to migrate to find work?

3. How does it interpret the fact that in July 2013, in the middle of the tourist season, 3 706 unemployed were registered in the hotel and catering industry, even though tourist businesses employed thousands of foreign workers?

4. Does the European *acquis* contain any provisions or temporary derogations to address such anomalies?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(22 October 2013)

The principle of free movement of workers set out in Article 45 TFEU guarantees equal treatment of EU and Cypriot nationals as far as access to the labour market is concerned. There is no possibility of a derogation from that rule.

As regards access by third-country nationals to the Member States' labour markets, each Member State is competent to determine the volumes of admission of third-country nationals coming from third countries to their territory in order to seek work, whether employed or self-employed. The Member States are also competent for ensuring that labour market formalities and minimum working conditions are respected.

The Commission notes that the inflow of foreign workers into Cyprus appears to have diminished in the most recent period ([1]), in line with the fall in labour demand.

Finally, as shown in several Commission reports ([2]), migrant workers generally contribute to easing shortages in the receiving countries, often at the low-skill end of the jobs spectrum. In Cyprus, the occupational distribution of third-country migrants suggests that they are complementary to Cypriot nationals rather than substitutes ([3]).

([1]) For instance, according to Eurostat data, the number of first residence permits issued for remunerated activities by Cyprus to third-country nationals has decreased by 43% between 2010 (11,917) and 2012 (6,889). Moreover, data from the Labour force survey indicates that the overall number of EU nationals working in Cyprus has decreased by 9% over the last year (from 55,100 in 2012Q2 to 46,400 in 2013Q2).

([2]) Employment in Europe 2008, Chapter 2 and 3, Employment and Social developments in Europe Review 2011, Chapter 6.

([3]) According to EU-Labour force survey, in 2012, 75% of the third-country nationals working in Cyprus were employed in elementary occupations (ISCO 9) while 80% of Cypriot nationals being unemployed had a high (ISCED 5-6) or medium (ISCED 3-4) level of education. Moreover, 66% of the third-country nationals working in Cyprus were employed in the domestic services sector (NACE P) while this sector represents only 6% of the overall employment in Cyprus and around 0.2% for the Cypriots nationals.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009766/13
à la Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(30 août 2013)

Objet: Risque d'explosion dans les entreprises de nettoyage à sec

En France, l'arrêté du 5 décembre 2012 modifiant l'arrêté du 31 août 2009 relatif aux prescriptions générales applicables aux installations classées pour la protection de l'environnement soumises à déclaration sous la rubrique n° 2345 relative à l'utilisation de solvants pour le nettoyage à sec et le traitement des textiles ou des vêtements, a favorisé la reconnaissance de tous les solvants pouvant être utilisés en remplacement du perchloroéthylène et a allégé les obligations relatives à la sécurité incendie pour les installations utilisant les solvants alternatifs.

Considérant que cet arrêté ne permet pas de maîtriser le risque d'explosion dans les entreprises de nettoyage à sec, le syndicat professionnel FNET (Fédération nationale de l'entretien des textiles) a déposé un recours devant le Conseil d'État pour faire appliquer les principes de précaution et de prévention en vue de protéger les salariés, la clientèle et les voisins des pressings. Le risque d'explosion lié aux solvants hydrocarburés serait confirmé par plusieurs explosions et incendies de machines à Portet-sur-Garonne en 2012, à Montpellier et en Seine-et-Marne.

Les professionnels pointent du doigt le produit ISANE IP 175, solvant hydrocarbure combustible, utilisé dans les nouvelles machines et pour lequel l'évaluation du danger et des risques se révèle compliquée. Ce nouveau solvant serait susceptible de former une atmosphère explosible. De plus, l'analyse des risques ne serait pas conforme à l'article R.4411-73 du code du travail, l'usage fait de ce produit chimique dans les activités de nettoyage à sec n'étant pas indiqué à la rubrique 1.2. Utilisation de la substance/préparation, comme le précise l'annexe II du règlement (CE) nº 1907/2006 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 18 décembre 2006 (REACH).

1. La Commission considère-t-elle que les solvants hydrocarburés utilisés dans les entreprises de nettoyage à sec instaurent un nouveau type de danger, à savoir le risque d'explosion?

2. Est-elle au courant d'autres cas d'explosion en Europe?

3. Quelles mesures compte-t-elle proposer pour renforcer l'évaluation des risques relatifs à l'utilisation de ces produits et garantir la sécurité des salariés, des clients et des voisins des pressings?

Réponse donnée par M. Andor au nom de la Commission
(21 octobre 2013)

1. Concernant la protection des travailleurs, l'article 6 de la directive 89/391/CEE ([1]) oblige l'employeur à prendre les mesures nécessaires pour éviter, évaluer et combattre les risques.

La prévention des explosions est particulièrement importante pour la santé et la sécurité des travailleurs. La directive 1999/92/CE ([2]) impose aux employeurs l'obligation de prendre des mesures pour empêcher ou maîtriser la formation d'atmosphères explosives. Conformément à l'article 4 de la directive 1999/92/CE, les employeurs doivent traiter les risques spécifiques créés par des atmosphères explosives en effectuant une évaluation globale des risques.

Cette exigence s'applique également à l'usage professionnel des solvants hydrocarburés tels que le produit ISANE IP 175, qui est un agent nettoyant et dégraissant. Les risques professionnels potentiels liés à l'utilisation de ces produits sont connus. Ils doivent être évalués correctement par l'employeur dans chaque cas particulier. Sur la base de cette évaluation, les mesures de protection et de prévention appropriées doivent alors être mises en place.

2. La Commission n'a pas été informée de cas d'explosions dûs à l'usage de solvants hydrocarburés dans des entreprises de nettoyage à sec.

3. La directive 89/391/CEE s'applique à tous les secteurs d'activités et précise que l'employeur est tenu d'assurer la sécurité et la santé des travailleurs dans tous les aspects liés au travail. La directive 1999/92/CE complète les dispositions générales de la directive 89/391/CEE. Ces deux directives ont été transposées et mises en œuvre dans le droit français. Les autorités nationales compétentes, qui sont en général les inspections du travail, sont responsables au premier chef de l'application de la législation nationale et, si nécessaire, de l'application de sanctions appropriées.

([1]) Directive 89/391/CEE du Conseil du 12 juin 1989, concernant la mise en œuvre de mesures visant à promouvoir l'amélioration de la sécurité et de la santé des travailleurs au travail, JO L 183 du 29.6.1989, p. 1.

([2]) Directive 1999/92/CE du 16 décembre 1999 concernant les prescriptions minimales visant à améliorer la protection en matière de sécurité et de santé des travailleurs susceptibles d'être exposés au risque d'atmosphères explosives, JO L 23, du 28.1.2000.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009766/13
to the Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(30 August 2013)

Subject: Explosion risk on the premises of dry-cleaning firms

In France, the entry into force of the decree of 5 December 2012 amending that of 31 August 2009 laying down general rules applicable to facilities classified for environmental protection purposes and covered by the declaration under heading No 2345 concerning the use of solvents for dry-cleaning and the treatment of textiles or clothing led to official authorisation being given for the use of all solvents which are substitutes for perchloroethylene and to the relaxation of the fire-safety requirements to be met by facilities using alternative solvents.

Taking the view that the provisions of the new decree would not rule out the risk of explosions on the premises used by dry-cleaning firms, the FNET, the professional association representing such firms, lodged an appeal with the Council of State seeking the application of the precautionary principle and the principle of prevention with a view to protecting workers, customers and people living in the vicinity of dry cleaners. The FNET argued that the risks associated with the use of hydrocarbon solvents had been confirmed by a number of explosions and fires involving dry-cleaning equipment in Portet-sur-Garonne in 2012, in Montpellier and in the department of Seine-et-Marne.

Industry representatives are pointing the finger at one specific product, ISANE IP 175, a combustible hydrocarbon solvent which is employed in the latest types of dry-cleaning equipment and whose use poses risks which are as yet difficult to assess. It is claimed that the new solvent gives off fumes which create an explosive atmosphere. What is more, the risk analysis carried out was reportedly not consistent with Article R.4411-73 of the Labour Code, on the grounds that the way this chemical is used in dry-cleaning activities is not described under heading 1.2., Use of the substance/preparation, as required by Annex II to Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 (REACH).

1. Does the Commission take the view that the hydrocarbon solvents used by dry-cleaning firms are creating a new type of danger, i.e. an explosion risk?

2. Is it aware of other cases involving explosions in Europe, in addition to those cited above?

3. What measures will it propose in order to improve the way in which the risks associated with the use of such products are assessed, in an effort to guarantee the safety of workers, customers and people living in the vicinity of dry cleaners?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(21 October 2013)

1. As far as the protection of workers is concerned, Article 6 of Directive 89/391/EEC ([1]) requires the employer to take the necessary measures to avoid, evaluate and combat risks.

Explosion prevention is of particular importance to occupational health and safety. Directive 1999/92/EC ([2]) imposes on the employer the obligation to take measures, in order to prevent or control explosive atmospheres. According to Article 4 of Directive 1999/92/EC the employer should address the specific risks arising from explosive atmospheres by carrying out an overall assessment.

This requirement applies equally to the occupational use of hydrocarbon solvents such as ISANE IP 175, which is a cleaning and degreasing agent. The potential occupational risks related to the use of such products are known. They must be assessed properly by the employer in every single case. Based on that assessment, the appropriate protective and preventive measures should then be put on place.

2. The Commission has not been informed of any explosion resulted by the usage of hydrocarbon solvents in dry-cleaning firms.

([1]) Directive 89/391/EEC of 12 June 1989 on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health of workers at work, OJ L 183, 29.6.1989.

([2]) Directive 1999/92/EC of 16 December 1999 on minimum requirements for improving the safety and health protection of workers potentially at risk from explosive atmospheres, OJ L 23, 28.1.2000.

3. Directive 89/391/EEC applies to all sectors of activity and stipulates that it is the employer's duty to ensure the safety and health of workers in every aspect related to the work. Directive 1999/92/EC supplements the general provisions of Directive 89/391/EEC. Both Directives have been transposed and implemented in French law. The competent national authorities, which are in general the labour inspectorates, are primarily responsible for enforcing the implementation of national legislation and, where necessary, applying suitable penalties.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009767/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(30 août 2013)

Objet: Points faibles des banques de développement

Pour rester première pourvoyeuse d'aide au développement malgré la crise, l'Union européenne se rapproche des banques de développement (BEI, BERD, AFD, KfW) et d'autres agences bilatérales.

Ensemble, elles financent de grands projets d'infrastructures, notamment d'énergie ou de transports, ce qui constitue une manière pour l'UE d'augmenter l'impact de son aide au développement sans accroître ses dépenses. Les Européens paient l'assistance technique (études d'impact, aide institutionnelle) et subventionnent les projets afin de faciliter l'octroi de prêts par les institutions financières.

Selon la BEI, l'expérience montre qu'un euro donné sous forme de bonification d'intérêt ou d'assistance technique dans le fonds UE-Afrique pour les infrastructures permet de lever 13 euros de prêts. La Commission européenne vante même un effet multiplicateur allant dans certains cas jusqu'à 30 euros et projette de relever les enveloppes de ces véhicules de financement à partir de 2014. Une plateforme européenne réunissant la Commission, les États et les institutions financières européennes a été créée en décembre 2012 pour étudier les moyens d'utiliser ce type de financement à bon escient et à plus grande échelle. Cette technique dite de «mixage» permet d'accélérer les décaissements européens habituellement lents. Les institutions financières soumettent directement des projets de financement à la Commission et aux États qui prennent la décision finale.

1. Comment la Commission compte-t-elle augmenter l'efficacité et la transparence des procédures de sélection des projets et de suivi des opérations?

2. Comment la Commission va-t-elle les rationaliser et les améliorer?

3. La Commission partage-t-elle l'avis que le nombre d'institutions financières associées provoque une organisation de ces facilités d'investissement qui laisse à désirer?

4. Que répond la Commission à ceux qui décrient le guichet unique?

5. La Commission partage-t-elle l'avis selon lequel:

— le profil des bailleurs de fonds — principalement des entreprises européennes — entraîne un biais dans le montage des projets?

— faute de critères de sélection extra-financiers, l'impact sur la lutte contre la pauvreté n'est pas clairement établi?

— la logique financière semble alors l'emporter sur celle du développement?

Réponse donnée par M. Piebalgs au nom de la Commission
(21 octobre 2013)

1.-2. Le financement mixte est soumis à des règles et à des procédures semblables à celles en vigueur pour d'autres modes de mise en œuvre. La Commission, les États membres et les délégations de l'UE participent à la sélection des projets. Des informations sur les mécanismes régionaux de cofinancement de l'UE («mécanismes de financement») sont publiées dans les rapports annuels ([1]). Le suivi est la règle, tant au niveau du projet qu'à celui du mécanisme. La plateforme européenne de financement mixte pour la coopération extérieure est actuellement le théâtre d'un vif débat sur les différentes possibilités de rationaliser et d'améliorer encore les processus de sélection et le suivi.

3. Le nombre d'institutions financières associées n'influe pas sur la rapidité des procédures. Une participation plus large amène des idées de projet plus innovantes, augmente le potentiel de coopération et de cofinancement, permet de répondre plus efficacement aux besoins des pays partenaires, renforce la compétitivité des conditions de financement et améliore l'efficacité de l'aide.

([1]) Voir le site internet d'EuropeAid: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/news/2012-12-12-platform-blending-funds_en.htm (en anglais seulement).

4. Bien que les mécanismes de financement maximisent l'efficacité et la qualité du financement mixte, ils ne constituent pas des guichets uniques. Ils s'inscrivent dans le cadre de coopération extérieure de l'UE. Avant leur soumission, les projets de financement mixte sont préparés conjointement par les institutions financières, les pays partenaires et les délégations de l'UE, comme les projets traditionnels, la différence étant que les tâches techniques peuvent être déléguées aux institutions financières.

5. Les mécanismes de financement sont mis en place au sein de programmes et de projets régionaux et doivent répondre aux objectifs politiques européens et aux critères d'impact et de durabilité. Même si les objectifs de l'Union européenne sont primordiaux, les aspects financiers et extra-financiers des projets n'en sont pas moins évalués. Les opérations de financement mixte visent à catalyser l'investissement public et privé pour contribuer au développement dans les pays partenaires.

Lorsque la mise en œuvre de projets est confiée aux institutions financières, il est notamment exigé que soient respectées les règles internationales en matière de passation de marché, ce qui interdit tout biais en faveur d'entités européennes.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009767/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(30 August 2013)

Subject: Weaknesses of development banks

To keep its position as the leading provider of development aid despite the crisis, the European Union has taken to working with the development banks (EIB, EBRD, AFD, KfW) and other bilateral agencies.

Together they finance major infrastructure projects, in particular in the energy and transport sectors, giving the EU the opportunity to enhance the impact of its development aid without increasing its expenditure. The EU covers the cost of technical assistance (impact assessment, institutional aid) and subsidises projects so as to facilitate the provision of loans by the financial institutions.

According to the EIB, experience demonstrates that one euro given in the form of interest-rate subsidy or technical assistance in the EU-Africa Infrastructure Trust Fund allows EUR 13 to be raised in loans. The European Commission claims there is a multiplier effect of as much as EUR 30 in some cases, and is proposing to increase the envelopes for these funding vehicles with effect from 2014. A European platform bringing together the Commission, the Member States and European financial institutions was set up in December 2012 in order to examine ways of using this type of funding efficiently and on a large scale. This technique, known as 'blending', speeds up the customarily slow process of disbursement by the EU. The financial institutions submit funding projects directly to the Commission and the Member States, who take the final decision.

1. How does the Commission propose to increase the efficiency and transparency of the procedures for selecting projects and monitoring operations?

2. How will the Commission rationalise and improve these procedures?

3. Does the Commission share the view that so many financial institutions are associated with these arrangements that the investment facilities cannot be organised properly?

4. What is the Commission's response to critics of the one-stop shop approach?

5. Does the Commission share the view that:

– the profile of the donors – mainly European enterprises – creates a bias in the setting up of projects?

– in the absence of non-financial selection criteria, there is no clear assessment of the impact on the fight against poverty?

– the result is that financial logic seems to win out over the logic of development?

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

1. & 2. Blending is subject to rules and procedures similar to those for other implementation modes. Project selection involves the Commission, Member States and EU delegations. Information on EU regional blending facilities ('facilities') is published in annual reports ([1]). Monitoring is carried out as standard practice, at project and facility level. In the EU Platform for Blending in External Cooperation intensive debate is taking place, looking at options to further streamline and enhance selection processes and monitoring.

3. The number of Financial Institutions (FIs) involved does not slow down procedures. Wider participation leads to more innovative project ideas, potential for cooperation and co-financing, a more effective response to partner countries' needs, competitive financing conditions and higher aid effectiveness.

4. While the facilities maximise the efficiency and quality of blending, they are no one-stop shops. They are embedded in the EU external cooperation framework. Before submission, blending projects are prepared jointly by FIs, partner countries and EU delegations, like in traditional projects, with the difference that technical tasks may be delegated to FIs.

([1]) See the EuropeAid website: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/news/2012-12-12-platform-blending-funds_en.htm

5. The facilities are established within regional programmes and projects and must be in line with EU policy objectives and impact and sustainability criteria. While EU objectives are paramount, both financial and non-financial aspects of projects are assessed. Blending operations aim to catalyse public and private investment as a means to support development in partner countries.

When the implementation of projects is delegated to FIs it is inter alia required that international procurement standards are applied, which prohibits a European bias.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009768/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(30 août 2013)

Objet: Favoriser le WiFi

En 2012, 71 % des consommations Internet sur tablette et smartphone ont transité par le réseau WiFi, selon une étude interne de la Commission européenne. Un taux qui devrait s'élever à 78 % en 2016, toujours selon Bruxelles.

Autrement dit, le WiFi constitue le principal canal de consommation des données en mobilité, loin devant les réseaux mobiles des opérateurs. Un constat qui s'explique notamment par le coût relativement bas du WiFi face aux réseaux mobiles, particulièrement lorsque les utilisateurs sont en déplacement à l'étranger, mais aussi par son usage généralisé en entreprise et à domicile.

Il n'en reste pas moins que l'accès au WiFi peut se révéler contraignant, voire onéreux.

Quelle est la stratégie de la Commission pour changer ce dernier constat?

Réponse donnée par Mme Kroes au nom de la Commission
(30 septembre 2013)

On constate en effet une utilisation accrue des accès Wi-Fi publics, privés et communautaires ainsi qu'un délestage du trafic des données mobiles de la part des opérateurs de réseau mobile en Europe. Les nouvelles applications sans fil comme les nuages, les médias sans fil et l'internet des objets stimulent encore plus la demande en matière de capacité des réseaux sans fil et de haut débit.

Dans ce contexte, la proposition de règlement concernant un marché unique des télécommunications adoptée par la Commission le 11 septembre 2013 [COM(2013 627 final] prévoit notamment une série de dispositions éliminant les restrictions potentielles au déploiement et à l'utilisation du réseau Wi-Fi afin d'améliorer sa disponibilité dans toute l'Union.

Les dispositions proposées suppriment les obstacles à la fourniture de services Wi-Fi, permettent aux fournisseurs d'ouvrir des réseaux Wi-Fi au public avec l'accord des clients, éliminent les restrictions à la fourniture de Wi-Fi dans les locaux des autorités publiques ou aux alentours et à la fédération de points d'accès Wi-Fi.

De plus, les règles proposées éliminent les lourdeurs administratives lors du déploiement et de l'exploitation des points d'accès sans fil à portée limitée, notamment des points d'accès Wi-Fi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009768/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(30 August 2013)

Subject: Making WiFi more readily available

According to a Commission study, 71% of all wireless internet traffic on tablets and smartphones was over WiFi in 2012. The study predicts that this figure will increase to 78% by 2016.

WiFi is therefore used far more than mobile phone networks for accessing the net when on the move. The reasons for this include the fact that it is cheaper to use WiFi than a mobile telephone connection, particularly when abroad, and the fact that most homes and businesses have a WiFi network.

However, WiFi connections are not always readily available or cheap.

How does the Commission intend to go about changing this?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(30 September 2013)

There is indeed an increased usage of public and private, and community Wi-Fi access as well as offloading of mobile traffic applied by mobile operators in Europe. Emerging wireless applications such as wireless cloud, media, and Internet of Things are driving further demand for wireless network capacity and broadband speed.

Against this background the proposal for a Telecoms Single Market Regulation adopted by the Commission on 11 September 2013 (COM(2013) 627 final) *inter alia* contains a number of provisions removing potential restrictions to Wi-Fi network deployment and usage with a view to improve its availability across the Union.

These proposed provisions remove barriers to offer Wi-Fi services, allow providers to open Wi-Fi networks to the public with their customers' consent, avoid lock-in for consumers, remove restrictions on provision of Wi-Fi on or around the premises of public authorities and remove restrictions on the federation of Wi-Fi access points.

Furthermore the proposed rules remove red tape for the deployment and operation of small-area wireless access points including Wi-Fi access points.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-009770/13
aan de Commissie
Judith Sargentini (Verts/ALE)
(30 augustus 2013)

Betreft: eCall-autochip

U stelde in uw antwoord dd 21.8.2013 op mijn vraag E-008690/2013 dat er bij het starten van de auto die is uitgerust met een eCall-chip automatisch een „aanmelding" plaats zal vinden bij het telecommunicatienetwerk met de beste dekking, echter dat er pas een „verbinding" wordt opgezet na het inschakelen van eCall.

1. Welke partijen zijn betrokken bij respectievelijk de „aanmelding" en de „verbinding"?

2. Wordt bij deze „aanmelding" uniek identificeerbare informatie overgedragen aan het telecommunicatienetwerk?

3. Wordt bij het zich verplaatsen van het voertuig opnieuw een aanmelding gedaan als een ander netwerk of een andere zendmast een betere dekking geeft?

4. Welke informatie wordt bij aanmelding bij het telecommunicatienetwerk precies aangeboden? Valt deze informatie onder de Richtlijn Dataretentie? Staat deze informatie ter beschikking aan opsporingsautoriteiten?

5. Als na het opzetten van een „verbinding" locatiegegevens worden overgedragen, wie is op dat moment zender en wie is ontvanger van die gegevens? Hoe en hoe lang worden die gegevens bewaard? Staat deze informatie ter beschikking aan opsporingsautoriteiten?

6. Zijn de gegevens die ten tijde van de „verbinding" worden doorgestuurd ook leesbaar voor eventuele tussenliggende partijen? Is het voor die partijen juridisch en technisch mogelijk om de gegevens in te zien?

Antwoord van mevrouw Kroes namens de Commissie
(10 oktober 2013)

Wanneer het eCall-boordsysteem (In-Vehicle System, IVS) zich in de normale bedrijfsstatus bevindt, is het bij geen enkel telecommunicatienetwerk aangemeld. De aanmelding en de spraak-/dataverbinding vinden alleen plaats als er een ongeval is gebeurd. Tijdens normaal bedrijf mag het IVS enkel het radiospectrum scannen op beschikbare netwerken, maar geen verbinding met exploitanten van mobiele netwerken (Mobile Network Operators, MNO's) tot stand brengen.

Bij de aanmelding wordt de internationale identiteit mobiele abonnee (International Mobile Subscriber Identity, IMSI) verstrekt.

Als er een ongeval plaatsvindt, worden de locatiegegevens verzonden, net als bij alle andere 112-gesprekken. Op deze gegevens zijn alle eisen uit de relevante wetgevingsbesluiten ([1]) ([2]) van toepassing. Daarnaast worden meer nauwkeurige locatiegegevens (de door het satellietnavigatiesysteem bepaalde huidige positie en de twee voorafgaande posities van het voertuig) door middel van de minimumgegevensset ([3]) (Minimum Set of Data, MSD) verzonden. Deze gegevens worden verzonden naar de alarmcentrale (Public Safety Answering Point, PSAP) en daar opgeslagen overeenkomstig de relevante wetgeving betreffende persoonsgegevens en consumentenbescherming ([2]).

Geen enkele MNO of andere tussenpersoon heeft toegang tot de MSD die door de IVS naar de PSAP's wordt verzonden.

([1]) Richtlijn 2002/22/EG van het Europees Parlement en de Raad van 7 maart 2002 inzake de universele dienst en gebruikersrechten met betrekking tot elektronische-communicatienetwerken en -diensten, PB L 108 van 24.4.2002, blz. 51.

([2]) Richtlijn 2002/58/EG van het Europees Parlement en de Raad van 12 juli 2002 betreffende de verwerking van persoonsgegevens en de bescherming van de persoonlijke levenssfeer in de sector elektronische communicatie, PB L 201 van 31.7.2002, blz. 37. Verordening (EG) nr. 2006/2004 van het Europees Parlement en de Raad van 27 oktober 2004 betreffende samenwerking tussen de nationale instanties die verantwoordelijk zijn voor handhaving van de wetgeving inzake consumentenbescherming, PB L 364 van 9.12.2004, blz.1. Richtlijn 2009/136/EG van het Europees Parlement en de Raad van 25 november 2009 tot wijziging van Richtlijnen 2002/22/EG en 2002/58/EG en Verordening (EG) nr. 2006/2004, PB L 337 van 18.12.2009, blz. 11.

([3]) CEN EN 15722 „Telematica voor wegvervoer en -verkeer — Esafety — ECall minimumgegevensset".

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009770/13
to the Commission
Judith Sargentini (Verts/ALE)
(30 August 2013)

Subject: eCall chip in vehicles

In its reply of 21 August 2013 to my Question E-008690/2013, the Commission stated that when a vehicle which is equipped with eCall technology is started, the in-vehicle system will automatically 'register' in the telecommunication network with the best coverage reachable, but 'communication' will take place only after an eCall has been triggered.

1. Which parties are involved in 'registration' and 'communication' respectively?

2. Does this 'registration' involve transmitting uniquely identifiable information to the telecommunication network?

3. As the vehicle moves, does the system re-register if a different network or mobile base station can provide better coverage?

4. Exactly what information is provided when registering with the telecommunication network? Does this information fall under the Data Retention Directive? Is this information available to investigating authorities?

5. If, after 'communication' has been established, location data are transmitted, who is then transmitting and who is receiving the data? How, and for how long, are the data stored? Is this information available to investigating authorities?

6. Can the data which are transmitted during the 'communication' also be accessed by any intermediate parties? Is it legally and technically possible for those parties to inspect the data?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(10 October 2013)

While in its normal operational status the eCall In-Vehicle System (IVS) is not registered to any telecommunications network. Registration and voice/data communications take place only in case of an accident. During its normal operation, the IVS may only scan the radio spectrum for available networks, but without communicating with the Mobile Network Operators (MNOs).

The International Mobile Subscriber Identity (IMSI) is provided during registration.

When an accident occurs, location data are transmitted, as in any other 112 call. All requirements set out in the relevant legislative acts ([1]), ([2]) also apply to these data. Additionally, more accurate location data (the current and the two previous positions of the vehicle as determined by the satellite navigation system) are transmitted through the Minimum Set of Data ([3]) (MSD). These data are transmitted and stored by the Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) in compliance with the relevant legislation on personal data & consumer protection[2].

No intermediate parties (including the MNOs) have access to the MSD that is transmitted from the IVS to the PSAPs.

([1]) Directive 2002/22/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 March 2002 on universal service and users' rights relating to electronic communications networks and services, OJ L 108, 24.4.2002, p. 51.

([2]) Directive 2002/58/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 July 2002 concerning the processing of personal data and the protection of privacy in the electronic communications sector, OJ L 201, 31.7.2002, p. 37; Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 October 2004 on cooperation between national authorities responsible for the enforcement of consumer protection laws, OJ L 364, 9.12.2004, p. 1; Directive 2009/136/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 November 2009 amending Directives 2002/22/EC and 2002/58/EC and Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004, OJ L 337, 18.12.2009, p. 11.

([3]) CEN EN 15722 'Road transport and traffic telematics — ESafety — eCall minimum set of data'.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-009771/13
aan de Commissie
Philippe De Backer (ALDE)
(30 augustus 2013)

Betreft: Aanbevelingen nationaal hervormingsprogramma 2013 België — breedband

Eerder dit jaar formuleerde de Europese Commissie aanbevelingen over het nationale hervormingsprogramma 2013 van België. In de vierde aanbeveling wordt gesteld dat er voorzien moet worden in een betere verbinding voor mobiele breedband.

1. Welke aanbevelingen stelt de Commissie voor om de markt m.b.t. mobiele breedband verder te openen? Gaat de Commissie hieromtrent concrete maatregelen nemen?

2. Welke economische — of andere — gevolgen verwacht de Commissie van een betere verbinding van mobiele breedband?

3. Kan de Commissie kwantificeren wat een betere mobiel breedband voor de economie in Brussel en in België zou betekenen?

4. Hoe gaat de Commissie om met de strenge stralingsnormen die momenteel van toepassing zijn in Brussel? Zal het extra maatregelen nemen om de mobiele bereikbaarheid te garanderen?

Antwoord van mevrouw Kroes namens de Commissie
(3 oktober 2013)

Snelle draadloze diensten zijn van belang om de ontwikkeling van innovatieve technologieën en diensten die bepalend zijn voor de groei in de EU-economie te stimuleren; ze dragen bij tot andere sectoriële beleidsmaatregelen van de EU en helpen de digitale kloof te overbruggen. Uit studies is gebleken dat overheden voor een snellere economische groei en een hogere productiviteit kunnen zorgen door invoering en gebruik van mobiel breedbandinternet uit te breiden ([1]). Geschat wordt dat een toename met 10 % van de 3G-penetratie leidt tot een stijging van het BBP per hoofd van de bevolking met 0,15 procentpunt ([2]).

Door meer radiospectrum beschikbaar te stellen voor mobiel breedband kan mobiel dataverkeer zonder belemmeringen verder groeien. België is echter nog een van de weinige landen in Europa waar mobiel breedband geen gebruik kan maken van de 800 MHz-band ondanks een met alle lidstaten gemaakte afspraak dit uiterlijk eind 2012 mogelijk te maken. De Commissie heeft er bij de Belgische autoriteiten op aangedrongen de geplande veiling van gebruiksrechten in de 800 MHz-band zo spoedig mogelijk uit te voeren.

De uitrol en beschikbaarheid van 4G in Brussel is van essentieel belang voor de economische en sociale ontwikkeling. In dit verband verheugt de Commissie zich over de politieke overeenkomst die in juni werd bereikt over de ontwikkeling van 4G in Brussel, alsook over de opstelling van een register van openbare ruimtes waar antennes kunnen worden geplaatst. De Commissie volgt nauwlettend of dit politieke akkoord wordt omgezet in bindende wetgeving, en verwacht dat in de nabije toekomst oplossingen op langere termijn worden gevonden.

([1]) Analysys Mason Limited (2013), „Study on the socio-economic impact of bandwidth", studie uitgevoerd in opdracht van de Europese Commissie.
([2]) Deloitte, GSMA en Cisco (2012), „What is the impact of mobile telephony on economic growth?".

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009771/13
to the Commission
Philippe De Backer (ALDE)
(30 August 2013)

Subject: Recommendations concerning Belgium's national reform programme 2013 — broadband

Earlier this year, the Commission made recommendations concerning Belgium's national reform programme 2013. In the fourth recommendation, it stated that it was necessary to provide better mobile broadband connections.

1. What recommendations does the Commission propose in order to further open up the market for mobile broadband? Will the Commission take specific measures in this regard?

2. What economic or other consequences does the Commission expect from better mobile broadband connections?

3. Can the Commission quantify what impact better mobile broadband would have on the economy in Brussels and Belgium?

4. What is the Commission's approach to the strict radiation standards which currently apply in Brussels? Will it take extra measures to guarantee mobile access?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(3 October 2013)

The availability of fast wireless services is important to stimulate the development of innovative technologies and services that will drive growth in the EU economy, contribute to other EU sectorial policies and help overcome the digital divide. Studies suggest that countries can accelerate economic growth and productivity by increasing mobile broadband Internet adoption and usage ([1]). It has been estimated that a 10% rise in 3G penetration increases GDP per capita growth by 0.15 percentage points ([2]).

Increasing the amount of radio spectrum allocated to mobile broadband allows mobile data traffic to grow without supply constraints. Yet, Belgium is one of the few remaining countries in Europe where the 800 MHz band is still not available for mobile broadband in spite of an agreed commitment by all Member States to do so by the end of 2012. The Commission has urged the Belgian authorities to complete the planned auction of the usage rights in the 800 MHz band as soon as possible.

The roll-out and availability of 4G in Brussels is essential to its economic and social development. In this respect, the Commission welcomes the political agreement reached in June on the development of 4G in Brussels as well as the creation of a register of public spaces available to accommodate antennas. The Commission is closely monitoring the implementation of this political agreement into binding legislation, and expects that longer term solutions will be found in the near future.

([1]) Analysys Mason Limited (2013), Study on the socioeconomic impact of bandwidth, study prepared for the European Commission.
([2]) Deloitte, GSMA and Cisco (2012), What is the impact of mobile telephony on economic growth?

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-009772/13
à la Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(30 août 2013)

Objet: Éducation à l'environnement et au développement durable dans l'Union

À travers le 7e programme d'action pour l'environnement (PAE), dont je suis le rapporteur au Parlement européen, l'Union européenne s'engage à devenir une économie verte inclusive qui garantisse croissance et développement, préserve la santé et le bien-être de l'homme, fournisse des emplois dignes de ce nom, réduise les inégalités et investisse dans le capital naturel tout en le protégeant. Cette transformation passe par l'intégration totale des questions liées à l'environnement dans d'autres politiques afin de créer une approche cohérente et coordonnée. Parmi ces politiques, l'éducation occupe une place de choix, comme l'a reconnu l'accord politique intervenu en trilogue le 19 juin 2013 sur le 7e PAE.

1. La Commission a-t-elle produit une analyse des programmes d'éducation à l'environnement dans les écoles primaires et les établissements de l'enseignement secondaire des États membres de l'Union?

2. À la lumière d'initiatives telles que la Décennie des Nations unies sur l'ESD (éducation au service du développement durable) et la Stratégie de l'UNECE sur l'ESD, la Commission envisagerait-elle de lancer une Stratégie européenne sur l'éducation à l'environnement et au développement durable au titre de la mise en œuvre du 7e PAE?

3. À la suite de la réunion intitulée «Renforcer l'éducation pour les politiques de développement durable en Méditerranée» organisée dans le cadre du programme «Horizon 2020» «Renforcement des capacités/Programme méditerranéen pour l'environnement» les 17 et 18 juin derniers à Zagreb, quelle priorité et quels moyens la Commission compte-t-elle accorder à la future Stratégie méditerranéenne sur l'éducation pour le développement durable à la veille de la conférence ministérielle conjointe des ministres de l'environnement et des ministres de l'éducation, qui se tiendra le 21 octobre 2013 à Monaco?

Réponse donnée par Mme Vassiliou au nom de la Commission
(27 septembre 2013)

1. Conformément aux dispositions de l'article 165 du traité sur le fonctionnement de l'Union européenne, la responsabilité du contenu et de l'organisation des systèmes d'éducation et de formation incombe entièrement aux États membres. La recommandation sur les compétences clés pour l'éducation et la formation tout au long de la vie ([1]) souligne l'importance des connaissances, aptitudes et attitudes environnementales correspondant aux compétences de base en sciences et technologies. Bien que la Commission n'ait pas établi de rapport détaillé sur l'éducation à l'environnement dans les États membres, le rapport élaboré en 2011 pour la Commission par le réseau Eurydice aborde la question dans le contexte plus large de l'enseignement des sciences ([2]).

2. La Commission ne prévoit pas actuellement de lancer une stratégie européenne particulière pour l'éducation à l'environnement et au développement durable. Les politiques de l'UE visent à soutenir les actions nationales et à contribuer à relever les défis communs. La Commission continuera à fournir des publications et du matériel audiovisuel sur les questions environnementales qui peuvent être utilisés pour soutenir les initiatives pédagogiques dans les États membres. La Commission mène également une campagne environnementale à l'échelle de l'UE intitulée «Generation Awake» dans le contexte de la feuille de route pour une utilisation efficace des ressources ([3]). Le matériel de lecture est disponible sur la page d'accueil du site de la campagne.

3. La Commission a soutenu l'élaboration d'une stratégie méditerranéenne sur l'éducation pour le développement durable à l'occasion de plusieurs réunions régionales parrainées par le programme «Horizon 2020 — Renforcement des capacités/Programme méditerranéen pour l'environnement», comme celle qui s'est tenue à Zagreb en juin 2013. Une décision sur la poursuite de l'appui de la Commission doit encore être prise et dépendra du résultat de l'évaluation à mi-parcours du programme «Horizon 2020» et de l'adoption officielle de la stratégie sur l'éducation pour le développement durable.

([1]) Journal Officiel L 394 du 30 décembre 2006.
([2]) Agence exécutive «Éducation, audiovisuel et culture» de l'UE, 2011, «L'Enseignement des sciences en Europe: les politiques nationales, les pratiques et la recherche». Disponible à l'adresse: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/documents/thematic_reports/133FR.pdf
([3]) Generation Awake: tes choix feront la différence (http://www.generationawake.eu/).

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009772/13
to the Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(30 August 2013)

Subject: Environment and sustainable development education in the EU

Under the 7th Environmental Action Programme (EAP), for which I am the European Parliament rapporteur, the European Union undertakes to transform itself into an inclusive green economy that secures growth and development, safeguards human health and well-being, provides decent jobs, reduces inequalities and invests in and preserves natural capital. This is to be achieved through environmental mainstreaming with a view to ensuring a coherent and coordinated approach focusing on education, in accordance with the political agreement reached at the 7th EAP trialogue of 19 June 2013.

1. Has the Commission drawn up a detailed report on environment education programmes at primary and secondary school level in the EU Member States?

2. In view of initiatives such as the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and the related UNECE strategy, would the Commission consider launching a European environmental education and sustainable development education strategy under the 7th EAP?

3. Following the meeting of 17 and 18 June 2013 in Zagreb on strengthening sustainable development education policies in the Mediterranean as part of the Horizon 2020 Capacity Building/Mediterranean Environment Programme, what level of priority will the Commission give to the future Mediterranean strategy for sustainable development education and what resources will it earmark for this purpose in the run-up to the joint conference of Environment and Education Ministers scheduled for 21 October 2013 in Monaco?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(27 September 2013)

1. In accordance with Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the responsibility for the content and organisation of education and training systems rests entirely with Member States. The recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning ([1]) highlights the importance of environmental knowledge, skills and attitudes in relation with basic competences in science and technology. While the Commission has not carried out any detailed report on environment education in Member States, a 2011 report compiled for the Commission by the Eurydice network touches upon the issue in the wider context of science education. ([2])

2. The Commission has currently no plans to launch a specific European environmental education and sustainable development education strategy. EU policies are designed to support national actions and help address common challenges. The Commission will continue to provide printed and audiovisual material on environmental issues which can be used to support educational initiatives in Member States. The Commission also runs an EU-wide environmental campaign called 'Generation Awake' in the context of the Resource Efficiency Roadmap ([3]). Reading materials are available on the homepage of the campaign.

3. The Commission has supported the preparation of a Mediterranean Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), through various regional meetings sponsored by the Horizon 2020 Capacity Building/Mediterranean Environment Programme, including the one in Zagreb in June 2013. A decision on further Commission support needs yet to be taken and will depend on the outcome of the Horizon 2020 mid-term review and the formal adoption of the strategy on Education for Sustainable Development.

([1]) OJ L 394, 30.12.2006.
([2]) Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (Eurydice), 2011, Science Education in Europe: National Policies, Practices and Research. Online at http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/documents/thematic_reports/133EN.pdf
([3]) Generation Awake: your choices make a world of difference (http://www.generationawake.eu/).

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor E-009773/13
upućeno Komisiji
Dubravka Šuica (PPE)
(30. kolovoza 2013.)

Predmet: Kršenje privatnosti građana EU-a

U proteklih nekoliko mjeseci bilo je nebrojeno mnogo medijskih izvješća o čestim kršenjima privatnosti korisnika internetskih usluga iz SAD-a kao što su Google i Facebook, što istovremeno uključuje i značajan broj građana EU-a.

Problem se pojavio zbog različitog tumačenja privatnosti u SAD-u i Europskoj uniji. Dok se u SAD-u postupak nadzora provodi bez obzira na eventualnu uključenost pojedinca u nezakonite aktivnosti, EU dopušta nadgledanje samo, i uz sudski nalog, ako je dotični pojedinac osumnjičen za kršenje zakona ili ugrožavanje sigurnosti države članice EU-a.

Imajući to na umu, može li Komisija pojasniti što namjerava učiniti kako bi zaštitila privatnost građana EU-a koji koriste internetske usluge iz SAD-a?

Odgovor gđe Reding u ime Komisije
(7. studenog 2013.)

Komisija je iznimno zabrinuta zbog medijskih izvješća o programima kao što je PRISM koji, čini se, omogućavaju, u velikim razmjerima, pristup podacima i obradu podataka o Europljanima.

Komisija je od vlade SAD-a zatražila objašnjenje u vezi s programima o kojima se izvještavalo u medijima i mogućim utjecajem na temeljna prava Europljana. Potpredsjednica Komisije zadužena za pravosuđe, temeljna prava i građanstvo potaknula je raspravu o toj temi izravno s glavnim državnim odvjetnikom SAD-a Ericom Holderom na Ministarskoj konferenciji za pravosuđe i unutarnje poslove EU-a i SAD-a u Dublinu 14. lipnja 2013. Nakon sastanka, zatražena su dodatna objašnjenja u pismu vlastima SAD-a, uključujući objašnjenja o količini prikupljenih podataka, opsegu programa i sudskom nadzoru koji su dostupni Europljanima. Osim toga, Komisija je osnovala, zajedno s Predsjedništvom Vijeća EU-a, ad hoc radnu grupu EU-a i SAD-a na visokoj razini o zaštiti podataka kako bi se detaljnije razmotrila ova pitanja. Na temelju prikupljenih informacija, Komisija će povratno o tome izvijestiti Europski parlament i Vijeće.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009773/13
to the Commission
Dubravka Šuica (PPE)
(30 August 2013)

Subject: Breaches of EU citizens' privacy

In the past couple of months, countless media reports have been made regarding frequent breaches of privacy against users of US Internet services such as Google and Facebook, which automatically includes a significant number of EU citizens.

The problem has arisen as a result of the difference between the US and European understanding of privacy. While in the US monitoring is carried out regardless of whether or not one is suspected of dealing with illegal activities, the EU allows monitoring only where, along with a court order, the individual concerned is suspected of breaking the law or of compromising the security of EU Member States.

Bearing this in mind, will the Commission clarify what it intends to do in order to protect the privacy of EU citizens who use these US online services?

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

The Commission is very concerned regarding the media reports about programmes such as PRISM which appear to enable access and processing, on a large scale, of data of Europeans.

The Commission has requested clarifications from the US Government regarding the programmes reported in the media and the potential impact on the fundamental rights of Europeans. The Vice-President of the Commission responsible for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship raised this issue directly with US Attorney-General Eric Holder at the EU-US Justice and Home Affairs Ministerial in Dublin on 14 June 2013. Following this meeting, further clarifications have been requested writing to the US authorities, including on the volume of the data collected, the scope of the programmes and the judicial oversight available to Europeans. In addition, the Commission has set up, together with the Presidency of the Council of the EU, an ad-hoc high-level EU-US working group on data protection to examine these issues further. Based on the information gathered, the Commission will report back to the European Parliament and the Council.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009774/13
to the Commission
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(30 August 2013)

Subject: Alleged ban on Iranian state TV channels

I have been contacted by a constituent who believes that Iranian state TV channels have been forced to stop broadcasting in the EU and the US by the US Government and EU Member States. My constituent believes that this alleged action is based on false arguments that Iran is developing nuclear weapons.

Could the Commission confirm:

1. What evidence it has of whether the broadcasting of Iranian state TV channels inside the EU has ceased?

2. What it believes to be the reasons why broadcasting has been stopped?

3. What directives support the freedom to broadcast?

4. Whether any directives have been breached, and if so, what action it intends to take?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(15 October 2013)

The Commission is aware of a press release by Press TV announcing the termination of its carriage by satellite operator Intelsat ([1]). The decision allegedly affecting all channels offered by the Iranian state broadcaster Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) took effect as of 30 June 2013. It is unclear whether this caused any other service providers to terminate transmission services for IRIB channels. Information available from Press TV's website suggests that the service remains available in Europe from a number of satellites, such as Arabsat 8C, Express AM44 and Badr 4.

The Commission is unaware of the exact modalities that may have brought about the cancellation of transmission service contracts for channels of the described nature. The Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD) underpins the freedom of providing broadcasts within the Union subject to compliance with the regulatory framework in the country of origin. The provision of electronic communications services carrying broadcast content is regulated under the Electronic Communications Regulatory Framework.

The Commission has not received any complaints or submissions indicating a breach of the AVMSD, or of other provisions of Union law. For this reason, no further actions are planned. To the extent that satellite service providers may have chosen to terminate distribution agreements for reasons unrelated to the content of audiovisual media services, these fall outside the Commission's supervisory function in ensuring that the AVMSD is effectively implemented. In general, it is for Member States to ensure that the provisions transposing the obligations of the directive into domestic law are effectively being complied with.

([1]) http://www.presstv.ir/detail/2013/06/26/310864/intelsat-to-take-iranian-channels-off-air/

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009775/13
alla Commissione
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(30 agosto 2013)

Oggetto: Il problema del cyberbullismo nell'UE

Il 6 agosto 2013 il quotidiano britannico *The Times* ha riportato la notizia del suicidio di una adolescente britannica che aveva ricevuto messaggi offensivi su un sito di relazioni sociali. La ragazza è stata trovata impiccata nella sua abitazione e si presume che sia stata spinta al suicidio da messaggi anonimi inviati online che la incitavano al suicidio. Dopo il decesso della ragazza i famigliari hanno creato una pagina web in sua memoria, anch'essa oggetto di ingiurie.

Il padre della ragazza ha chiesto al primo ministro del Regno Unito David Cameron di adottare misure per proteggere i giovani che utilizzano i media sociali e ha dichiarato che: «I siti web come questo sono oggetto di bullismo perché le persone possono trincerarsi dietro l'anonimato. […] Chiedo al primo ministro e padre David Cameron di esaminare la questione e di provvedere affinché tali siti siano adeguatamente regolamentati in modo che gli episodi di bullismo come quello ai danni di mia figlia non accadano più. […] Non voglio che nessun altro genitore passi quello che sto passando io».

Stando al quotidiano il sito di relazioni sociali che avrebbe agevolato le ingiurie è Ask.fm, un sito molto popolare tra gli adolescenti, il quale consente agli utenti di inviare commenti o domande in forma anonima sulle pagine dei profili di altri utenti. Il sito a gestione lettone conta oltre 60 milioni di utenti ed è presumibilmente legato ai decessi di almeno quattro adolescenti soltanto nell'ultimo anno. L'anno scorso Ciara Pugsley, 15 anni, ed Erin Gallagher, 13 anni, entrambi irlandesi, si sono tolti la vita dopo essere stati presumibilmente oggetto di bullismo attraverso il sito.

1. È disposta la Commissione a esaminare il problema dei suicidi collegati al sito di relazioni sociali Ask.fm?

2. È disposta la Commissione a contattare il governo lettone per chiedergli di aprire un'indagine sulle denunce riguardanti l'operato di Ask.com?

3. È disposta la Commissione a valutare la possibilità di definire strategie più ampie a livello UE per contrastare il problema del cyberabuso e del cyberbullismo?

Risposta di Neelie Kroes a nome della Commissione
(21 ottobre 2013)

La Commissione europea condanna il cyberbullismo, un fenomeno che, come molti altri aspetti dei comportamenti online, è in rapida evoluzione.

Ask.fm ha incaricato uno studio legale ([1]) britannico di effettuare un audit sulle caratteristiche di sicurezza del suo sito e il 16 agosto ha annunciato una serie di misure che intende adottare, tra cui: pubblicare un sito web per informare i genitori sulle funzionalità del sito e sulla politica aziendale per contrastare gli abusi, rendere maggiormente visibile sul sito la funzione di segnalazione degli abusi e aggiungere una funzione che dia agli utenti l'opzione di non ricevere messaggi anonimi. In questo momento la Commissione non ritiene pertanto opportuno esaminare ulteriormente la questione.

La strategia europea per creare un'internet migliore per i ragazzi ([2]), che definisce un approccio globale nei confronti della sicurezza online dei minori, si applica anche al cyberbullismo e la Commissione è sempre pronta ad apportare miglioramenti su questo fronte. Nell'ambito di tale strategia, una coalizione di aziende del settore (*CEO Coalition for a better Internet for Children*) ha concordato l'attuazione di misure concrete per migliorare la facilità e la visibilità delle segnalazioni di abusi e chiarire agli utenti le implicazioni delle diverse impostazioni di privacy ([3]).

([1]) Studio Legale: Mishcon de Reya (http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/askfm-will-be-safer-from-online-bullying-as-owners-introduce-new-features-8774234.html).
([2]) https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/european-strategy-deliver-better-internet-our-children
([3]) https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/self-regulation-better-internet-kids

Con il sostegno della Commissione è stata inoltre creata una rete paneuropea di «centri internet più sicuro» che fornisce assistenza tramite call center nei vari paesi e promuove attività di sensibilizzazione per gestire i rischi ma anche per cogliere le opportunità di internet. Nel maggio 2013 questa rete ha pubblicato un documento che raccoglie consigli e suggerimenti su come utilizzare ask.fm e le sue impostazioni di privacy ([4]).

([4]) http://www.saferinternet.org/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=32d5bf23-59b7-4a1b-88c3-4690c646cc7e&groupId=10137

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009775/13
to the Commission
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(30 August 2013)

Subject: EU-wide problem of cyber bullying

On 6 August 2013 *The Times* newspaper (UK) reported that in early August a British teenage girl had committed suicide after receiving abusive messages on a social networking site. Tragically, the girl was found hanged in her home, and it is alleged that she was driven to suicide by anonymous online messages encouraging her to kill herself. After her death, her family created a web page in her memory. It too was the target of abuse.

The father of the girl has appealed to UK Prime Minister David Cameron to take measures to protect young people using social media. In a statement, the father said: 'Websites like this are bullying websites because people can be anonymous. […] I would appeal to David Cameron as the Prime Minister and a father to look at this and to make sure these sites are properly regulated so bullying of vulnerable people like my daughter cannot take place. […] I don't want any other parents to go through what I am going through.'

According to the newspaper, the social networking site alleged to have facilitated the abuse is Ask.fm. It is popular with teenagers, and allows users to post anonymous comments or questions on other users' profile pages. The Latvian-run site has over 60 million users and has allegedly been linked to the deaths of at least four teenagers in the past year alone. Ciara Pugsley, 15, and Erin Gallagher, 13, both from Ireland, took their lives in separate incidents last year, reportedly after having been bullied on the site.

1. Is the Commission prepared to look into the problem of suicides linked to the social networking site Ask.fm?

2. Is the Commission prepared to contact the Latvian Government with a request that it conduct an investigation into the complaints regarding the conduct of Ask.com?

3. Is the Commission prepared to look into outlining broader EU-wide strategies to tackle the problem of cyber-abuse and cyber-bullying?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(21 October 2013)

The European Commission condemns cyber bullying. This is a phenomenon that is evolving very rapidly, just like many other aspects of our online behaviour.

Ask.fm commissioned a UK law firm ([1]) to conduct an audit of its site and its safety features, and announced on 16th August a series of measures to be implemented, including the creation of a website for parents informing about the site's functions and moderation policy, to make the report abuse button more prominent on their site, as well as to add a button for users to opt-out from receiving messages from anonymous users. Therefore, the Commission does not deem it appropriate to foresee a further investigation at this stage.

The European Strategy to create a better Internet for Children ([2]) is a comprehensive approach to child safety online. It also applies to cyber bullying, but the Commission is always ready to improve. As part of the strategy, the CEO Coalition for a better Internet for Children has agreed to take practical measures improving the ease and visibility of reporting and making clear to users the implications of different privacy settings ([3]).

The Commission has also set up and supports a pan-European network of Safer Internet Centres, providing support through national networks of helplines and promoting awareness of how to manage risks and get the best out of the opportunities on the Internet. The network has produced in May 2013 a tip sheet about how to use ask.fm and its privacy settings ([4]).

([1]) Law Firm: Mishcon de Reya (http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/askfm-will-be-safer-from-online-bullying-as-owners-introduce-new-features-8774234.html).
([2]) https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/european-strategy-deliver-better-internet-our-children
([3]) https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/self-regulation-better-internet-kids
([4]) http://www.saferinternet.org/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=32d5bf23-59b7-4a1b-88c3-4690c646cc7e&groupId=10137

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009776/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(30 agosto 2013)

Oggetto: Traffico di stupefacenti in Algeria

Il 25 luglio 2013 il ministro dell'Interno algerino Dahou Ould Kablia ha annunciato che il paese sta per intraprendere una guerra contro i trafficanti di stupefacenti. «È una guerra contro una nuova forma di terrorismo» ha detto. I trafficanti di stupefacenti, sostenuti in passato da gruppi di islamisti del Mali, hanno dovuto adattarsi e sono diventati più aggressivi nel portare avanti il traffico di droga. Stando al ministro «sia in Marocco che in Algeria esistono gruppi estremamente organizzati», aggiungendo che in passato vi era uno «straordinario livello di coordinamento» tra i gruppi.

Secondo il sito web di notizie Maghrebia i trafficanti di stupefacenti «hanno perduto i loro più importanti alleati, i terroristi, a causa della guerra in Mali e della situazione relativa alla sicurezza nel Sahel». Stando alle parole del direttore della sicurezza pubblica presso la gendarmeria nazionale, Mohamed Tahar Ben Naemane, «i trafficanti di droga non sono più in grado di pagare i terroristi per ottenere aiuto nel traffico illecito di stupefacenti. […] Hanno invece scelto di sfidare direttamente i servizi di sicurezza algerini, in alcuni casi con armi pesanti, e questo spiega la grande quantità di sequestri nel paese». In risposta l'Algeria ha mobilitato 1 300 brigate della gendarmeria nazionale, 28 unità di ricerca, 8 brigate di ricerca e diverse unità transfrontaliere, in tutto 25 000 uomini.

Secondo un esperto in materia di sicurezza Kamel Aimeur «non è impossibile che i trafficanti di droga, pur avendo perso un alleato importante nei gruppi terroristici, diventino più aggressivi dopo la guerra nel Mali. […] Il legame tra i gruppi terroristici e i trafficanti di droga è comprovato e per diversi anni i terroristi hanno protetto i trafficanti di droga, ovviamente hanno pagato un prezzo per tale protezione».

1. Quali misure è disposta ad adottare l'UE per sostenere le autorità algerine nella loro attività di contrasto al traffico di droga?

2. Quali misure sta adottando l'UE per monitorare i presunti legami tra i gruppi terroristici quali AQIM e i trafficanti di droga?

3. Alla luce dell'attacco di In Amenas, avvenuto nel gennaio 2013 in Algeria, quali provvedimenti sono stati adottati per migliorare il controllo sulla prevenzione di futuri attacchi ai danni di impianti petroliferi e di gas che impiegano cittadini dell'Unione europea?

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

L'AR/VP è al corrente dell'importanza del problema relativo al traffico di droga descritto dal ministro dell'interno algerino (oggi non più in carica). I legami tra terrorismo e criminalità organizzata, in particolare per il traffico di stupefacenti, sono reali. Molti degli strumenti e delle strutture necessari per affrontarli non differiscono da quelli per contrastare il terrorismo. Sia le autorità nazionali che la cooperazione regionale e internazionale dovrebbero sfruttare potenziali sinergie per combattere più efficacemente queste minacce alla sicurezza.

Lo sviluppo istituzionale gioca un ruolo fondamentale in questi sforzi. L'UE promuove un approccio alla lotta contro il terrorismo in Algeria basato sulla giustizia penale, nel pieno rispetto dello Stato di diritto, del diritto internazionale e dei diritti umani. Il programma d'azione annuale 2013 per la regione ENPI meridionale sostiene, nel rispetto dello stato di diritto, indagini e azioni penali nella regione del Maghreb (3 milioni di EUR). L'azione, attuata congiuntamente all'UNODC, è il primo progetto finanziato dall'UE in questa regione. Per il periodo 2013-2016 sono previste o sono in corso d'esame attività regionali e nazionali, assistenza tecnica all'interno dei vari paesi e corsi di formazione. Attraverso il programma SPRING (sostegno al partenariato, alle riforme e alla crescita inclusiva) i finanziamenti dell'UE promuovono la governance in Algeria (10 milioni di EUR), concentrandosi in particolare sullo stato di diritto, incluso l'accesso alla giustizia e la lotta contro la corruzione, sulla partecipazione dei cittadini e sulla sana gestione delle finanze pubbliche.

Dopo l'attacco terroristico del gennaio 2013 all'impianto a gas nei pressi di In Amenas, l'Algeria ha rafforzato la presenza delle sue forze di sicurezza in punti strategici delle regioni di confine. Il paese è un importante partner per la cooperazione internazionale nella lotta contro il terrorismo. Diversi Stati membri dell'UE si sono dichiarati interessati e hanno presentato proposte per collaborare con l'Algeria nella strategia antiterrorismo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009776/13
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(30 August 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Drug trafficking in Algeria

On 25 July 2013 Algerian Minister of the Interior Dahou Ould Kablia announced that the country was waging a war against drug traffickers. 'It is a war against a new form of terrorism', he said. Drug traffickers previously supported by Islamist groups in Mali have had to adapt and become more aggressive in order to maintain their drug traffic. According to the Minister, 'there are highly organised gangs in both Morocco and Algeria'. He added that there had previously been an 'extraordinary level of coordination' between these gangs.

According to the news website Maghrebia, drug traffickers 'have lost their biggest helpers, the terrorists, due to the war in Mali and the security situation in the Sahel'. In the words of the Director for Public Security at the National Gendarmerie, Mohamed Tahar Ben Naemane, 'drug traffickers are no longer able to pay terrorists to help them smuggle drugs. […] Instead, they have opted to take on the Algerian security services directly, sometimes with heavy weapons. This explains the large quantities seized in the country'. In response, Algeria has mobilised 1 300 National Gendarmerie brigades, 28 search divisions, eight search brigades and a number of cross-border units, in all 25 000 men.

According to security expert Kamel Aimeur, 'it is not impossible that drug traffickers, who lost a major ally in the terrorist groups, will become more aggressive after the war in Mali. […] The link between terrorist groups and drug traffickers is proven. And for several years, these terrorists have protected drug traffickers. They paid a high price for this protection, of course'.

What steps is the EU prepared to take in support of the Algerian authorities working to combat drug trafficking?

What steps is the EU taking to monitor the alleged links between terrorist groups, such as AQIM, and drug traffickers?

In light of the attack in In Amenas, Algeria, in January 2013, what steps have been taken to improve monitoring to prevent future attacks against oil and gas installations employing European Union citizens?

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

The HR/VP is aware of the importance of the drug problem described by the (then) Minister of the Interior of Algeria. The link between terrorism and organised crime, especially drug trafficking, is real. Many of the structures and instruments needed to tackle these are the same as for counter terrorism. Both national authorities and regional and international cooperation should exploit potential synergies to more effectively address these security threats.

Institution building is fundamental in these efforts. The EU promotes a criminal justice approach to the fight against terrorism in Algeria, based on full respect for the rule of law, international law and human rights. The ENPI Regional South Annual Action Programme 2013 supports rule-of-law-compliant investigations and prosecutions in the Maghreb region (EUR 3 million). This action implemented in joint management with UNODC is the first EU-financed project in the Maghreb region. In 2013-2016 regional and national activities, in-country technical assistance and training courses are foreseen or under consideration. Through its SPRING (Support to Partnership, Reform and Inclusive Growth) programme the EU finances a programme aimed to support governance in Algeria (EUR 10 million), focusing on the rule of law, including access to justice and the fight against corruption, citizens participation and sound management of public finances.

Following the January 2013 terrorist attack at the gas plant near In Amenas, Algeria has reinforced the presence of its security forces at strategic points in border regions. Algeria is an important partner in international cooperation in fight against terrorism. Several EU Member States declared interest and steps to cooperate with Algeria in counter-terrorism.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009777/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(30 agosto 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Cristiani copti egiziani presi di mira deliberatamente

Il 14 agosto 2013, Jessi Boulus, una ragazza appartenente alla comunità dei cristiani copti egiziani, è stata uccisa da colpi di arma da fuoco mentre stava rientrando a casa dopo una lezione di studi biblici presso la Chiesa evangelica di via Ahmed Esmat dove lo zio svolge la funzione di pastore. Si teme che ciò possa mostrare il collasso dell'autorità centrale e l'ascesa della militanza islamica. La famiglia della ragazza intende incontrare il procuratore generale del Cairo auspicando che il caso della loro figlia riceva una risposta più efficace, dato che finora le autorità hanno taciuto. I cristiani copti e le altre minoranze lamentano spesso il fatto che né la polizia né la magistratura affrontano i loro casi con la dovuta serietà.

Molti egiziani che sostengono il deposto leader della fratellanza musulmana Mohammed Morsi hanno accusato i cristiani di essere i responsabili della sua caduta. L'8 agosto 2013 quasi 10 000 persone di fede islamica hanno percorso in marcia una strada della città di Assiut densamente abitata da cristiani cantando «Islam, Islam, nonostante i cristiani». Alcuni ragazzini hanno scritto con le bombolette spray sui muri «Boicottare i cristiani». Altri hanno scritto «Tawadros è un cane», facendo riferimento al patriarca dei copti, il papa Tawadros II. Su numerose abitazioni, negozi e luoghi di culto di persone di fede cristiana sono state dipinte croci di grandi dimensioni per segnalare la confessione degli occupanti, mentre i copti hanno ricevuto minacce di morte.

1. Quali passi è disposto a intraprendere il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante per chiedere alle autorità egiziane di aprire un'indagine sull'omicidio di Jessi Boulus di 10 anni?

2. Intende il VP/AR affrontare con le competenti autorità egiziane la questione dei diritti delle minoranze e della loro protezione?

3. Come valutano i funzionari UE in servizio nella regione l'inasprimento delle tensioni tra islamisti egiziani e copti cristiani?

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

L'AR/VP ha condannato in termini di assoluta chiarezza l'estrema violenza, le uccisioni e gli attacchi, compresi quelli rivolti a chiese, che hanno fatto seguito alla dispersione di sit-in appoggiati dai Fratelli Musulmani avvenuta a metà agosto. Il 21 agosto 2013, l'AR/VP ha indetto una riunione straordinaria del Consiglio Affari esteri dedicata all'Egitto, nel corso della quale i ministri degli esteri dell'UE hanno adottato conclusioni che si riferivano in modo specifico anche alla distruzione di numerose chiese e agli assalti indirizzati alla comunità copta.

L'UE è a conoscenza delle coercizioni alle quali sono sottoposte diverse minoranze religiose in Egitto ed esprime profonda preoccupazione al riguardo, condannando ogni forma di intolleranza, discriminazione e violenza per motivi di religione o di credo, ovunque ciò avvenga e indipendentemente dalla religione. L'AR/VP ha ripetutamente esortato le autorità egiziane a garantire la libertà di religione e di credo nel paese.

La delegazione dell'UE al Cairo segue da vicino i casi di violenza settaria e nei suoi contatti con le autorità egiziane insiste sull'importanza di evitare discriminazioni per motivi religiosi. Per contribuire ad aumentare il rispetto della libertà di religione e di credo in Egitto, l'AR/VP è pronta a impegnarsi con tutte le parti interessate nel paese e con le organizzazioni regionali e internazionali che condividono i valori e gli obiettivi dell'UE su questo tema.

L'UE ritiene che la cooperazione e il dialogo politico costituiscano i canali più appropriati per incoraggiare e fare pressione sul governo del Cairo in modo che esso intraprenda azioni concrete per proteggere la comunità copta e altre minoranze religiose.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009777/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(30 August 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Deliberate targeting of Egyptian Coptic Christians

On 14 August 2013, a ten-year-old Egyptian Coptic Christian girl, Jessi Boulus, was shot as she walked home from a Bible study class at the Ahmed Esmat Street Evangelical Church in Cairo, where her uncle serves as a pastor. There are concerns that this could be illustrative of the collapse of central authority and the rise in Islamist militancy. The family of the girl plan to meet with Cairo's central prosecutor hoping that their daughter's case will receive a better response, as there has been silence from the authorities up to now. Coptic Christians and other minorities often complain that neither the police nor the judiciary take their cases seriously.

Many Egyptians who back the ousted Muslim Brotherhood leader Mohammed Morsi have accused Christians of being responsible for his downfall. On 8 August 2013, up to 10 000 Islamists marched down the heavily Christian street in the town of Assiut and chanted 'Islamic, Islamic, despite the Christians'. A number of kids spray-painted on the walls 'Boycott the Christians'. Others wrote 'Tawadros is a dog' referring to the Patriarch of the Copts, Pope Tawadros II. Many Christians' homes, shops and places of worship have been marked with large painted crosses, to identify the confession of the occupants and Copts have been subject to death threats.

1. What steps is the Vice-President/High Representative prepared to take in order to ask that the Egyptian authorities take measures to investigate the killing of 10-year-old Jessi Boulus?

2. Does the VP/HR plan to discuss the issue of minority rights and their protection with the relevant Egyptian authorities?

3. What is the assessment of EU officials in the region with regard to the heightening of tensions between Egyptian Islamists and Coptic Christians?

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

The HR/VP condemned in the clearest possible terms the extreme violence, killings and attacks, including on churches, that followed the dispersal in mid-August of the Muslim Brotherhood supported sit-ins. On 21 August 2013, the HR/VP convened an extra-ordinary Foreign Affairs Council on Egypt where EU Foreign Ministers adopted conclusions which also specifically referred to the destruction of many churches and the targeting of the Coptic community.

The EU is aware and concerned about the constraints that different religious minorities face in Egypt and condemns all forms of intolerance, discrimination and violence against persons because of their religion or belief, wherever it takes place and regardless of the religion. The HR/VP is repeatedly calling on the Egyptian authorities to ensure freedom of religion or belief in the country.

The EU Delegation in Cairo is closely following cases of sectarian violence and emphasises the importance of avoiding discrimination on religious grounds in its contacts with Egyptian authorities. In order to support the improvement of freedom of religion or belief in Egypt, the HR/VP is keen to engage with the relevant stakeholders in the country as well as with the regional and international organisations sharing the EU's values and objectives in this respect.

The EU considers that cooperation and political dialogue are the most appropriate channels to encourage and put pressure on Cairo's government so that it will undertake concrete actions in order to protect Copts and other religious minorities.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009778/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(30 agosto 2013)

Oggetto: Omicidio di un politico laico tunisino

Il 26 luglio 2013 il politico laico tunisino Mohamed Brahmi è stato brutalmente ucciso nella città meridionale di Sidi Bouzid e in risposta il più grande sindacato del paese ha indetto uno sciopero generale. Mohamed Brahmi ha svolto la funzione di coordinatore del movimento popolare di sinistra ed è stato anche un oppositore del governo guidato dagli islamisti. Mentre stava uscendo dalla sua abitazione nella periferia di Tunisi è stato tragicamente ucciso da 11 proiettili sparati a bruciapelo.

Stando al quotidiano britannico *The Times*: «È stato crivellato di colpi davanti a sua moglie e ai suoi bambini». Secondo altre versioni prima dell'attentato avrebbe ricevuto una telefonata che lo avrebbe indotto a uscire di casa. È stato ucciso nel giorno della repubblica celebrato in Tunisia, e tra i tunisini cresce la rabbia sul modo di operare del governo e per come sta gestendo la questione. L'atroce omicidio di Brahmi ha soltanto alimentato il livello di malcontento nel paese. All'inizio di quest'anno è stato ucciso un altro politico laico, Chokri Belaid, presumibilmente per mano di estremisti islamici. Stando a un servizio di un notiziario della BBC numerosi giovani tunisini temono che le loro speranze di democrazia vengano annientate dall'intolleranza delle fazioni jihadiste islamiche armate che operano nel paese.

1. Qual è la posizione del Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante circa l'omicidio del politico laico Mohamed Brahmi, il secondo omicidio di alto profilo commesso quest'anno in Tunisia?

2. Quale è la valutazione dei funzionari dell'UE in servizio in Tunisia in merito al coinvolgimento e alla provenienza degli elementi islamici estremisti che operano nel paese e che stanno prendendo di mira i leader laici?

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

Nella dichiarazione rilasciata il 25 luglio 2013 l'AR/VP ha condannato fermamente l'assassinio di M. Brahmi, come aveva fatto nel febbraio 2013 in seguito all'uccisione di C. Belaid. L'UE chiede lo svolgimento tempestivo di indagini efficaci su questi omicidi politici affinché i colpevoli siano assicurati alla giustizia e processati con la massima rapidità. Su un piano politico, l'UE è convinta che il rapido completamento della Costituzione e l'organizzazione delle prossime elezioni politiche costituiscano la miglior risposta collettiva a questi ignobili delitti. Gli esponenti politici e i rappresentanti della società civile devono trovare il necessario compromesso, in uno spirito di consenso, tolleranza e rispetto reciproco, per far progredire il processo di transizione.

L'UE è pienamente consapevole delle minacce terroristiche nella regione, comprese quelle in Tunisia, e segue da vicino gli sviluppi della situazione. Attraverso i suoi strumenti di cooperazione, l'UE sostiene il rafforzamento dello Stato di diritto in tutta la regione e mantiene un dialogo con la Tunisia sulla sicurezza delle frontiere e sulla riforma del settore della sicurezza.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009778/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(30 August 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Assassination of Tunisian secular politician

On 26 July 2013 the Tunisian secular politician Mohamed Brahmi was brutally killed in the southern city of Sidi Bouzid. In response, the country's largest trade union called for a general strike. Mr Brahmi was the coordinator of the leftist Popular Movement. He was also a critic of the Islamist-led government. As he was leaving his home in the suburbs of Tunis, he was tragically killed by 11 bullets shot at point-blank range.

According to *The Times* newspaper (UK): 'He was riddled with bullets in front of his wife and children'. Other reports claim that just before the shooting he had received a telephone call at his home prompting him to leave the house. He was killed on Tunisia's Republic Day, and there is growing anger among Tunisians at the way in which the government is functioning and how it is handling this issue. The atrocious killing of Brahmi has only fuelled the level of discontent in the country. Earlier this year, another secular politician, Chokri Belaid, was killed, allegedly the work of extremist Islamists. According to a BBC News report, many young Tunisians are fearful that their hopes for democracy are being crushed by the intolerance of armed Islamist jihadi factions in the country.

1. What is the position of the Vice-President / High Representativ on the murder of the secular politician Mohamed Brahmi, the second such high-profile assassination in Tunisia this year?

2. What is the assessment of EU officials in Tunis of the involvement and provenance of the extremist Islamist elements in the country who are targeting secular leaders?

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

As expressed in the statement of 25 July 2013, the HR/VP firmly condemned the murder of M. Brahmi, as HR/VP also did following the assassination of C. Belaid (February 2013). The EU calls for prompt and effective investigations on these political assassinations so that perpetrators can be brought to justice and judged without delays. Politically, the EU is convinced that the rapid finalisation of the Constitution and the organisation of the next general elections are the best collective reply to those vile murders. Political actors as well as civil society representatives need to find the necessary compromise in a spirit of consensus, tolerance and mutual respect, so that the transition process can move forward.

The EU is well aware of the terrorist threats in the region, including in Tunisia and is closely following the development of the situation. Through its cooperation instruments, the EU is supporting the strengthening of the rule of law in the country and has a dialogue with Tunisia on border's security and security sector reform.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009779/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(30 agosto 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Tutela del patrimonio archeologico razziato in Egitto

Durante la recente fase di «guerra civile» in Egitto è avvenuto, pressoché indisturbatamente, un vero e proprio saccheggio generalizzato di preziosi reperti archeologici.

Da mesi, infatti, approfittando del caos e dell'attenzione dei media concentrata solo sulle piazze del Cairo, la furia iconoclasta islamista si è abbattuta attaccando molti siti archeologici, i musei più lontani dalla capitale sono stati devastati, le piramidi meno famose e meno protette sono state violate e le loro pietre sono state di nuovo usate per costruire muri e case.

Può l'Alto Rappresentante dell'UE far sapere come e con quali modalità intende intervenire a tutela di un così prezioso patrimonio culturale?

Quali iniziative intende attuare affinché sia avviato il recupero dei beni sottratti, che rischiano di arricchire il traffico internazionale di beni archeologici?

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

L'Unione europea interviene in tutela del patrimonio culturale egiziano tramite discussioni politiche e tecniche con le autorità e le parti interessate, oltre che con l'attuazione di programmi di cooperazione specifici. L'Unione sta seguendo attentamente la situazione del patrimonio culturale con i suoi partner, le autorità egiziane, gli Stati membri e l'UNESCO ([1]).

Si tengono regolarmente riunioni ad alto livello con il ministro delle Antichità, oltre che riunioni tecniche, per individuare adeguati programmi di cooperazione. A questo proposito la delegazione dell'UE ha discusso con gli Stati membri e con i rappresentanti del ministero degli Affari esteri e del ministero delle Antichità a proposito del traffico illecito e del saccheggio dei beni culturali egiziani.

Di conseguenza l'UE sta preparando l'attuazione di due seminari, finanziati nel quadro dello strumento TAIEX ([2]) e incentrati sulle misure da adottare in Egitto per una lotta più efficace al saccheggio dei beni culturali ai fini di tutelare il patrimonio culturale a rischio e sulle modalità di contrasto del traffico illecito. Inoltre l'UE sta preparando programmi di follow up per rafforzare le capacità delle autorità responsabili e per sensibilizzare i cittadini sulla necessità di tutelare il patrimonio culturale a rischio. L'Unione europea si è inoltre impegnata a livello regionale con i programmi Euromed Heritage (fino a gennaio 2013) e Euromed Police (in corso).

L'UE continuerà a collaborare con le autorità egiziane per il recupero e la restituzione dei beni culturali in virtù del quadro di cooperazione UE-Egitto, rispettando la divisione delle competenze con gli Stati membri e gli strumenti internazionali pertinenti per il recupero e la restituzione.

([1]) (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, Organizzazione delle Nazioni unite per l'educazione, la scienza e la cultura).
([2]) Assistenza tecnica e scambio di informazioni.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009779/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(30 August 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Protection of archaeological heritage plundered in Egypt

During the recent period of 'civil war' in Egypt, people have — virtually undisturbed — been looting precious archaeological finds all over the country.

For months now, taking advantage of the chaos and of the media attention that has been focused only on Cairo's squares, Islamist iconoclastic fury has been unleashed, with attacks on numerous archaeological sites. Museums the furthest away from the capital have been destroyed and the less famous, less protected pyramids have been violated and their stones re-used to build walls and houses.

Can the High Representative of the EU say what action she intends to take to protect such a precious cultural heritage?

What steps will she take to initiate the recovery of these stolen assets, which are likely to bolster the international trafficking of archaeological heritage?

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

The European Union is involved in the protection of Egyptian cultural heritage through policy-level and technical discussions with authorities and stakeholders as well as through the implementation of specific cooperation programmes. The European Union is closely monitoring the situation of cultural heritage with its close partners, the Egyptian authorities, Member States and Unesco ([1]).

There are continuous high-level meetings with the Minister of State for Antiquities, as well as on the technical level to identify adequate cooperation programmes. In this respect, the EU Delegation discussed with Member States and representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and of the Ministry of State of Antiquities the illicit trafficking and looting of Egyptian cultural property.

As a a result, the EU is preparing the implementation of two workshops financed under the TAIEX ([2]) instrument, concentrating on measures to be implemented in Egypt to better fight looting of cultural heritage for the protection of cultural heritage at risk and on countering illicit trafficking. Moreover, the EU is preparing future follow-up programmes aiming at reinforcing the capacities of responsible authorities and raising awareness of the need for protecting cultural heritage at risk. Furthermore, the European Union has been working at the regional level through the Euromed Heritage (until January 2013) and Euromed Police Programmes (ongoing).

The EU will continue to cooperate with the Egyptian authorities on the recovery and restitution of cultural property within the context of the EU-Egypt cooperation framework, and respecting the division of competences with Member States as well as the relevant international instruments for recovery and restitution.

([1]) United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation.
([2]) Technical Assistance and Information Exchange.

(Slovenska različica)

Vprašanje za pisni odgovor E-009780/13
za Komisijo
Mojca Kleva Kekuš (S&D)
(30. avgust 2013)

Zadeva: E-zdravstvene storitve

Tehnološki napredek in uporaba tehnologije sta izjemno pomembna pri približevanju zdravstvenega sistema uporabnikom in povečevanju njegove učinkovitosti. Z ustrezno uporabo e-zdravstvenih storitev in izmenjavo informacij naj bi tudi izboljšali rezultate zdravljenja, z bolj kakovostno zdravstveno oskrbo, odpravljanjem neenakosti v zdravstvu ter večjo dostopnostjo kakovostnih zdravstvenih storitev pa zagotovili cenovno dostopnejšo zdravstveno nego. Med glavna vprašanja, na katera je treba poiskati odgovor, sodijo različna obravnava zaradi spola in različne možnosti zaradi dostopa do interneta, pa tudi dostop do zdravstvenih informacij.

— Kako namerava Komisija spodbujati e-zdravstvene storitve med starejšimi, ki nimajo znanja o informacijskih tehnologijah?

— Kako Komisija spodbuja uvajanje e-zdravstvenih storitev v državah v razvoju, zlasti med ženskami, ki običajno ne uporabljajo tehnologije, prav tako pa jim manjka osnovno znanje o informacijskih tehnologijah?

Odgovor komisarke Neelie Kroes v imenu Komisije
(21. oktober 2013)

Opolnomočenost pacienta, digitalna pismenost na zdravstvenem področju, h končnemu uporabniku usmerjen pristop in spodbujanje inovativnih rešitev za starejše generacije so bistvenega pomena za uspešno uvedbo e-zdravja v okviru Akcijskega načrta za e-zdravje za obdobje 2012–2020 – Inovativno zdravstveno varstvo za 21. stoletje ([1]). Komisija tako s programom za konkurenčnost in inovativnost podpira in bo z Obzorjem 2020 še nadalje podpirala ukrepe za povečanje digitalne pismenosti državljanov na zdravstvenem področju. Namen nedavnega pilotnega evropskega partnerstva za inovacije za dejavno in zdravo staranje je povečati obseg uspešnih inovacij, vključno z rešitvami na področju e-zdravja, in izmenjati pomembne prakse, ki se razvijajo in uvajajo s sodelovanjem različnih deležnikov iz celotne Evrope.

Več kot sto organizacij, ki so končne uporabnice storitev, je vključenih v raziskovalne in inovacijske projekte, ki jih financira EU, da se tako pridobijo jasni dokazi o njihovem socialno-ekonomskem vplivu. Tako je na primer projekt CommonWell zajemal vrsto pilotnih storitev in je vključeval več kot 500 starejših državljanov in njihove skrbnike. Rezultati ovrednotenja so dostopni na http://commonwell.eu/commonwell-home/.

Eden od ukrepov iz akcijskega načrta za e-zdravje 2012–2020 je tudi spodbujanje razprav o e-zdravju na globalni ravni za razvoj spretnosti na področju informacijske in komunikacijske tehnologije (IKT). Pomembno je poudariti, da v državah v razvoju že obstajajo številni primeri uporabe inovativnih orodij na področju zdravstvenega varstva, na primer Mobile Alliance for Maternal Action (MAMA), ki nosečnicam in novim materam po mobilnih telefonih v Bangladešu postopno zagotavlja najpomembnejše informacije, ali številni ukrepi na področju nadzora tobaka, npr. za preprečevanje in prenehanje kajenja ter sledenje nezakoniti trgovini.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0736:FIN:SL:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009780/13
to the Commission
Mojca Kleva Kekuš (S&D)
(30 August 2013)

Subject: E-health services

Advancing and using technology is an essential means of making the healthcare system more accessible and effective for consumers. The appropriate use of e-health and information exchange also aims to improve health outcomes and make healthcare more affordable by improving the quality of medical care, decreasing health disparities, and enhancing access to quality medical services. However, the main issues that need to be addressed include gender and digital gaps, as well as access to health information.

— How will the Commission promote e-health services among elderly people lacking IT skills?

— How is the Commission encouraging the implementation of e-health services in developing countries, especially among women who usually do not have access to technology and who lack basic IT knowledge?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(21 October 2013)

Patient empowerment, digital health literacy, end-user centred approach and promotion of innovative solutions towards older generations are essential for successful eHealth deployment as stated in the eHealth Action Plan 2012 — 2020: Innovative healthcare for the 21st century ([1]). Therefore, the Commission supports via the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme and will continue supporting under Horizon 2020, activities aiming at increasing citizens' digital health literacy. The recent European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing aims to scale up successful innovation including eHealth solutions and to exchange notable practices which are developed and deployed by cooperation among various stakeholders from across all of Europe.

More than one hundred end user organisations have been involved in EU funded research and innovation projects to ensure clear evidence of socioeconomic impact. For example the CommonWell project consisted of a series of pilot services with involvement of more than five hundred older citizens as well as their carers. The evaluation results can be found at http://commonwell.eu/commonwell-home/

One of the actions listed in the eHealth Action plan 2012 — 2020 is the promotion of policy discussions on eHealth at global level to develop ICT (Information and Communication Technology) skills. It is worth mentioning that there is already a number of good examples of using innovative tools in healthcare in developing countries such as the Mobile Alliance for Maternal Action (MAMA) which was created to provide new and expectant moms with vital stage-based information via mobile phones in Bangladesh or a series of tobacco control activities e.g. for smoking prevention, cessation and tracking illicit trade.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0736:FIN:EN:PDF

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor P-009781/13
upućeno Komisiji
Oleg Valjalo (S&D)
(30. kolovoza 2013.)

Predmet: Spor Komisije s Hrvatskom u vezi s europskim uhidbenim nalogom

Kao i moje biračko tijelo, prilično sam zabrinut oko mogućeg ishoda spora koji je u tijeku između Komisije i Republike Hrvatske u vezi s europskim uhidbenim nalogom.

S obzirom na negativan učinak koji bi sankcije Komisije koje je najavila povjerenica Reding mogle imati na Hrvatsku, a time neizostavno i na moje birače, bio bih zahvalan ako bi Komisija mogla pojasniti koje konkretne mjere namjerava poduzeti ako:

1. spor između Komisije i Republike Hrvatske u vezi s europskim uhidbenim nalogom potraje u predstojećim tjednima/mjesecima;

2. Vlada Republike Hrvatske, u suradnji s hrvatskim Ministarstvom pravosuđa, postigne djelomičan ili uglavnom zadovoljavajući sporazum s Komisijom?

Odgovor gđe Reding u ime Komisije
(10. listopada 2013.)

Na sastanku potpredsjednice Reding i hrvatskog ministra pravosuđa Miljenića 25. rujna 2013., Hrvatska se obvezala da će bez odgode i bezuvjetno napraviti potrebne izmjene zakona o provedbi Okvirne odluke o europskom uhidbenom nalogu kako bi otklonila vremensko ograničenje primjene europskog uhidbenog naloga u Hrvatskoj koja je država članica izvršenja. Izmijenjeni bi zakon stupio na snagu najkasnije 1. siječnja 2014.

Komisija pozdravlja odluke Republike Hrvatske kojima će se osigurati da počinitelji budu privedeni pravdi te napominje kako će se brzim, učinkovitim i bezuvjetnim usklađivanjem zakona o provedbi europskog uhidbenog naloga s pravnom stečevinom Europske unije omogućiti da svi zahtjevi za predaju osumnjičenih ili osuđenih počinitelja budu obrađeni u okviru sustava europskog uhidbenog naloga bez obzira na vrijeme počinjenja kaznenog djela. Komisija će pomno pratiti ovaj postupak te će u trenutku kada hrvatski zakon bude donesen ponovno ocijeniti njegovu usklađenost s Okvirnom odlukom o europskom uhidbenom nalogu.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009781/13
to the Commission
Oleg Valjalo (S&D)
(30 August 2013)

Subject: Commission dispute with Croatia regarding the European Arrest Warrant

Sharing the concern of my constituents, I am somewhat worried about the possible outcomes of the ongoing dispute between the Commission and the Republic of Croatia regarding the European Arrest Warrant (EAW).

Given the negative effect that the Commission's sanctions — announced by Commissioner Reding — might have on Croatia, and therefore inevitably on my constituents, I would be grateful if the Commission could clarify the exact steps it is planning to take if:

1. The dispute between the Commission and the Republic of Croatia regarding the EAW continues in the coming weeks/months;

2. The Croatian Government, in cooperation with the Croatian Ministry of Justice, reaches a partial or largely satisfactory agreement with the Commission?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(10 October 2013)

On 25 September 2013 at a meeting between Vice-President Reding and Croatian Minister of Justice Miljenić, Croatia has given a commitment to swiftly and unconditionally make the required changes in the law implementing the European arrest warrant Framework Decision in order to remove the time-limitation on Croatia's application of the European arrest warrant as an executing state. The modified law would enter into force at the latest on 1 January 2014.

The Commission welcomes the steps taken by the Republic of Croatia to ensure that criminals are brought to justice and notes that the swift, effective and unconditional alignment of the law implementing the European arrest warrant in line with the *acquis communautaire* will allow for all requests for the surrender of suspected and convicted criminals to be dealt within the European arrest warrant system irrespective of the date of commission of the crime. The Commission will closely watch this process and once the Croatian law is enacted then assess whether it is, again, in line with the European arrest warrant Framework Decision.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-009782/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(2 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Κακοποίηση παιδιών και σεξουαλική παρενόχληση στην Τουρκία

Σύμφωνα με δημοσιεύματα της εφημερίδας *Hurriyet Daily News*, τα ποινικά μητρώα καταδεικνύουν ότι οι περιπτώσεις κακοποίησης παιδιών και σεξουαλικής παρενόχλησης έχουν αυξηθεί σημαντικά μεταξύ 2008 και 2012 στην Τουρκία.

Η περιοχή του Μαρμαρά κατέχει την πρώτη θέση όσον αφορά την κακοποίηση παιδιών, με 29,1% των υποθέσεων για τις οποίες κινήθηκε διαδικασία το 2012, ενώ η Κεντρική Ανατολία έρχεται δεύτερη με 16,7%. Η περιοχή του Μαρμαρά ήταν επίσης η περιοχή με τις περισσότερες αγωγές για σεξουαλική παρενόχληση το 2012 (32,1%), ενώ στη δεύτερη θέση βρίσκεται η περιοχή του Αιγαίου (18,3%).

Όσον αφορά τις ανθρωποκτονίες εκ προθέσεως, η περιοχή του Μαρμαρά ήταν και πάλι η πρώτη στη λίστα, αριθμώντας περίπου 3 405 υποθέσεις το 2012, ενώ η Νότια Ανατολία ήρθε δεύτερη με 2 764 υποθέσεις.

Η Επιτροπή παρακαλείται να απαντήσει στις εξής ερωτήσεις:

1. Ποια είναι η άποψή της σχετικά με αυτό το ζήτημα;

2. Ποια μέτρα πρέπει να ληφθούν για να προστατευθούν τα δικαιώματα των ευάλωτων παιδιών στην Τουρκία;

Απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(25 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή είναι ενήμερη για το θέμα που θίγει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου. Η βία κατά των παιδιών και οι πρόωροι γάμοι εξακολουθούν να προκαλούν ανησυχία.

Οι τουρκικές αρχές έχουν λάβει και σχεδιάζουν να λάβουν μέτρα για την αντιμετώπιση του ζητήματος. Στις 4 Οκτωβρίου 2012, το πρωθυπουργικό γραφείο εξέδωσε εγκύκλιο που εξετάζει την καθιέρωση κέντρων παρακολούθησης για παιδιά σε νοσοκομεία και ιδρύματα που υπάγονται στο Υπουργείο Υγείας, με απώτερο στόχο την πρόληψη της κακοποίησης παιδιών και την παροχή φροντίδας στα παιδιά που είναι θύματα κακοποίησης Τα κέντρα αυτά επιτρέπουν την ταυτόχρονη διεξαγωγή όλων των δικαστικών και των ιατρικών διαδικασιών στο πλαίσιο ενός κέντρου, προκειμένου να μην προκληθεί περαιτέρω βλάβη στο παιδί. Έχει οριστεί αναπληρωτής διαμεσολαβητής ειδικά αρμόδιος για τα δικαιώματα των γυναικών και των παιδιών. Ο Υπουργός Οικογένειας και Κοινωνικών Πολιτικών έχει αναλάβει την ολοκλήρωση μιας εθνικής στρατηγικής για τη βία κατά των παιδιών, η οποία θα συμπληρώνει τις προσπάθειες που καταβάλλονται για την αντιμετώπιση της ενδοοικογενειακής βίας και της βίας στα σχολεία, της κακοποίησης, της εκμετάλλευσης και της παραμέλησης.

Η Τουρκία, ως υποψήφια χώρα στην πορεία προς την προσχώρησή της στην ΕΕ, οφείλει να ενισχύσει τις προσπάθειές της προς αυτή την κατεύθυνση και να εξασφαλίσει ότι τα μέτρα που έχουν ληφθεί και όσα πρόκειται να ληφθούν θα έχουν βιώσιμα αποτελέσματα. Η Επιτροπή θα εξακολουθήσει να παρακολουθεί επισταμένως τις εξελίξεις.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009782/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(2 September 2013)

Subject: Child abuse and sexual harassment in Turkey

According to the Turkish news site *Hurriyet Daily News*, criminal records show that the incidence of child abuse and sexual harassment increased drastically in Turkey between 2008 and 2012.

The Marmara region is ranked number one as regards child abuse, with 29.1% of cases opened in 2012; and Central Anatolia is second, with 16.7%. Marmara was also the region with the most sexual harassment lawsuits filed in 2012 (32.1%), followed by the Aegean region (18.3%).

With regard to intentional homicide, the Marmara region again topped the list, with some 3 405 cases filed in 2012, while South-Eastern Anatolia came second, with 2 764 cases.

The Commission is asked to answer the following:

1. What is its position on this matter?

2. What measures should be taken in order to protect the rights of vulnerable children in Turkey?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(25 October 2013)

The Commission follows the issue raised by the Honourable Member closely. Violence against children and early marriages remain issues of concern.

Turkish authorities have taken, and are planning to take steps to address the issue. With a view to preventing child abuse and treating children victims of abuse, a Circular was issued on 4 October 2012 by the Prime Ministry envisaging the establishment of child monitoring centres within hospitals and institutions affiliated to the Ministry of Health. They allow all judicial and medical procedures to be concluded within one centre and at once, in order to prevent further harm to the child. A Deputy Ombudsman was made specifically responsible for women's and children's rights. The Minister for Family and Social Policies undertook to finalise a National Strategy on Violence against Children, which would complement ongoing efforts to address domestic violence and violence in schools, abuse, exploitation and neglect.

Turkey, as a candidate country on its EU accession path, needs to strengthen efforts in this direction and achieve sustainable impact of the measures adopted and of those planned to be adopted. The Commission will keep on monitoring developments closely.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-009783/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(2 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Η δέσμη μέτρων εκδημοκρατισμού της Τουρκίας

Η τουρκική ημερήσια εφημερίδα Taraf έχει ως πρωτοσέλιδο τη δέσμη μέτρων εκδημοκρατισμού που η κυβέρνηση πρόκειται να δημοσιοποιήσει αυτήν την εβδομάδα.

Η εφημερίδα επικρίνει το γεγονός ότι η αστυνομία θα έχει το δικαίωμα να θέτει υπό κράτηση ύποπτους εγκληματικών πράξεων, χωρίς την έγκριση του εισαγγελέα. Η νέα αυτή ρύθμιση θα ανοίξει ωστόσο τον δρόμο για μαζικές κρατήσεις σε περιπτώσεις δημόσιων ταραχών, όπως οι διαδηλώσεις στο πάρκο Γκεζί. «Η δίκη χωρίς κράτηση θα αποτελεί την εξαίρεση με τη νέα ρύθμιση», αναφέρει η εφημερίδα. Επιπλέον, η δέσμη μέτρων θα προβλέπει βαρύτερες ποινές για διαδηλωτές.

Η *Taraf* περιγράφει τη δέσμη ως «ένα ακόμη βήμα στην προσπάθεια μετατροπής της Τουρκίας σε αστυνομοκρατούμενο κράτος» και ως τμήμα του νέου προγράμματος δράσης της τουρκικής κυβέρνησης που αποσκοπεί στην αποτροπή νέου κύματος διαδηλώσεων στο Γκεζί και στην αντιμετώπιση του «συνδρόμου Γκεζί της κυβέρνησης».

Η δέσμη περιλαμβάνει, μεταξύ άλλων, τη σύσταση ανεξάρτητης επιτροπής παρακολούθησης για την αποτροπή των βασανιστηρίων στην αστυνομία και την χωροφυλακή, σε μία προσπάθεια εκπλήρωσης των απαιτήσεων της ΕΕ. Ωστόσο, η Taraf επισημαίνει ότι η αστυνομία δεν θα παρακολουθείται από ανεξάρτητους επιθεωρητές, αλλά από την γραφειοκρατία, και ότι δεν θα υπάρχει εποπτεία των δυνάμεων ασφαλείας.

Υπό το φως των προαναφερθέντων, η Επιτροπή παρακαλείται να απαντήσει στις εξής ερωτήσεις:

1. Πληροί η νέα αυτή δέσμη μέτρων εκδημοκρατισμού τα πρότυπα που όρισε η ΕΕ για την Τουρκία ως υποψήφια για ένταξη χώρα;

2. Θα προστατεύσει αυτή η δέσμη τα βασικά ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα των Τούρκων πολιτών, συμπεριλαμβανομένου του δικαιώματος στην έκφραση, και θα ενθαρρύνει τη συμμετοχική δημοκρατία, σύμφωνα με τους κανόνες και τις πεποιθήσεις της ΕΕ;

3. Είναι η Επιτροπή αισιόδοξη για τις μεταρρυθμίσεις της Τουρκίας όσον αφορά τη δικαιοσύνη και τα ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα;

Κοινή απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(4 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή παρακολούθησε προσεκτικά τη συνέντευξη τύπου του πρωθυπουργού Ερντογάν στις 30 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013, κατά την οποία ανακοινώθηκε η δέσμη μέτρων εκδημοκρατισμού στην οποία αναφέρεται το Αξιότιμο Μέλος, και επικροτεί την αναφορά του πρωθυπουργού στον καθοδηγητικό ρόλο του κεκτημένου της ΕΕ στις τουρκικές μεταρρυθμίσεις.

Τα μέτρα που ανακοινώθηκαν προσφέρουν προοπτικές προόδου σε σειρά σημαντικών θεμάτων, όπως η χρήση γλωσσών πλην της τουρκικής σε ορισμένες περιπτώσεις, καθώς και σχετικά με τα δικαιώματα των μειονοτήτων, όπως είναι η περίπτωση της μονής Mor Gabriel. Επιπλέον, τα μέτρα δεσμεύουν την Τουρκία να πραγματοποιήσει αλλαγές στο τρέχον υψηλό όριο κοινοβουλευτικής εκπροσώπησης και να επεκτείνει την κρατική χρηματοδότηση των πολιτικών κομμάτων, γεγονός το οποίο αναμένεται να αυξήσει την πολυφωνία. Η Επιτροπή ελπίζει επίσης ότι η εξαγγελία νόμου για την προστασία των προσωπικών δεδομένων θα διευκολύνει τη συνεργασία μεταξύ της ΕΕ και της Τουρκίας σε διάφορους τομείς.

Η Επιτροπή αναμένει πρόοδο σε αυτά τα ζητήματα, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της πλήρους δέσμευσης των κομμάτων της αντιπολίτευσης, και θα παρακολουθεί στενά τη μετατροπή των προτάσεων σε συγκεκριμένες δράσεις, καθώς και την υλοποίησή τους.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-011262/13
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(3 oktober 2013)

Betreft: „Democratization and Human Rights Package" van de Turkse regering

De Turkse regering heeft haar „Democratization and Human Rights Package" gepresenteerd. Daarin staat onder „Right to Assembly and Demonstration" het volgende:

— Rallying places and routes are to be determined by civilian authorities in consultation with political parties, trade unions and related bodies;

— Time periods for rallies and demonstrations are extended;

— Government commissioner will no longer be needed to decide on rallies and demonstrations;

— Board of Assembly Arrangement is strengthened and the authority to decide on terminating rallies and demonstrations is assigned to the Regulatory Authority.

1. Is de Commissie bekend met het „Democratization and Human Rights Package" van de Turkse regering([1])? Hoe beoordeelt de Commissie dit? Welke verwachtingen heeft zij ervan?

2. Hoe interpreteert resp. hoe serieus neemt de Commissie de onder „Right to Assembly and Demonstration" aangekondigde maatregelen, nu in het rapport „Gezi Park Protests — Brutal Denial of the Right to Peaceful Assembly in Turkey"([2]) van Amnesty International juist wordt geconcludeerd „dat de Turkse autoriteiten zich rond de protesten van deze zomer op grote schaal schuldig hebben gemaakt aan mensenrechtenschendingen"?

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

De Commissie heeft zorgvuldig geluisterd naar de persconferentie van eerste minister Erdoğan op 30 september 2013 waarin hij het democratiseringspakket presenteerde waarnaar het geachte Parlementslid verwijst, en is verheugd over de verwijzing door de eerste minister naar de leidende rol van de EU-acquis bij de Turkse hervormingen.

De aangekondigde maatregelen bieden kans op vooruitgang op een reeks belangrijke thema's, zoals het gebruik van andere talen dan het Turks in een aantal gevallen en de rechten van minderheden, zoals in het geval van het Mor Gabriël-klooster. De maatregelen verplichten Turkije ertoe iets te doen aan de huidige hoge drempelwaarden voor de vertegenwoordiging in het Parlement en aan het opener maken van de nationale overheidsfinanciering voor politieke partijen, wat moet leiden tot meer pluralisme. De Commissie hoopt eveneens dat de aankondiging van een wet inzake gegevensbescherming de samenwerking tussen de EU en Turkije op diverse gebieden zal vergemakkelijken.

De Commissie verheugt zich op de vooruitgang bij deze zaken, met inbegrip van het feit dat de oppositiepartijen hierbij volledig zullen worden betrokken, en zij zal van nabij volgen hoe de voorstellen in concrete maatregelen worden vertaald. Zij zal de uitvoering ervan op de voet volgen.

([1]) http://www.akparti.org.tr/english/haberler/democratization-and-human-rights-package/52628.
([2]) http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/EUR44/022/2013/en/0ba8c4cc-b059-4b88-9c52-8fbd652c6766/eur440222013en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009783/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(2 September 2013)

Subject: Turkey's democratisation package

The Turkish daily newspaper *Taraf* gives front-page coverage to the democratisation package that the government is expected to unveil this week.

The paper criticises that the police will be authorised to detain suspected criminals without the prior approval of the prosecutor. This new arrangement will pave the way for mass detentions in cases of public unrest, such as the Gezi park protests. 'Trial without detention will become exceptional with the new arrangement,' the paper says. In addition, the package will envisage heavier penalties for protesters.

Taraf describes the package as 'another step in the bid for transforming Turkey into a police state', and part of the new agenda of the Turkish government to prevent a new wave of Gezi protests and to deal with the 'government's Gezi syndrome.'

The package includes, among others, the establishment of an independent monitoring commission to prevent torture by the police and the gendarmerie, in an effort to meet EU demands. However, *Taraf* highlights that the police will not be monitored by independent inspectors, but by the bureaucracy, and that there will be no oversight of the security forces.

In this light, could the Commission answer the following:

1. Does this new democratisation package meet the standards set by the EU for Turkey as a candidate country?

2. Will this package protect the basic human rights of Turkish citizens, including freedom of expression, and encourage participative democracy in line with EU rules and beliefs?

3. Does the Commission look favourably upon Turkey's reforms with regard to justice and human rights?

Question for written answer E-011262/13
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(3 October 2013)

Subject: 'Democratization and Human Rights Package' from the Turkish Government

The Turkish Government has presented its 'Democratization and Human Rights Package'. It states the following under the heading 'Right to Assembly and Demonstration':

— Rallying places and routes are to be determined by civilian authorities in consultation with political parties, trade unions and related bodies;

— Time periods for rallies and demonstrations are extended;

— Government commissioner will no longer be needed to decide on rallies and demonstrations;

— Board of Assembly Arrangement is strengthened and the authority to decide on terminating rallies and demonstrations is assigned to the Regulatory Authority.

1. Is the Commission familiar with the Turkish Government's 'Democratization and Human Rights Package'? ([1]) What is the Commission's view of it? What expectations does it have of it?

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

2. How does the Commission interpret and how seriously does it take the measures announced under 'Right to Assembly and Demonstration', given now the conclusion just made in the report 'Gezi Park Protests — Brutal Denial of the Right to Peaceful Assembly in Turkey' ([2]) from Amnesty International that Turkish authorities have committed human rights violations on a massive scale this summer against the protests?

Joint answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(4 November 2013)

The Commission has listened carefully to the press conference of Prime Minister Erdoğan on 30 September 2013 in which he announced the democratisation package referred to by the Honourable Member, and welcomes the reference by the Prime Minister to the guiding role of the EU *acquis* in Turkey's reforms.

The announced measures hold out the prospect of progress on a range of important issues, including use of languages other than Turkish in a number of instances and minority rights such as the case of the Mor Gabriel Monastery. The measures also commit Turkey to address changes to the current high thresholds for representation in Parliament and to open up state financing of political parties, which should increase pluralism. The Commission also hopes that the announcement of a law on data protection will facilitate EU/Turkey cooperation in different areas.

The Commission looks forward to progress on these matters, including the full engagement of the opposition parties and will closely follow the translation of the proposals into concrete actions and follow up its implementation.

([2]) http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/EUR44/022/2013/en/0ba8c4cc-b059-4b88-9c52-8fbd652c6766/eur440222013en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009784/13
to the Commission
Brian Simpson (S&D)
(2 September 2013)

Subject: Accompanying measures for sugar protocol countries

In its response to Written Question E-007698/2013 the Commission stated that assistance for sugar producers in the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP) and those countries considered least developed has been targeted through the accompanying measures of the sugar protocol to improve competitiveness and, in some instances, to diversify operations.

1. Can the Commission confirm what percentage of the EUR 1.02 billion package for transitional assistance has been committed to:

— support the improvement in competitiveness, efficiency and production in the sugar industry?

— diversification and withdrawal from sugar production?

2. Moreover, can the Commission provide an assessment of the effectiveness of the use of the assistance package in improving the competitiveness and export capacity of the sugar cane industry for ACP countries?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(28 October 2013)

1. With regards to the objectives of the 18 Multiannual Indicative Programmes and the country allocations, 23% of the funding allocated to the Accompanying Measures of the Sugar Protocol (AMSP) target diversification and adaptation to the social impact of the sugar reform, and 77% finance activities improving the competiveness and efficiency of sugar production ([1]).

2. AMSP actions are evaluated by the EU Delegations according to the Multiannual Indicative Programmes objectives and indicators. Evaluation criteria include relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and impact.

In Trinidad and Tobago, for instance, where it was decided to phase out sugar production, our support under the AMSP contributed to the following results:

— More than 2500 employees coming from the state-owned sugar company Caroni have been re-trained, and a pension plan for all employees has been established.

— A total of 17 agricultural estates, 30 residential estates and 10 industrial estates have been developed on lands formerly under sugar cultivation.

In Mauritius, which aims at improving sugar production and competitiveness, AMSP support has contributed to the following results:

— Two new refineries have been in operation since 2009. Producers of special sugars have further increased their production capacities, focusing on the supply of high value added sugars.

— The share of white sugar in total sugar export from Mauritius has increased from zero per cent in 2009 to about 70% in 2012.

([1]) In a previous response (E-007698/2013), we erroneously indicated that the AMSP is supporting Jamaica with the objective of withdrawing from sugar production. We recognise and support the Jamaica Country Strategy for the Adaptation of the Sugar Cane Industry 2006-2020 which includes the following objectives: to develop and maintain a sustainable private sector led Sugar Cane industry; to strengthen the economic diversification, social resilience and environmental sustainability of sugar dependent areas; and to support progress towards macroeconomic goals national adaptation strategy targeting. We present our apologies for any inconvenience caused.

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor E-009785/13
upućeno Komisiji
Dubravka Šuica (PPE)
(2. rujna 2013.)

Predmet: Problem ometanja frekvencija na hrvatskoj obali

Štetnim ometanjem signala preko talijanskih televizijskih i radijskih odašiljača, koji se koriste frekvencijama koje nisu dogovorene na međunarodnoj razini i tehničkim parametrima koji na toj razini nisu usklađeni, izravno se krše međunarodni sporazumi i nanosi izravna šteta Hrvatskoj i njezinim građanima.

Tim se ometanjem izravno krše prava na frekvencije dodijeljena Republici Hrvatskoj i stvaraju problemi u prijemu televizijskog i radijskog signala duž hrvatske obale. Najviše su pogođeni Istra, Dubrovnik i jadranski otoci. Ometanjem se onemogućuju i smanjuju zone prijema signala naših odašiljača te nanosi znatna gospodarska šteta i izazivaju veliko nezadovoljstvo i frustracija među našim građanima.

Talijanski odašiljači i dalje emitiraju na svim radijskim i televizijskim frekvencijskim spektrima, ne poštujući pritom sporazume Ženeva 84 (za radio) i Ženeva 06 (za televiziju). Zbog toga je jedino trajno raspoloživo rješenje primjena tehničkih i regulatornih odredbi utvrđenih međunarodnim sporazumima.

Kako Komisija može pomoći Hrvatskoj u rješavanju problema štetnog ometanja signala preko talijanskih odašiljača, čime se nanosi znatna gospodarska šteta i izazivaju veliko nezadovoljstvo i frustracija među našim građanima?

Odgovor gđe Kroes u ime Komisije
(14. listopada 2013.)

Komisija je svjesna prekograničnih smetnji u radijskoj frekvenciji koje stvaraju određene emisije Italije u Hrvatskoj i drugim državama članicama, posebice u slučaju televizijskih odašiljača visoke snage. U ovoj fazi radiofrekvencijski pojas 470 — 790 MHZ nije usklađen na razini EU-a te su prekogranične smetnje u prijemu radijske frekvencije DVB-T prvenstveno dvostrano pitanje između Hrvatske i Italije. Jedan način rješavanja tog problema jest da nadležna hrvatska regulatorna tijela to pitanje upute nadležnim talijanskim tijelima na dvostranoj osnovi. Država članica koja se suočava s prekograničnim problemima povezanima s koordinacijom frekvencija ili štetnim interferencijskim problemima može zatražiti intervenciju „dobre usluge" Skupine za politiku radiofrekvencijskog spektra (RSPG), koja je savjetodavna skupina pri Komisiji ([1]). I Hrvatska i Italija članice su RSPG-a. Hrvatska agencija za poštu i elektroničke komunikacije (HAKOM) ima predstavnika u RSPG-u i može bilo kada podnijeti zahtjev za pomoć putem postupka „dobre usluge" RSPG-a unutar europodručja, ako to smatra primjerenim.

([1]) Dodatne informacije o mogućnosti dobivanja pomoći od RSPG-a možete pronaći u sljedećim dokumentima:
https://circabc.europa.eu/sd/d/0fb28fab-3007-46b4-bdbf-883b02da318c/RSPG12-409%20on%20EU%20assistance%20as%20Adopted.pdf
http://rspg-spectrum.eu/_documents/documents/meeting/rspg29/rspg12-420_final-rfr_eu_assistance_bilateral_coordination.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009785/13
to the Commission
Dubravka Šuica (PPE)
(2 September 2013)

Subject: Frequency interference problem on the Croatian coast

Harmful interference of Italian television and radio transmitters, which are operating at frequencies that are not internationally concerted and using technical parameters that are not internationally harmonised, is directly violating international agreements and causing direct damage to Croatia and its citizens.

These interferences are in direct violation of frequency rights that are granted to the Republic of Croatia and cause problems for television and radio reception along the Croatian coast. Istria, Dubrovnik and the Adriatic islands are the areas most affected. The interferences preclude and reduce the reception zone of our transmitters and cause significant economic damage as well as strong dissatisfaction and frustration among our citizens.

Currently, Italian transmitters continue to broadcast on all frequency spectrums for radio and television while not respecting the 'Geneva 84' (radio) and 'Geneva 06' (television) agreements. The only permanent solution available, therefore, is to apply technical and regulatory provisions set out in international agreements.

How can the Commission help Croatia deal with this problem of harmful interferences of Italian transmitters which cause significant economic damage and strong dissatisfaction and frustration among our citizens?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(14 October 2013)

The Commission is aware of cross-border radio frequency interferences generated by certain Italian emissions in Croatia and other Member States, particularly in the case of high-power TV transmitters. At this stage, the UHF-TV frequency band 470 — 790 MHZ is not harmonised at EU level, and cross border radio frequency DVB-T interference is therefore primarily a bilateral issue between Croatia and Italy. A possible way to address this issue is for the responsible Croatian national regulatory authority to raise this issue on a bilateral basis with the respective Italian authorities. A Member State which faces cross-border frequency coordination issues or harmful interference problems may also request the 'good offices' intervention from the Radio Spectrum Policy Group (RSPG), an advisory group to the Commission ([1]). Both Croatia and Italy are members of the RSPG. The 'Hrvatska agencija za poštu i elektroničke komunikacije' (HAKOM) is represented at the RSPG and may file a request for assistance through the (intra-EU) RSPG 'good offices' procedure at any time if it considers it appropriate.

([1]) More information about possible assistance of the RSPG can be found in the following documents:
https://circabc.europa.eu/sd/d/0fb28fab-3007-46b4-bdbf-883b02da318c/RSPG12-409%20on%20EU%20assistance%20as%20Adopted.pdf
http://rspg-spectrum.eu/_documents/documents/meeting/rspg29/rspg12-420_final-rfr_eu_assistance_bilateral_coordination.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009786/13
to the Commission
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(2 September 2013)

Subject: South Tyrol transport pass

I have been contacted by a constituent who informs me that a discriminatory regulation is preventing Britons and other non-Italian EU citizens from obtaining cheap travel in South Tyrol, northern Italy.

My constituent tells me that the regional transport system, SII, offers a number of travel passes for use on the bus and train network. He says that, according to the SII website, the pass is available to all citizens of the EU and to anyone working or studying in South Tyrol. However, he says that those who apply for the pass must provide a 'Stuernummer', an Italian state tax number, on their application form.

My constituent tells me that his application was rejected because he does not have an Italian tax number. When he contacted SII, he was told to contact the Italian Finance Ministry to obtain a tax number. However, he believes that he would not be eligible for this as he does not work or pay tax in Italy.

As SII appears to be in breach of the statements on its own website, could the Commission

1. investigate and state if it believes SII to be in breach of any EU legislation on non-discrimination towards EU citizens?

2. take action to ensure that the relevant Italian authorities enable EU citizens to apply for the pass without the need to supply an Italian state tax number?

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

The Commission is committed to ensuring the full respect of the principle of non-discrimination on grounds of nationality enshrined in Article 18 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (the Treaty) and the right of every Union citizen to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States, subject to the limitations and conditions laid down in the Treaties and by the measures adopted to give them effect.

Articles 18 and 21(1) of the Treaty as confirmed by the Court of Justice require that Union citizens should be treated outside of their Member State of origin similarly to the nationals of the host Member State when they are in a similar situation unless differential treatment can be justified by objective considerations of public interest that are independent of nationality of the persons concerned and are proportionate to the legitimate aim of the national provisions (see for example Case C-103/08 Gottwald).

The issue raised by the Honourable Member has not been brought to the attention of the Commission so far. The Commission will request further information on that particular aspect of the South Tyrolese bus and train fare scheme so as to assess whether it complies with the Treaty. It will inform the Honourable Member of its findings.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009787/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(2 septembre 2013)

Objet: Bayer et Syngenta s'entêtent à tuer les abeilles

Sensibilisée à la disparition des abeilles, la Commission, avec l'appui du Parlement européen, avait confirmé, à l'époque, sa décision de restreindre pendant deux ans à compter du 1er décembre prochain l'utilisation de trois produits chimiques (la clothianidine, l'imidaclopride et le thiaméthoxame) utilisés dans des pesticides fabriqués par les groupes Bayer et Syngenta et considérés comme responsables de l'hécatombe. Leur utilisation sera proscrite pour le traitement des semences, l'application au sol (en granulés) et le traitement foliaire des végétaux, y compris des céréales (à l'exception des céréales d'hiver), qui attirent les abeilles. Bruxelles avait ensuite décidé, en juillet, d'interdire pour deux ans l'utilisation à l'air libre du fipronil, un insecticide réputé mortel pour les abeilles, fabriqué par le groupe allemand BASF.

Les deux pesticides de Bayer à base de clothianidine et d'imidaclopride sont sur le marché depuis plusieurs années et ont reçu une autorisation de commercialisation, a fait valoir Bayer mardi. Pour Bayer, une plainte a été déposée devant la Cour de Justice de l'Union pour lui permettre d'y voir plus clair dans la réglementation européenne.

«Nous avons besoin de conditions générales fiables pour décider de futurs investissements», a souligné le porte-parole de Bayer CropScience.

«Nous aurions préféré ne pas intenter une action en justice, mais nous n'avons pas le choix étant donné que nous sommes persuadés que la Commission a établi à tort un lien entre le thiaméthoxame et le déclin de la santé des abeilles», a pour sa part expliqué mardi le directeur opérationnel du groupe suisse Syngenta, John Atkin, cité dans un communiqué

Quelles sont les réponses de la Commission à l'argumentation des entreprises citées?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(4 octobre 2013)

La Commission a connaissance des actions en justice engagées par les entreprises Bayer et Syngenta. Elle défendra autant que nécessaire, devant les tribunaux, les mesures qu'elle a adoptées.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009787/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(2 September 2013)

Subject: Are Bayer and Syngenta determined to kill bees?

Against the backdrop of declining bee populations, the Commission, with the support of the European Parliament, confirmed its decision to restrict for a period of two years as from 1 December 2013 the use of three chemical products (clothianidin, imidacloprid and thiamethoxam) used in pesticides manufactured by the Bayer and Syngenta groups and which are thought to be responsible for the deaths of millions of bees. Their use will be banned in the treatment of seeds, and as pesticides spread on the soil (in granule form) or sprayed on the leaves of plants, including cereals (except for winter cereals), which attract bees. Subsequent to that decision, the Commission decided, in July 2013, to prohibit for two years the spraying of fipronil in the open air, an insecticide produced by the German group BASF which is believed to kill bees.

According to a statement issued recently by Bayer, its two clothianidin and imidaclopride-based pesticides have been on the market for several years and were granted marketing authorisation. Bayer has filed a complaint with the European Court of Justice seeking a clarification.

According to its spokesperson, Bayer Cropscience needs a stable legal framework on which to base future investment decisions.

Swiss company Syngenta's chief operating officer, John Atkin, said in a statement issued recently that 'we would prefer not to take legal action but have no other choice given our firm belief that the Commission wrongly linked thiamethoxam to the decline in bee health'.

What is the Commission's response to the arguments put forward by Bayer and Syngenta?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(4 October 2013)

The Commission is aware of the legal actions initiated by Bayer and Syngenta and will defend the measures taken in Court as necessary.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009788/13
à la Commission
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(2 septembre 2013)

Objet: Crise humanitaire en Syrie

Selon l'Organisation des Nations unies, les réfugiés syriens traversent la pire crise humanitaire depuis le génocide rwandais. Ils sont 6 000 à fuir leur pays chaque jour. Plus d'1,8 million de Syriens ont trouvé refuge dans les pays voisins, dont les deux tiers depuis le début de l'année.

La situation se dégrade de jour en jour et les enfants sont les premières victimes du drame humanitaire qui se joue depuis plus de deux ans en Syrie. Ils sont aujourd'hui un million à devoir fuir dans les pays limitrophes pour se réfugier dans les camps ou dans des abris de fortune, parfois sans leur famille. C'est une génération entière qui est aujourd'hui traumatisée, privée de foyer et de repères, et qui a désespérément besoin de soutien.

En Syrie, près de la moitié des 6,8 millions de Syriens ayant besoin d'une aide d'urgence sont aussi des enfants. Selon le Programme alimentaire mondial, 4 millions de personnes ne sont plus en mesure de se nourrir.

1. Quelles mesures humanitaires urgentes la Commission a-t-elle prises pour soulager la situation de la population syrienne?

2. Avec quelles organisations la Commission collabore-t-elle afin de faire parvenir l'aide humanitaire aux réfugiés?

3. Quels sont les moyens déployés par la Commission vis-à-vis des enfants syriens?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Georgieva au nom de la Commission
(28 octobre 2013)

1. Outre l'aide humanitaire fournie par les États membres, qui s'élève à 1,014 milliard d'euros, l'UE a, depuis fin 2011 et en réponse directe aux crises, mobilisé 943 millions d'euros au total (aide humanitaire: 515 millions d'euros; aide économique, aide au développement et aide à la stabilisation: 428 millions d'euros) pour des activités mises en œuvre en Syrie et ailleurs. L'aide humanitaire de l'UE soutient en priorité des réponses médicales urgentes destinées à sauver des vies, la fourniture de médicaments essentiels, de nourriture et de compléments alimentaires, l'approvisionnement en eau potable, des services d'assainissement et d'hygiène, la fourniture d'abris, la distribution de produits non alimentaires de base et la protection des plus vulnérables dans la région (personnes déplacées à l'intérieur du pays, réfugiés, communautés d'accueil).

2. L'UE fournit son aide humanitaire par l'intermédiaire des Nations unies et d'ONG internationales, en respectant les principes humanitaires.

3. Au titre de son budget humanitaire, la Commission soutient dix partenaires dans la région pour des activités en rapport direct avec la protection des enfants et avec les violences à caractère sexiste. La Commission applique des critères de vulnérabilité stricts lorsqu'elle sélectionne les projets à financer. Or les enfants sont souvent ceux qui ont, comparativement, le plus grand besoin d'aide et qui sont, par conséquent, les bénéficiaires directs d'une aide destinée à sauver des vies, qui comprend de la nourriture, des services de santé, de l'eau, des services d'assainissement et d'hygiène, des abris et des produits non alimentaires. À ce jour, la Commission a également affecté plus de 124 millions d'euros à la fourniture de services éducatifs aux enfants touchés par le conflit en Syrie et dans les pays voisins.

Le 25 septembre, la Commission a organisé, conjointement avec le ministre jordanien des affaires étrangères, M. Judeh, une réunion de haut niveau en marge de l'Assemblée générale des Nations unies. L'accent était mis tout particulièrement sur le sort des enfants syriens et sur les mesures nécessaires pour assurer leur protection.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009788/13
to the Commission
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(2 September 2013)

Subject: Humanitarian crisis in Syria

According to the United Nations, Syrian refugees are facing the world's worst humanitarian crisis since the Rwandan genocide. Six thousand Syrians are fleeing their country every day. More than 1.8 million Syrians have sought refuge in neighbouring countries, two thirds of whom have fled this year alone.

The situation is getting worse every day. What is more, it is children who are the primary victims of the humanitarian crisis, which has now been raging in Syria for more than two years. So far a million children have been forced to flee to neighbouring countries, where they live in refugee camps or makeshift shelters, sometimes without their families. An entire generation has been traumatised, left homeless and deprived of all points of reference. They are now desperately in need of help.

In Syria almost half of the 6.8 million Syrians in need of emergency aid are children. According to the World Food Programme, four million people no longer have the means to feed themselves.

1. What urgent humanitarian measures has the Commission taken to improve the situationfor the Syrian people?

2. What organisations is it working with to make sure that humanitarian aid reaches therefugees?

3. What has it done to support Syrian children?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(28 October 2013)

1. In addition to EUR 1.014 billion of humanitarian assistance provided by Member States, the EU has, since the end of 2011 and in direct response to the crises, mobilised EUR 943 million (humanitarian aid: EUR 515 million; economic, development and stabilisation assistance: EUR 428 million) of total support for activities inside and outside Syria. The EU humanitarian assistance primarily supports life-saving medical emergency responses, the provision of essential drugs, food and nutritional items, safe water, sanitation and hygiene shelter, distribution of basic non-food items and protection to help the most vulnerable in the region (Internally Displaced People, refugees, host communities).

2. The EU provides its humanitarian assistance through the UN and international NGOs in line with humanitarian principles.

3. The Commission supports ten partners in the region for activities directly related to child protection and gender-based violence under its humanitarian budget. The Commission uses strict vulnerability criteria when selecting projects for funding. Consequently, children often have the relatively greatest need of aid and are therefore the direct recipients of life-saving assistance including food, health, water, sanitation and hygiene, shelter and non-food items. The Commission has also provided to date more than EUR 124 million to provide education services to affected children in Syria and in the neighbouring countries.

On the 25 September, the Commission co-hosted a High-Level meeting together with the Jordanian Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr Judeh in the margins of the UN General Assembly week. The meeting included a special focus on the plight of Syrian children and measures needed to ensure their protection.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009789/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(2 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Dolcificanti artificiali: nuovi rischi per la salute dell'uomo rispetto allo zucchero naturale

Da una revisione di recenti studi su bevande e cibi dolcificati artificialmente o zuccherati, emerge che i dolcificanti artificiali, sostitutivi dello zucchero, anche quelli a calorie zero, non sono meno rischiosi per la salute rispetto allo zucchero vero e non costituiscono un'alternativa più salutare allo zucchero raffinato o allo sciroppo di glucosio. Inoltre, vi è un effetto boomerang: se si consumano tanti prodotti dolcificati artificialmente, la risposta dell'organismo sia a livello cerebrale sia a livello metabolico risulta attenuata perché i dolcificanti non saziano la voglia di dolce che è insita nel cervello e anche perché non stimolano l'insulina come sa fare lo zucchero. Ciò significa che affidandosi troppo a cibi e bevande dolcificati artificialmente si rischia di finire per mangiare di più; le prove che si sono accumulate negli ultimi anni suggeriscono che i consumatori assidui di sostituti dello zucchero (saccarina, sucralosio, aspartame ecc.) potrebbero anche essere a maggior rischio di ingrassare e di ammalarsi di sindrome metabolica, di diabete e malattie cardiovascolari. Da dati attuali, il consumo frequente di dolcificanti può avere effetti inaspettati e dare disturbi metabolici. Consumare cibi dolci a basso contenuto calorico interferisce con le risposte dell'organismo che contribuiscono all'equilibrio energetico; quindi, il messaggio è che sia lo zucchero sia i dolcificanti vanno usati con moderazione e cautela. La voglia di dolce risulta insoddisfatta e il cervello non si attiva per inviare gli stimoli necessari alla produzione di insulina. La conseguenza è che non ci si sente sazi, si mangia di più e si continua ad introdurre calorie attraverso l'assunzione di altri cibi, fino ad ottenere l'appagamento sperato, che potrebbe però essere accompagnato dall'accumulo di chili di troppo.

Chi soffre di problemi di obesità o di diabete, o chi sperava di dimagrire grazie ad aspartame, saccarina e altri dolcificanti artificiali, ha probabilmente una sola alternativa dal punto di vista dei dolcificanti: optare per la frutta fresca o essiccata e per soluzioni più naturali, come la stevia, oltre a diminuire in generale il consumo di alimenti dolci, sfuggendo alla dipendenza dagli zuccheri artificiali e raffinati.

Alla luce di quanto esposto, può la Commissione far sapere che posizione intende assumere circa l'aumento del consumo di bevande e cibi dolcificati artificialmente, e se intende predisporre uno studio aggiornato sulla valutazione dei rischi connessi alla salute dei consumatori abituali?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(10 ottobre 2013)

Gli edulcoranti destinati ad essere utilizzati nei prodotti alimentari sono disciplinati nell'UE dal regolamento (CE) n. 1333/2008 ([1]) relativo agli additivi alimentari. Tale regolamento stabilisce l'elenco di tutti gli edulcoranti autorizzati che possono essere immessi sul mercato in quanto tali e le loro condizioni d'impiego nei prodotti alimentari.

L'articolo 7 di tale regolamento definisce le condizioni d'impiego specifiche per gli edulcoranti, incluso l'impiego per sostituire gli zuccheri nella produzione di alimenti a ridotto contenuto calorico, alimenti non cariogeni o alimenti senza zuccheri aggiunti, per produrre alimenti destinati a un'alimentazione particolare o per sostituire gli zuccheri qualora ciò consenta di prolungare la durata di conservazione degli alimenti.

Onde proteggere la salute umana, la sicurezza degli additivi destinati ad essere utilizzati nei prodotti alimentari per il consumo umano va valutata prima che essi siano immessi sul mercato dell'Unione. La Commissione ha inoltre istituito un programma relativo a una nuova valutazione, da parte dell'Autorità europea per la sicurezza alimentare (EFSA), della sicurezza degli additivi alimentari autorizzati nell'Unione anteriormente al 20 gennaio 2009 ([2]). Per tale nuova valutazione l'EFSA tiene conto delle informazioni sull'esposizione umana agli additivi alimentari collegata alla catena alimentare (schemi di consumo e utilizzi, livelli attuali e massimi di utilizzo, frequenza di consumo e altri fattori che incidono sull'esposizione).

La Commissione segue da vicino il programma di nuova valutazione e prenderà, ove necessario, opportuni provvedimenti in base ai risultati riportati nei pareri scientifici.

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 1333/2008 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 16 dicembre 2008, relativo agli additivi alimentari.
([2]) Regolamento (UE) n. 257/2010 della Commissione, del 25 marzo 2010, che istituisce un programma relativo a una nuova valutazione degli additivi alimentari autorizzati conformemente al regolamento (CE) n. 1333/2008 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio relativo agli additivi alimentari.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009789/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(2 September 2013)

Subject: Artificial sweeteners — new risks to human health compared to natural sugar

A review of recent studies on sweetened or artificially sweetened foods and beverages has shown that artificial sweeteners, or sugar substitutes — even those with zero calories — are no less hazardous to health than real sugar and are not a healthier alternative to refined sugar or glucose syrup. There is also a boomerang effect: if many artificially sweetened products are consumed, the body's response, both in the brain and metabolism, is attenuated because the sweeteners do not fulfil the desire for sweetness that is inherent in the brain and also because they do not trigger an insulin response in the same way as sugar. This means that by relying too heavily on artificially sweetened foods and drinks you are likely to end up eating more. The evidence that has been building up over the years suggests that regular consumers of sugar substitutes (saccharin, sucralose, aspartame, etc.) could also be at greater risk of gaining weight and becoming ill with metabolic syndrome, diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

According to current data, frequent consumption of sweeteners can have unexpected effects and give rise to metabolic disorders. Consumption of low-calorie sweet foods interferes with the body's responses that contribute to energy balance — the message is, therefore, that both sugar and sweeteners should be used sparingly and cautiously. Sweet cravings are not satisfied and the brain does not send out the necessary stimuli for insulin production. The result is that you do not feel full, you eat more and continue to introduce calories by eating other foods until you obtain the desired level of satisfaction, which could, however, be accompanied by weight gain.

People suffering from obesity or diabetes, or those who hope to lose weight thanks to aspartame, saccharin and other artificial sweeteners, probably have only one alternative as far as sweets are concerned — that of opting for fresh or dried fruit, or for more natural solutions, such as stevia, as well as reducing their consumption of sweet foods, thereby escaping from their dependence on artificial and refined sugars.

In the light of the above, can the Commission say what position it intends to adopt with regard to the increased consumption of artificially sweetened foods and beverages and whether it intends to carry out an updated study on the assessment of the health-related risks for regular consumers?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(10 October 2013)

Sweeteners for use in foodstuffs are regulated within the EU by Regulation (EC) No 1333/2008 ([1]) on food additives. This legislation sets out the list of all permitted sweeteners which may be placed on the market as such and their conditions of use in foods.

Article 7 of that regulation establishes the specific conditions of use for sweeteners, including replacing sugars for the production of energy-reduced food, non-cariogenic food or food with no added sugars, for producing food intended for particular nutritional uses or replacing sugars where this permits an increase in the shelf-life of the food.

In order to protect human health, the safety of additives for use in foodstuffs for human consumption must be assessed before they are placed on the Union market. In addition, the Commission set up a programme for the re-evaluation, by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), of the safety of food additives that were already permitted in the Union before 20 January 2009 ([2]). For this re-evaluation EFSA takes into account information on the human exposure to the food additives from food (e.g. consumption pattern and uses, actual use levels and maximum use levels, frequency of consumption and other factors influencing exposure, including high level consumers).

The Commission is closely following the re-evaluation programme and if needed, appropriate measures will be taken based on the outcomes indicated in the scientific opinions.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1333/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 on food additives.
([2]) Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 257/2010 of 25 March 2010 setting up a programme for the re-evaluation of approved food additives in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1333/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council on food additives.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009790/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(2 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Ghiandola tiroidea: benefici da alimenti ricchi di iodio ma svantaggi da inquinamento ambientale

Lo iodio contenuto in pesci, molluschi, crostacei, alghe, frutta e verdura coltivate vicino al mare protegge la ghiandola tiroidea da malattie. Infatti, nelle popolazioni che vivono sul mare e si nutrono del pescato si registra la più bassa incidenza di patologie della tiroide, quali gozzi, noduli e neoplasie.

L'alimentazione è la fonte principale per prevenire tali malattie. Gli esperti indicano tra i cibi ricchi di iodio sia il pesce fresco che i prodotti coltivati su terreni costieri in cui è presente questo elemento; a questi vanno aggiunti i broccoli, gli spinaci, le rape e la salsa di soia, alimenti ricchi di iodio.

Nonostante l'Italia sia circondata dal mare, con quasi 8mila km di coste, è tra i paesi in cui si è più esposti alle patologie della tiroide. Tra le cause la trasmissione genetica ed ereditaria, un'inadeguata assunzione di iodio e problemi ambientali, che potrebbero essere riferibili a centrali elettriche e attività industriali. Si pensi che ogni anno in Italia si assiste a più di 40mila interventi per asportazione della tiroide, nel 20 % dei casi per neoplasie e tumori.

Considerato che:

— il pesce fresco si dimostra uno degli alimenti salva tiroide più salutari e importanti, in una dieta che deve essere il più varia possibile;

— la ghiandola tiroidea è influenzata notevolmente dall'inquinamento ambientale e dalla presenza di polveri sottili ed allergeni nell'aria inquinata;

può la Commissione far sapere:

1. Se intende fornire maggiori informazioni e linee guida su una corretta alimentazione a protezione della ghiandola tiroidea, visti i benefici degli alimenti ricchi di iodio?

2. Che posizione assume rispetto agli studi della ricerca medica che evidenziano una stretta relazione tra infiammazione della ghiandola tiroidea e inquinamento ambientale?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(14 ottobre 2013)

1. Il tenore di iodio di un alimento può essere etichettato se almeno una quantità significativa di iodio è presente nell'alimento stesso ([1]). È inoltre consentito agli alimenti di recare la seguente indicazione autorizzata sulla salute: «Lo iodio contribuisce alla normale produzione di ormoni della tiroide e alla normale funzione tiroidea» se sono conformi alle specifiche condizioni previste per utilizzare tale indicazione, vale a dire possiedono un contenuto minimo di iodio ([2]). Rientra inoltre nell'ambito di responsabilità degli Stati membri controllare la situazione nutrizionale della popolazione e decidere se intendono o no intraprendere iniziative per rimediare a un'insufficiente assunzione di elementi nutritivi essenziali, come le campagne d'informazione. Alcuni Stati membri hanno affrontato il problema della carenza di iodio nella popolazione adottando misure volontarie od obbligatorie per un incremento del contenuto di iodio negli alimenti, categorie di misure entrambe consentite dalla normativa dell'UE in materia di prodotti alimentari.

2. La Commissione non è al corrente di studi che colleghino l'infiammazione della tiroide all'inquinamento ambientale. Le strategie di prevenzione basate sui rischi e le politiche di promozione della salute sono elementi dell'iniziativa Horizon 2020, che sarà lanciata tra breve — Programma quadro per la ricerca e l'innovazione (2014-2020) ([3]).

([1]) Regolamento (UE) n. 1169/2011. GU L 304 del 22/11/2011, pagg. 18-63.
([2]) Regolamento (UE) n. 432/2012 della Commissione. GU L 136 del 25/5/2012 pagg. 1-40 .
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/index_en.cfm.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009790/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(2 September 2013)

Subject: The thyroid gland: benefits of iodine-rich food and effects of environmental pollution

The iodine in fish, shellfish, crustaceans, algae, and fruit and vegetables grown near the sea protects the thyroid gland from disease. In fact, people who live by the sea and eat fish have the lowest recorded incidence of thyroid disorders such as goitre, nodules and neoplasia.

Eating properly is the best way to prevent these disorders. Experts advise that foods rich in iodine include fresh fish and produce grown on coastal soil in which iodine is present. Broccoli, spinach, turnips and soya sauce are also foods with a high iodine content.

Italy is surrounded by the sea, with almost 8 000 km of coastline. Nonetheless it is one of the countries with the highest rates of thyroid disorders. Reasons for this include genetic and hereditary transmission, insufficient iodine intake and environmental problems, which could be related to power stations and the effects of industry. There are said to be more than 40 000 operations to remove part or all of the thyroid every year in Italy, in 20% of cases on account of neoplasia and tumours.

Fresh fish, eaten as part of a diet that is as varied as possible, has been proven to be one of the most important and healthiest foods for protecting the thyroid.

The thyroid gland is particularly affected by environmental pollution and the presence of fine particulates and allergens in polluted air.

1. In light of the benefits of food rich in iodine, does the Commission plan to provide more information and guidelines on what foods help protect the thyroid gland?

2. What is the Commission's view of medical research demonstrating a close link between inflammation of the thyroid gland and environmental pollution?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(14 October 2013)

1. The iodine content of a food may be labelled if at least a significant amount of iodine is present in the food ([1]). Also, foods are allowed to bear the authorised health claim: 'iodine contributes to the normal production of thyroid hormones and normal thyroid function' if they meet the specific conditions of use for this claim, i.e. a minimum amount of iodine ([2]). Furthermore, it is the responsibility of Member States to monitor the nutritional situation of the population, and to decide whether or not they wish to take initiatives to address insufficient intake of essential nutrients, such as information campaigns. Some Member States have addressed iodine deficiency in the population by voluntary or mandatory food fortification with iodine, which are both allowed by EU food legislation.

2. The Commission is not aware of studies linking thyroid inflammation to environmental pollution. Risk-based prevention strategies and health promotion policies is one aspect that will be addressed by the soon-to-start Horizon 2020 — The framework Programme For Research And Innovation (2014-2020) ([3]).

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011. OJL 304, 22/11/2011 P. 0018 — 0063.
([2]) Commission Regulation (EU) No 432/2012. OJL 136, 25/5/2012 P. 0001 — 0040.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/index_en.cfm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009791/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(2 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Recupero dei patrimoni occultati indebitamente dagli ex regimi di Egitto, Libia e Tunisia

In seguito agli avvenimenti e alle rivolte di piazza della cosiddetta «primavera araba» sono stati rovesciati tre regimi dell'Africa settentrionale: il governo di Muammar Gheddafi in Libia, Hosni Mubarak in Egitto e Zine el Abidine Ben Ali in Tunisia. Tra i crimini, accertati o meno, commessi negli ultimi decenni in tali paesi su mandato dei governanti vi è anche l'appropriazione indebita e l'occultamento di beni e disponibilità economiche. I fatti in questione non hanno una rilevanza marginale poiché, seppure non sia possibile redigere delle stime esatte dei patrimoni accumulati nel corso degli anni in conseguenza della natura illegale delle attività, si presume che le fortune sottratte da Gheddafi e Mubarak possano ammontare anche a diverse decine di miliardi di dollari mentre ben più contenuta sembra essere la ricchezza estorta da Ben Ali. In seguito alle elezioni e alla nomina di governi democratici, le autorità dei Paesi protagonisti della primavera araba stanno cercando di istruire indagini e processi nei confronti degli esponenti dei regimi coinvolti nelle attività di espropriazione e occultamento dei beni, ma le difficoltà, soprattutto di carattere burocratico, che devono fronteggiare per il recupero di quanto sottratto sono spesso un ostacolo arduo da superare, anche in conseguenza delle limitate conoscenze delle autorità arabe sugli ordinamenti giuridici internazionali.

Considerato che:

— nei due anni circa che sono passati dalla caduta dei regimi, il valore dei beni resi alla Libia ammonta a 3,6 miliardi di dollari mentre solo 29 milioni di dollari sono tornati in possesso della Tunisia e nessuna restituzione è ancora stata effettuata a favore dell'Egitto;

— il valore dei beni congelati, in attesa di un giudizio sulla loro liceità, è di 25 miliardi di dollari per la Libia, 800 milioni per l'Egitto e 69 milioni per la Tunisia;

— le autorità dei Paesi della primavera araba, subito dopo il rovesciamento dei regimi, hanno avviato una serie di mutual legal assistance (MLA), procedure volte ad acquisire e scambiare informazioni per perseguire reati civili e penali tra due paesi, delle quali una buona parte non sono andate a buon fine per difetti di forma o per motivi «politici».

si chiede alla Commissione:

1. quali azioni e programmi intende predisporre per il recupero dei patrimoni occultati dai passati regimi (potenzialmente anche in alcuni Stati membri)?

2. che posizione assume rispetto alle negoziazioni di mutua assistenza giudiziaria con i paesi in questione?

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

1. Il coinvolgimento dell'Unione europea nel recupero dei beni è conseguenza dell'imposizione di misure restrittive a 48 persone in relazione alla Tunisia, a 19 persone in relazione all'Egitto e a 24 persone e 50 persone giuridiche in relazione alla Libia. Scopo di tale imposizione era contribuire a consolidare i cambiamenti politici avvenuti durante i disordini della «primavera araba» del 2011.

Occorre però sottolineare che le misure restrittive imposte dall'UE riguardano il congelamento dei beni, che è una questione distinta dalla confisca e dal rimpatrio dei beni stessi: la confisca e il rimpatrio dei fondi congelati sono di competenza non dell'Unione ma degli Stati membri e oggetto dei pertinenti procedimenti nazionali. Dato che il recupero dei beni può avvenire esclusivamente mediante meccanismi giudiziari bilaterali, l'UE può svolgere soltanto un ruolo di coordinamento.

Per assistere l'Egitto, la Libia e la Tunisia, l'UE ha comunque mantenuto il congelamento dei beni in occasione di ogni revisione annuale, in modo da dare agli Stati membri e ai paesi richiedenti più tempo per ottenere il ritorno dei beni oggetto di appropriazione indebita dopo l'applicazione delle misure restrittive.

Sono stati inoltre adottati ulteriori atti giuridici per favorire lo scambio di informazioni riguardanti il recupero dei beni e il ritorno dei fondi in attesa dell'esito di procedimenti giudiziari in relazione all'Egitto, alla Libia e alla Tunisia.

Nel suo ruolo di coordinamento, l'AR/VP continua a impegnarsi presso le autorità egiziane, libiche e tunisine riguardo alle questioni delle sanzioni e del recupero dei beni, nonché a promuovere la restituzione dei beni oggetto di appropriazione indebita in contesti quali il Forum arabo del partenariato di Deauville su iniziativa del G8.

2. Le istituzioni dell'UE possono svolgere soltanto un ruolo di facilitazione. Le negoziazioni si svolgono nel contesto della cooperazione bilaterale tra gli Stati membri e i paesi terzi richiedenti.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009791/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(2 September 2013)

Subject: Recovery of assets illegally hidden away by the former regimes in Egypt, Libya and Tunisia

Three regimes in North Africa were overthrown as a result of the popular uprisings and events of the Arab Spring: the governments of Muammar Gaddafi in Libya, Hosni Mubarak in Egypt and Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali in Tunisia. To the crimes, whether confirmed or not, committed in these countries over the past decades on the orders of government leaders should be added the embezzlement and concealing of commodities and capital assets. This is not a small matter. It is not possible to calculate precisely how much was amassed over the course of the years, as it was done illicitly, but it seems likely that the fortunes stolen by Gaddafi and Mubarak could amount to as much as tens of billions of dollars, while Ben Ali would appear to have siphoned off a lesser amount. Following the elections and the appointment of democratic governments, the authorities in the Arab Spring countries are trying to start investigations and collect evidence against regime leaders implicated in the expropriation and concealment of assets. However the problems they must deal with in their efforts to recover the stolen money, especially problems caused by bureaucracy, are often difficult to overcome, with the Arab authorities' limited knowledge of international legal systems not helping.

It is approximately two years since these regimes fell. During this time Libya has received USD 3.6 billion in returned assets, while only USD 29 million have been returned to Tunisia and Egypt has yet to see any of its assets returned.

The value of assets frozen pending a ruling on their lawfulness stands at USD 25 billion for Libya, USD 800 million for Egypt and USD 69 million for Tunisia.

Authorities in the Arab Spring countries set a series of mutual legal assistance (MLA) requests in motion immediately after the overthrow of the regimes. These are procedures whereby two countries can acquire and exchange information in order to prosecute civil and criminal crimes. However many of these were unsuccessful owing to faulty drafting or because of 'political' motives.

1. What actions and programmes does the Commission plan to establish in regard to recovery of assets hidden away (possibly even in some Member States) by the former regimes?

2. What is its position regarding negotiations on mutual legal assistance with the countries concerned?

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

1. The involvement of the EU in the issue of asset recovery stems from the imposition of restrictive measures on 48 persons in relation to Tunisia, 19 in relation to Egypt and 25 persons and 50 entities in relation to Libya. This was done to help assure the political changes that took place during the 2011 Arab Upheaval.

It is important to note that the EU restrictive measures relate to an asset freeze, which is a separate matter from confiscation/repatriation of assets. The EU has no competence for the confiscation and repatriation of these frozen funds. This is a competence of Member States and subject to relevant national proceedings. Given that asset recovery can only be achieved via bilateral judicial mechanisms, the role that the EU can play must be one of coordination.

However, to assist Egypt, Libya and Tunisia, the EU has maintained its asset freeze in place at each annual review to give Member States and requesting states more time to achieve the return of restrictive misappropriated assets.

Further legal acts have also been adopted to better facilitate information sharing in relation to asset recovery and the return of funds pending to judicial decisions in relation to Egypt, Libya and Tunisia.

In its coordination role, the HR/VP continues to engage with the Egyptian, Libyan and Tunisian authorities regarding sanctions and asset recovery issues and to promote the restitution of misappropriated assets at fora such as the G-8 Deauville Partnership Arab Forum.

2. The EU institutions can only play a facilitation role. Negotiations are a matter for bilateral cooperation between Member States and requesting third states.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009792/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(2 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Sostanze tossiche nell'abbigliamento «made in China»: quali rischi e quale tutela normativa

Quarantaquattro capi di abbigliamento esterno per adulti e bambini con etichetta di origine «made in China» sono di recente passati al vaglio di due autorevoli laboratori di analisi tessili. Lo studio, promosso da laboratori di prova dotati di sistema di qualità europeo e accreditati dal rispettivo ente nazionale, fornisce la certezza scientifica che «sui 23 capi selezionati per un'analisi approfondita, ben 21 campioni contengono sostanze tossiche».

I criteri di analisi presi in esame sono stati tre:

— la valutazione delle conformità dei materiali tessili rispetto alle normative sulla sicurezza chimica (sia europee che cinesi);

— la presenza o meno di alchilfenoli etossilati, sostanze tossiche per la fauna acquatica e dannose anche per l'uomo (vietate in Europa, senza restrizioni in Cina);

— la conformità o meno delle etichette di composizione fibrosa all'effettiva realtà dei capi.

Il nome tecnico della sostanze tossiche riscontrate è alchilfenoli etossilati, ossia prodotti chimici usati come detergenti in diversi processi industriali e nella produzione di tessuti naturali e sintetici. Una volta usati e scaricati, si decompongono in un sottoprodotto molto tossico considerato un interferente endocrino.

L'iniziativa prende le mosse dalla constatazione che nella valutazione della sicurezza chimica dei prodotti della filiera della moda esistono, nei diversi mercati internazionali, parametri differenti. In particolare, sono significative le differenze normative tra UE e Cina. I parametri ecotossicologici cinesi sono meno restrittivi di quelli europei, proprio per gli alchilfenoli etossilati. Inoltre, le restrizioni normative della Cina valgono solo per i prodotti commercializzati nel loro mercato interno, non per l'export. La normativa europea riguarda direttamente la produzione, indipendentemente dai percorsi della successiva commercializzazione.

Considerato che:

— vi sono differenze sostanziali tra la normativa europea e quella della Cina;

— i risultati allarmanti dello studio evidenziano la non rispondenza delle normative cinesi per la commercializzazione di capi di abbigliamento destinati al mercato europeo;

— le evidenze scientifiche hanno provato che la presenza degli alchilfenoli etossilati rende tali prodotti altamente tossici sia per la salute dell'uomo che per l'ambiente;

si chiede alla Commissione:

1. quale posizione assume rispetto alle evidenze scientifiche riportate dal suddetto studio?

2. quali azioni intende intraprendere per garantire una maggiore vigilanza sui prodotti che arrivano da paesi terzi?

3. intende valutare se tale situazione di assenza di reciprocità comporti per i cittadini europei un alto fattore di rischio in termini di insalubrità di prodotti di importazione, cui si aggiunge la scarsa affidabilità delle informazioni merceologiche riportate sulle etichette ed una perdita di competitività per le imprese del settore, rispetto al mercato cinese?

Risposta di Neven Mimica a nome della Commissione
(30 ottobre 2013)

La Commissione non dispone di informazioni riguardo allo studio al quale si riferisce l'onorevole parlamentare e gradirebbe pertanto riceverne copia. La Commissione è pienamente consapevole della tossicità degli alchilfenoletossilati. Nell'ambito dell'Unione europea l'impiego del nonilfenolo e degli etossilati di nonilfenolo è già stato circoscritto ad alcune applicazioni specifiche a norma del regolamento REACH.

Tutti i prodotti importati da paesi terzi devono essere conformi alle prescrizioni UE in materia di salute e sicurezza del prodotto. Gli operatori economici hanno l'obbligo di provvedere affinché i prodotti importati e immessi in commercio siano sicuri. La garanzia del rispetto della normativa e la sorveglianza del mercato, compresa l'irrogazione delle sanzioni agli operatori economici, è di competenza degli Stati membri, i quali notificano alla Commissione le misure adottate nei confronti di prodotti non sicuri. In tale quadro, nel 2013 sono state finora ricevute 54 notificazioni di grave rischio chimico per quanto riguarda tessili e abbigliamento.

Le autorità cinesi sono informate settimanalmente dalla Commissione circa i prodotti pericolosi originari della Cina e riferiscono periodicamente in merito alle azioni correttive intraprese, compresi i divieti all'esportazione emanati. Per quanto concerne i controlli eseguiti dalle autorità cinesi, la Commissione desidera tuttavia sottolineare che, in conformità della legge cinese sulle importazioni ed esportazioni ([1]), soltanto un numero ristretto di categorie di prodotti non alimentari è sottoposto a controlli prima dell'esportazione. Tali controlli sono eseguiti a norma dei regolamenti cinesi e solo raramente in conformità alle prescrizioni del Paese di destinazione.

Migliorare ulteriormente la sicurezza dei prodotti originari della Cina costituisce una priorità fondamentale per la Commissione. Congiuntamente con le autorità cinesi è stato avviato un progetto per meglio coordinare tra queste e l'UE i controlli di sicurezza dei prodotti lungo tutta la filiera delle forniture.

([1]) http://english.mofcom.gov.cn/article/policyrelease/Businessregulations/201303/20130300045852.shtml.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009792/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(2 September 2013)

Subject: Toxic substances in Chinese-made clothing — what are the risks and what legal protection is available?

44 items of outerwear for adults and children, with Made in China labels, have recently been tested by two authoritative textile testing laboratories. The study, sponsored by laboratories with European quality systems and accredited by the relevant national authority, has provided scientific certainty that 'of the 23 items of clothing selected for in-depth analysis, as many as 21 samples contained toxic substances'.

There were three test criteria:

— an assessment of whether the textiles complied with chemical safety legislation (bothEuropean and Chinese);

— the presence (or absence) of alkylphenol ethoxylates, substances which are toxic toaquatic fauna and also harmful to humans (banned in Europe but unrestricted inChina);

— whether or not the fibrous labels conformed to the true nature of the items of clothing.

The technical name of the toxic substances found is alkylphenol ethoxylates, i.e. chemicals used as detergents in various industrial processes and in the production of natural and synthetic fabrics. Once used and discharged, they decompose into a highly toxic by-product that is considered to be an endocrine disrupter.

This initiative was based on the observation that, as regards chemical safety assessments for fashion industry products, different international markets have different parameters. In particular, there are significant regulatory differences between the EU and China. Chinese ecotoxicological parameters are less restrictive than those in Europe, precisely because of alkylphenol ethoxylates. Moreover, China's regulatory restrictions apply only to products sold on their domestic market, not those for export. EU legislation directly concerns production, regardless of subsequent marketing pathways.

Given that:

— there are substantive differences between EU and Chinese law;

— the alarming results of the study reveal the non-compliance of Chinese regulations asregards the marketing of garments for the European market;

— scientific evidence has proven that the presence of alkylphenol ethoxylates makes theseproducts highly toxic for both human health and the environment;

can the Commission therefore say:

1. what its position is with regard to the scientific evidence set out in this study;

2. what action it intends to take to ensure greater monitoring of products that come fromthird countries;

3. whether it will assess whether this lack of reciprocity carries a high risk factor for EU citizens in terms of the unhealthiness of imported products, not to mention the unreliability of the information given on labels and the loss of competitiveness for companies in this sector compared to the Chinese market?

Answer given by Mr Mimica on behalf of the Commission
(30 October 2013)

The Commission has no information about the study referred to by the Honourable Member and would appreciate to receive a copy. It is fully aware of the toxicity of alkylphenol ethoxylates. Within the Union, the use of nonylphenol and nonylphenol ethoxylates has already been restricted for a number of specific applications under the REACH Regulation.

All products imported from third countries must comply with EU product safety and health requirements. It is the obligation of economic operators to ensure that products imported and placed on the market are safe. Enforcement and market surveillance, including imposing penalties on economic operators, is the responsibility of the Member States who notify measures taken against unsafe products to the Commission. In this context, 54 serious chemical risk notifications concerning textiles and clothing from China were received so far in 2013.

Chinese authorities are informed weekly by the Commission about dangerous products of Chinese origin and regularly report back on corrective actions taken in China, including on export bans imposed. With regard to checks carried out by Chinese authorities, the Commission would however like to underline that, in accordance with Chinese law on Import and Export ([1]), only a small number of non-food product categories are checked before being exported. These checks are carried out according to Chinese regulations and only rarely in accordance with requirements of the country of destination.

Further improving the safety of products from China is a key priority of the Commission. Together with the Chinese authorities, a project has been launched to better coordinate product safety controls between EU and Chinese authorities throughout the whole supply chain.

([1]) http://english.mofcom.gov.cn/article/policyrelease/Businessregulations/201303/20130300045852.shtml

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009793/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(2 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Tutela dello status giuridico del Porto franco di Trieste

Con le interrogazioni E-000264/2013 ed E-006306/2013, è stato richiesto alla Commissione europea di intervenire per togliere o limitare al Porto internazionale di Trieste i privilegi che ad esso derivano in virtù del Trattato di Pace del 1947, in quanto lesivi della libera concorrenza all'interno dell'UE. In tali interrogazioni viene evidenziato che l'attuazione delle prerogative stabilite dall'allegato VIII del Trattato di pace di Parigi del 1947 per il Porto franco di Trieste danneggerebbe gli altri porti italiani. Lo stesso governo italiano, recependo tali richieste, è già intervenuto imponendo, in violazione del Memorandum di intesa di Londra del 1954, una soprattassa specifica solo per il porto di Trieste «al fine di riequilibrare il rapporto differenziale tra la misura della tassazione applicata nel porto franco di Trieste e quella applicata nella generalità dei porti nazionali». Inoltre il Comitato tecnico dell'UE ha approvato, in data il 24 luglio 2013, l'inserimento di un terminale di rigassificazione nell'Alto Adriatico tra i progetti prioritari in ambito energetico per l'Unione europea, senza peraltro specificare dove tale impianto dovrebbe essere ubicato. I progetti fino ad ora presentati riguardano due impianti, uno nel Porto di Trieste (Gas Natural — sito di Zaule) e l'altro off-shore nel Golfo di Trieste. Entrambi gli impianti vanno ad interferire con il traffico commerciale del Porto franco di Trieste e il progetto della Gas Natural all'interno del Porto franco di Trieste è addirittura proposto in violazione del Trattato di pace del 1947 che stabilisce l'impossibilità per uno Stato di esercitare la propria giurisdizione all'interno del Porto di Trieste (Allegato VIII del Trattato di Pace). Tale obbligo è stato ribadito con il Memorandum d'intesa di Londra con il quale all'art. 5 «Il Governo italiano s'impegna a mantenere il Porto franco a Trieste in ottemperanza delle disposizioni degli articoli da 1 a 20 dell'Allegato VIII del Trattato di pace con l'Italia». Lo status giuridico del porto di Trieste è quindi quello di un territorio internazionale al di fuori della sovranità della Repubblica italiana. Gli interventi dello Stato italiano, con imposizione di soprattasse sulle attività portuali svolte all'interno del porto di Trieste per «riequilibrare la concorrenza con i porti italiani», e le decisioni del Comitato tecnico UE e della Commissione UE per la realizzazione di terminali di rigassificazione nel porto di Trieste e/o nelle sue acque marittime si trovano quindi in contrasto con gli obblighi derivanti dai trattati internazionali in vigore per il territorio di Trieste e il suo porto eal cui rispetto è tenuta la stessa Unione europea.

Può dire la Commissione se è a conoscenza dei fatti sopra descritti? Come intende agire per assicurare il rispetto del trattato di pace del 1947 e del Memorandum di intesa di Londra che tutelano il Porto franco di Trieste?

Risposta di Günther Oettinger a nome della Commissione
(24 ottobre 2013)

La Commissione non è in grado di esprimere un parere sulla conformità delle misure adottate e/o previste dal governo italiano per il porto di Trieste nell'ambito del Trattato di pace del 1947 e del Memorandum d'intesa di Londra cui si riferisce l'interrogazione dell'onorevole deputato.

Per quanto riguarda il terminale di rigassificazione GNL onshore nell'Alto Adriatico, il 24 luglio gli organi decisionali dei gruppi regionali, costituiti da Stati membri e Commissione, hanno convenuto di inserirlo nell'elenco indicativo dei progetti di interesse comune (PIC). L'esatta ubicazione dell'impianto onshore non è stata ancora stabilita e nell'elenco non figura alcun terminale GNL offshore per questa regione. Gli elenchi regionali sono stati stilati dai gruppi di lavoro regionali in seguito alla valutazione del contributo delle proposte presentate al conseguimento degli obiettivi della politica energetica, conformemente al regolamento TEN-E.

Gli Stati membri hanno il diritto di approvare progetti di interesse comune concernenti il proprio territorio. Dal momento che la città di Trieste e il suo entroterra (zona A) sono territori soggetti alla sovranità dello Stato italiano, l'Italia ha il legittimo diritto di approvare il progetto GNL. L'Italia e la Jugoslavia hanno riconosciuto reciprocamente i confini che separano Trieste dalla vicina Jugoslavia con il Trattato di Osimo del 1975.

Al fine di mantenere lo status di progetti di interesse comune, tutti i progetti inclusi nell'elenco dei PIC devono essere conformi alla normativa dell'UE, compresa quella ambientale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009793/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(2 September 2013)

Subject: Protection of legal status of the Free Port of Trieste

In written questions E-000264/2013 and E-006306/2013 the Commission was asked to take action to withdraw or restrict the privileges granted to the international Port of Trieste under the 1947 Peace Treaty, given that they are detrimental to free competition within the EU. These questions pointed out that the implementation of the rights laid down in Annex VIII to the 1947 Paris Peace Treaty, with regard to the Free Port of Trieste, was damaging other Italian ports. The Italian Government itself, in acknowledgment of such requests, has already taken action by imposing — in breach of the 1954 London Memorandum of Understanding — a surtax specific only to the Port of Trieste 'in order to restore the balance in the taxation applied in the Port of Trieste and that applied in most national ports'.

In addition, on 24 July 2013 the EU Technical Committee approved the inclusion of a regasification terminal in the northern Adriatic among the priority projects of the EU energy sector, without specifying where such a facility was to be located. The projects submitted so far concern two plants — one in the Port of Trieste (*Gas Natural* — Zaule site) and the other site offshore in the Gulf of Trieste. Both plants will interfere with the commercial traffic of the Port of Trieste and the *Gas Natural* project in the Port of Trieste is even in breach of the 1947 Peace Treaty, which stipulates that a State may not exercise its jurisdiction in the Port of Trieste (Annex VIII to the Treaty of Peace). This requirement was reiterated in the London Memorandum of Understanding which, under Article 5, stipulates that 'the Italian Government undertakes to maintain the Free Port at Trieste in general accordance with the provisions of Articles 1-20 of Annex VIII of the Italian Peace Treaty'. The legal status of the Port of Trieste is therefore that of an international territory outside the sovereignty of the Italian Republic. The action taken by the Italian Government, in imposing surcharges on port activities carried out within the Port of Trieste to 'restore competition with Italian ports' and the decisions of the EU Technical Committee and the Commission to build regasification terminals in the port of Trieste and/or its waters are thus in breach of the obligations arising from existing international treaties in respect of the territory of Trieste and its port, with which the European Union is required to comply.

Can the Commission say whether it is aware of these issues? What action will it take to ensure compliance with the 1947 Peace Treaty and the London Memorandum of Understanding, which protect the Free Port of Trieste?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(24 October 2013)

The Commission is not in a position to comment on the compliance of the measures adopted and/or envisaged by the Italian Government in the Port of Trieste under the 1947 Peace Treaty and the London MoU referred to in the question of the Honourable Member.

Concerning the LNG regasification terminal 'Onshore LNG terminal in the Northern Adriatic', the decision making bodies of the Regional groups, comprised of Member States and Commission, agreed on the 24th of July on its inclusion on the draft list of Projects of Common Interest (PCI). The precise location of the onshore facility is not defined yet and there is no off-shore LNG terminal on this list in this region. The regional lists have been drawn up by the regional working groups following the assessment of the contribution of the submitted proposals to energy policy objectives, in accordance with the TEN-E regulation.

Member States have the right to approve projects of common interest related to their territory. The city of Trieste and its hinterland (Zone A) being under Italian sovereignty, Italy has the legitimate right to approve the LNG project. Borders separating Trieste from neighbouring Yugoslavia were mutually recognised by Italy and Yugoslavia in 1975 in the Treaty of Osimo.

All projects included in the PCI list have to be compliant with the EU legislation, including environmental legislation, in order to retain their PCI status.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009794/13
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(2. September 2013)

Betrifft: Fehlende Autobahnverbindung zwischen Koper(Slowenien) und der kroatischen Grenze

Die vielbefahrene und beliebte Urlaubsroute über Marburg, Laibach und Koper (A1/E61/E70) ist für zahlreiche Bürger Anlass zu Ärger darüber, dass es ca. 15 km vom Autobahnende in Koper (A1/E70) bis zum Beginn der neuen Autobahn (A9/E751) etwa 8 km nach der Grenze in Istrien keine Autobahnverbindung gibt. Dies führt von Koper bis zur kroatischen Grenze zur vermehrten Staubildung auf der schlecht ausgebauten Bergstraße.

1. Sind regionale Fördervorhaben geplant, um diesen infrastrukturellen Missstand zu beseitigen, zumal insbesondere Kroatien als neues EU-Mitglied besonderen Nutzen aus dieser Tourismusroute ziehen würde?

2. Wie kann man Slowenien dazu motivieren, auf dessen Seite der Großteil der unzureichenden Infrastruktur liegt, in die fehlende Autobahnverbindung zu investieren?

3. Welche Möglichkeiten gäbe es, auch Kroatien, das schließlich von den Touristen profitiert, als neues EU-Mitgliedsland dazu zu motivieren, ebenso in diese fehlende Autobahnverbindung zu investieren?

4. Wie könnte man Slowenien und Kroatien an einen Tisch bringen, um endlich die jahrelangen Grenzstreitigkeiten an der Dragonja-Mündung zu beseitigen und so auch dieses grenzüberschreitende Infrastrukturprojekt zu fördern?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(15. Oktober 2013)

Während die Autobahn- und die Eisenbahnverbindung Ljubljana — Koper Teile des TEN-V-Kernnetzes und der künftigen Korridore Ostsee-Adria und Mittelmeerraum bilden, gehört die Straßenverbindung von Koper zur kroatischen Grenze und darüber hinaus bis zur kroatischen Autobahn A9 nicht zum Transeuropäischen Verkehrsnetz.

Daher liegen der Kommission keine genauen Informationen über diese Verbindung vor. Außerdem gibt es keine Rechtsgrundlage für eine Kofinanzierung dieser Straßenverbindung mit TEN-V-Mitteln oder Mitteln der Fazilität „Connecting Europe“ (CEF); auch eine Förderung aus dem Kohäsionsfonds kommt nicht in Frage. Dagegen wäre eine Förderung mit EFRE-Mitteln möglich, doch gehören Nationalstraßen nicht zu den Kofinanzierungsprioritäten des Programmplanungszeitraums 2013-2020 für Slowenien und Kroatien.

Die Fazilität „Connecting Europe“ legt ihren Schwerpunkt auf die Verwirklichung von Teilen des künftigen Verkehrskernnetzes, insbesondere für den Schienenverkehr und die Binnenschifffahrt, die multimodalen Schnittstellen (Häfen, Terminals usw.) und technologische Innovationen.

Der Ausbau der vorhandenen Straßenverbindung oder der Bau einer neuen Autobahnverbindung müsste bilateral zwischen Slowenien und Kroatien vereinbart werden. Die Kommission weist darauf hin, dass bereits andere Autobahnverbindungen zwischen Slowenien und Kroatien vorhanden oder geplant sind.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009794/13
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(2 September 2013)

Subject: Missing section of motorway between Koper (Slovenia) and the Croatian border

Although busy and popular, the holiday route via Maribor, Ljubljana and Koper (A1/E61/E70) is also a source of aggravation for many motorists, because smooth progress is interrupted by a stretch of normal road approximately 15 km in length between the end of the A1/E70 motorway in Koper and the start of the new motorway (A9/E751) some 8 km beyond the border in Istria. Traffic jams are frequent on the narrow mountain road from Koper to the Croatian border.

1. Are there plans to make regional funding available to do away with this bottleneck, particularly as Croatia in particular, as a new EU Member State, would benefit greatly from improvements to this tourist route?

2. What steps could be taken to persuade Slovenia — on whose side of the border the majority of the inadequate infrastructure is located — to invest in a project to connect the two motorways?

3. Given that it too benefits from tourism, how could Croatia, as a new Member State, also be encouraged to invest in such a project?

4. What steps could be taken to bring Slovenia and Croatia to the negotiating table with a view to ending the lengthy border dispute between them concerning the estuary of the River Dragonja and thus clearing the way for investment in this cross-border infrastructure project?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(15 October 2013)

While the motorway and the railway line Ljubljana — Koper are parts of the TEN-T core network and, as such, of the future Baltic-Adriatic and Mediterranean Corridors, the road link continuing from Koper to the Croatian border and beyond to the Croatian A9 motorway is not included in the TEN-T.

Accordingly, the Commision does not have specific information on this link. Further, there is no legal base for co-funding this road connection from TEN-T or CEF funds, nor from cohesion fund. On the contrary, ERDF funding could be available yet national roads are not considered as a priority for co-financing in 2013-2020 programming period in Slovenia and Croatia.

The Connecting Europe Facility concentrates on the implementation of elements of the future transport core network in particular of rail and inland waterway, the multimodal interfaces (ports, terminals, etc.) and technological innovation.

Upgrading the existing road connection or constructing a new motorway link in this relation would have to be agreed bilaterally between Slovenia and Croatia. The Commision would like to recall the fact that there are already other existing and planned motorway links between Slovenia and Croatia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009795/13
to the Commission
Fiona Hall (ALDE)
(2 September 2013)

Subject: Infringement procedures 2003-2013

Article 258 TFEU gives the Commission the power to hold Member States to account if they do not comply with EC laws.

Since January 2008, how many such infringement procedures have been initiated by the Commission against each EU Member State?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(15 October 2013)

The Commission is sending directly to the Honourable Member and to Parliament's Secretariat a table containing the data requested.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009796/13
to the Commission
Fiona Hall (ALDE)
(2 September 2013)

Subject: Addax Bioenergy plantation in Sierra Leone

By 2014, a large proportion of the ethanol produced on the Addax Bioenergy sugar cane plantation in Sierra Leone will be exported to the EU. This biofuels project is funded by the African Development Bank, as well as five European bilateral institutions and two other donors. It has been promoted previously by the Commission as a sustainable biofuels project and has received a sustainability certificate from the Roundtable for Sustainable Biofuels.

However, in a report published this week by the NGO 'ActionAid' entitled 'Broken promises, the impacts of Addax Bioenergy in Sierra Leone on hunger and livelihood', it is suggested that this project has fallen short of the expected standards.

The report provides evidence of negative impacts on food security, land rights and the livelihoods of local communities, and there is said to have been a lack of adequate free, prior and informed consent from communities.

Bearing in mind the Commission's previous interest in this project, the role of European bilateral institutions in its funding, and the important commitment the EU has made to reducing poverty and hunger across the globe:

1. Is the Commission aware of the negative impacts that this project is having on local communities?

2. Will the Commission be undertaking a full investigation as to what has gone wrong with the Addax Bioenergy project and, if so, what form will this investigation take?

3. What does the Commission plan to do in order to ensure that such problems are not repeated, on this project or other biofuels projects exporting to the EU?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(6 November 2013)

The European Commission would first of all like to underline that funds from the European Development Fund have not been used to support the ADDAX plantation in Sierra Leone and as such, the Delegation of the European Union to Sierra Leone has not been involved in the project.

Investments in agriculture on the African continent are strongly needed. However, access to land, land rights, local food security, local access to energy and gender equity are among the issues that needs to be addressed for such investments to be beneficial for the societies as a whole. The Commission through its Delegation is actively following the general discussion around the land policy reform in Sierra Leone. The Government is currently working on a land policy reform in order to create clarity on issues related to land.

The European Union has a substantial quality assurance process which all new projects have to go through in order to ensure that such negative impacts, as described in the ActionAid report, can be addressed.

The Honourable Member will find more details about this quality assurance at:
http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/ensure-aid-effectiveness/quality-support-groups_en.htm

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-009797/13
do Komisji
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(2 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: W sprawie norweskich koncesji na wydobycie węglowodorów

Norweski Dyrektoriat ds. Paliw rozpoczyna proces licencyjny w zakresie koncesji na poszukiwanie i wydobycie węglowodorów we wschodniej części Morza Barentsa. Dotychczas na tym obszarze Oslo toczyło spór graniczny z Rosją. Norwegowie szacują, że mogą znajdować się tam złoża w objętości prawie 2 mld baryłek ekwiwalentu ropy naftowej.

W interesie obywateli Wspólnoty zwracam się z pytaniem, czy wobec zaistniałej sytuacji Komisja wyraża zainteresowanie norweskim procesem licencyjnym i czy planuje przedsięwziąć dodatkowe kroki zachęcające europejskich przedsiębiorców branżowych do ubiegania się o ww. koncesje? Proszę również o informacje, czy i w jakim zakresie, unijne firmy obecnie partycypują w norweskiej produkcji węglowodorów?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Günthera Oettingera w imieniu Komisji
(15 października 2013 r.)

Norwegia, będąc stroną Porozumienia o Europejskim Obszarze Gospodarczym, stosuje większość dorobku prawnego UE, w tym przepisy dotyczące zezwoleń na poszukiwanie, badanie i produkcję węglowodorów (dyrektywa 94/22/WE z dnia 30 maja 1994 r. w sprawie warunków udzielania i korzystania z zezwoleń na poszukiwanie, badanie i produkcję węglowodorów). Komisja obserwuje norweski proces licencyjny w ramach dyrektywy 94/22/WE, która zobowiązuje Norwegię do publikacji informacji o procedurze licencyjnej w Dzienniku Urzędowym UE co najmniej 90 dni przed końcowym terminem składania wniosków. Taka informacja powinna określać obszar geograficzny, rodzaj zezwolenia oraz kryteria kwalifikowania wnioskodawców, aby umożliwić składanie wniosków wszystkim zainteresowanym przedsiębiorstwom europejskim. Komisja, oprócz zagwarantowania, że takie informacje zostaną publikowane, nie nadzoruje w sposób czynny procedur licencyjnych w poszczególnych państwach UE lub EOG ani nie uczestniczy w tych procedurach do tego stopnia, aby promować poszczególne rundy licencyjne.

Jeśli chodzi o firmy partycypujące w norweskiej produkcji węglowodorów, Komisja informuje, że uaktualnione informacje znajdują się w sekcji „Fact pages" na stronie internetowej norweskiej Dyrekcji ds. Ropy Naftowej: http://factpages.npd.no/factpages/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009797/13
to the Commission
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(2 September 2013)

Subject: Norwegian licences for the extraction of hydrocarbons

The Norwegian Petroleum Directorate is launching a licencing procedure for the prospection and extraction of hydrocarbons in the east of the Barents Sea, an area which has been at the centre of a border dispute between Norway and Russia. The Norwegians think that the area could contain crude oil deposits equivalent to a volume of around two billion barrels.

With the interests of EU citizens in mind, I should like to ask whether the Commission is expressing any interest in the Norwegian licencing process in the light of the current situation. Moreover, is the Commission intending to take any additional action to encourage European businesses in the sector to apply for the above licences? Could the Commission also tell me whether, and to what extent, EU companies are currently active in Norwegian hydrocarbon production?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(15 October 2013)

As a member of the European Economic Area Agreement, Norway applies most of the EU *acquis* including legislation on hydrocarbons licensing (Directive 94/22/EC of 30 May 1994 on the conditions for granting and using authorisations for the prospection, exploration and production of hydrocarbons). The Commission follows the Norwegian licensing process within the framework of the directive 94/22/EC which binds Norway to publish, in the Official Journal of the EU, a notice on the licensing procedure at least 90 days before the closing date for applications. This notice should specify the geographical area, the type of authorisation and the selection criteria for applicants so that all interested European enterprises can submit applications. Besides ensuring the publication of such notices, the Commission does not actively oversee or get involved in the licensing procedures in individual EU or EEA countries to the extent of promoting individual licensing rounds.

As regards the data on companies active in Norwegian hydrocarbon production, the Commission is aware that updated information can be found under the Fact pages of the Norwegian Petroleum Directorate website:
http://factpages.npd.no/factpages/

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-009798/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(2 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – W sprawie zapowiadanych ograniczeń dostaw rosyjskiej ropy do Białorusi

W odpowiedzi na zatrzymanie przez Białoruś dyrektora rosyjskiego koncernu produkującego sole potasowe, Kreml zapowiedział zmniejszenie, z dniem 1 września br., dostaw ropy do tego kraju. Wyrażono również zastrzeżenia wobec białoruskich produktów mlecznych. Obok Ukrainy, Białoruś staje się zatem kolejnym krajem Partnerstwa Wschodniego, szykanowanym przez Moskwę, co w kontekście zbliżającego się wileńskiego szczytu, wzbudza szczególny niepokój.

W związku z powyższym zwracam się do Wysokiej Przedstawiciel z pytaniem, czy w obliczu prawdopodobnego pogorszenia się relacji rosyjsko-białoruskich, Bruksela rozważa wyrażenie jasnego stanowiska wobec coraz bardziej agresywnej polityki Kremla względem naszych krajów partnerskich? Stanowisko takie mogłoby skutkować wypracowaniem bardziej przychylnej postawy Mińska w odniesieniu do Unii Europejskiej.

Ponadto, proszę o informacje, czy i jakie konsekwencje dla krajów Wspólnoty, mogą zaistnieć w następstwie rosyjskich ograniczeń w dystrybucji surowców energetycznych do Białorusi.

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel i Wiceprzewodniczącą Komisji Catherine Ashton
w imieniu Komisji
(24 października 2013 r.)

Unia Europejska zawsze bardzo wyraźne podkreślała swoje stanowisko wobec naszych sąsiadów wschodnich, zakładające współpracę na rzecz dobrobytu i stabilnej sytuacji na naszym kontynencie. Zostało to potwierdzone w ramach naszego wspólnego celu przewidującego stowarzyszenie polityczne oraz integrację gospodarczą w oparciu o układy o stowarzyszeniu i odnośne pogłębione i kompleksowe strefy wolnego handlu. Jakiekolwiek działania podejmowane przez Rosję w związku z możliwością podpisania takich układów z niektórymi wschodnimi partnerami UE są nie do zaakceptowania. Odnosi się to do wszystkich form nacisku, również w odniesieniu do ewentualnych kwestii bezpieczeństwa energetycznego.

W 2009 r. UE i Rosja ustanowiły mechanizm wczesnego ostrzegania, który ma zagwarantować wczesną ocenę potencjalnych zagrożeń i problemów związanych z dostawami energii. Obejmuje to sytuacje, w przypadku których istnieje ryzyko dostaw rurociągami prowadzonymi przez terytorium Białorusi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009798/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(2 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Restrictions announced on supplies of Russian oil to Belarus

In response to the detention in Belarus of an executive from a Russian potash-producing company, the Kremlin announced a reduction in oil supplies to Belarus beginning on 1 September. It also expressed reservations about Belarusian dairy products. After Ukraine, Belarus has become the next Eastern Partnership country to be harassed by Moscow. In the context of the forthcoming summit in Vilnius, this is a matter of particular concern.

In this regard, I would like to ask the High Representative whether, in the face of a likely deterioration in Russian-Belarusian relations, Brussels is considering taking a clear stance against the Kremlin's increasingly aggressive policy towards our partner countries. Such a stance could lead to a more favourable attitude in Minsk towards the European Union.

In addition, what consequences, if any, will there be for EU Member States resulting from Russian restrictions on energy supplies to Belarus?

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

The European Union has always been very clear about its policy towards our Eastern Neighbours to work together to build a zone of propersity and stability on our continent. This is confirmed through our joint objective of political association and economic integration underpinned by Association Agreements and their Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas. Any measures by Russia linked to the possible signing of such Agreements with some of European Union's Eastern Partners are unaccepatble. This applies to all forms of pressure including as regards possible energy security issues.

The EU and Russia established an Early Warning Mechanism in 2009, in order to guarantee an early evaluation of potential risks and problems related to energy supply. This includes situations in case there is a risk of supply disrupptions through pipelines going through Belarus.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-009799/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(2 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – W sprawie masowych prześladowań chrześcijan w Egipcie

W ogarniętym chaosem Egipcie systematycznie powtarzają się ataki bojowników Bractwa Muzułmańskiego na chrześcijan, pomimo że ci ostatni nie są stroną konfliktu. M.in. w Luksorze doszło do zbrojnej napaści na siedzibę biskupa, na szczęście odpartej przez policję. Koptowie pozostają jednakże pod ciągłym zagrożeniem, praktycznie nie mogąc opuszczać swoich schronień i domostw. Przy czym również i tam nie mogą czuć się bezpieczni.

Chrześcijańscy duchowni przyznają ponadto, że władze nierzadko nie reagują na ich wezwania o pomoc, choćby w przypadkach ataków na obiekty sakralne. Według relacji, biskup Al-Minii, Anba Makarios, miał bezskutecznie zwracać się do premiera, szefa MSW i przedstawiciela wojska z prośbą o wysłanie sił bezpieczeństwa do ochrony Koptów.

Koptyjska mniejszość stanowi ok. 10 % mieszkańców Egiptu. Jest to więc znacząca grupa obywateli. W trosce o jej los zwracam się do Wysokiej Przedstawiciel z prośbą o odpowiedź:

1. W jaki sposób Unia Europejska realizuje pomoc dla egipskich chrześcijan?

2. Czy możliwe jest dyplomatyczne wsparcie mniejszości koptyjskiej poprzez wywarcie wpływu na obecnie rządzących w Kairze, aby zwracali baczniejszą uwagę na podobne przypadki haniebnej dyskryminacji na tle religijnym?

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

Wysoka Przedstawiciel / Wiceprzewodnicząca wyraźnie potępiła przypadki skrajnej przemocy, zabójstw i ataków, w tym w stosunku do kościołów, które nastąpiły w wyniku licznych demonstracji wspieranych przez Bractwo Muzułmańskie, jakie miały miejsce w połowie sierpnia. W dniu 21 sierpnia Wysoka Przedstawiciel / Wiceprzewodnicząca Komisji zwołała nadzwyczajne posiedzenie Rady do Spraw Zagranicznych w sprawie Egiptu, gdzie ministrowie spraw zagranicznych państw UE przyjęli konkluzje, w których odnieśli się w szczególności do licznych przypadków zniszczeń kościołów i ataków na wspólnotę koptyjską.

UE jest zaniepokojona ograniczeniami, jakim podlegają różne mniejszości religijne w Egipcie, i potępia wszelkie formy nietolerancji, dyskryminacji i przemocy przeciwko osobom ze względu na ich religię lub przekonania, niezależnie od miejsca oraz wyznania. Wysoka Przedstawiciel / Wiceprzewodnicząca regularnie wzywa egipskie władze do zapewnienia wolności wyznania i przekonań w tym kraju.

Delegatura UE w Kairze uważnie śledzi przypadki przemocy na tle religijnym i w swoich kontaktach z władzami egipskimi podkreśla znaczenie unikania dyskryminacji z przyczyn religijnych. Aby wesprzeć poprawę wolności wyznania lub przekonań w Egipcie, Wysoka Przedstawiciel / Wiceprzewodnicząca z zaangażowaniem współpracuje z wszelkimi odnośnymi zainteresowanymi stronami w tym kraju, a także z regionalnymi i międzynarodowymi organizacjami podzielającymi wartości i cele UE w tej dziedzinie.

UE stwierdza, że współpraca i dialog polityczny są najbardziej odpowiednimi kanałami wspierania i wywierania presji na rząd w Kairze, aby podjął on konkretne działania w celu ochrony Koptów i innych mniejszości religijnych.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009799/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(2 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Widespread persecution of Christians in Egypt

In the chaos that is engulfing Egypt, Christians are being systematically and repeatedly attacked by Muslim Brotherhood militants even though Christians are not involved in the conflict. In Luxor, for example, an armed attack on the bishop's office was fortunately repelled by the police. However, the Copts remain under constant threat and are virtually unable to leave their shelters and homes. And even there they cannot feel safe.

Christian clergy have also reported that the authorities often do not respond to their calls for help, even when places of worship come under attack. According to reports, the Bishop-General of Minya, Anba Macarius, has asked the prime minister, the interior minister and an army representative to send security forces to protect the Copts, but his requests have fallen on deaf ears.

The Coptic minority makes up around 10% of Egypt's population, in other words a substantial number of people. Out of concern for their fate I would like to put the following questions to the High Representative:

1. How is the European Union helping Egypt's Christians?

2. Is it possible to provide diplomatic support to the Coptic minority by exerting influence on the current rulers in Cairo in order to draw more attention to such incidents of shameful discrimination on religious grounds?

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

The HR/VP condemned in the clearest possible terms the extreme violence, killings and attacks, including on churches, that followed the dispersal in mid-August of the Muslim Brotherhood supported sit-ins. On 21 August, the HR/VP convened an extra-ordinary Foreign Affairs Council on Egypt where EU Foreign Ministers adopted conclusions which also specifically referred to the destruction of many churches and the targeting of the Coptic community.

The EU is aware and concerned about the constraints that different religious minorities face in Egypt and condemns all forms of intolerance, discrimination and violence against persons because of their religion or belief, wherever it takes place and regardless of the religion. The HR/VP is repeatedly calling on the Egyptian authorities to ensure freedom of religion or belief in the country.

The EU Delegation in Cairo is closely following cases of sectarian violence and emphasises the importance of avoiding discrimination on religious grounds in its contacts with Egyptian authorities. In order to support the improvement of freedom of religion or belief in Egypt, the HR/VP is keen to engage with the relevant stakeholders in the country as well as with the regional and international organisations sharing the EU's values and objectives in this respect.

The EU considers that cooperation and political dialogue are the most appropriate channels to encourage and put pressure on Cairo's Government so that it will undertake concrete actions in order to protect Copts and other religious minorities.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-009800/13
do Komisji
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(2 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: W obliczu konsekwencji rosyjsko-ukraińskiej „wojny handlowej"

W ostatnim czasie obserwujemy wzrost zaangażowania Kremla względem Ukrainy, pozostającego w wyraźnej kontrze wobec interesów Wspólnoty na Wschodzie. Przedstawiciele władz Rosji wprost przyznają, że niedawne zaostrzenie kontroli ukraińskich towarów miało zniechęcić Kijów do podpisania umowy o stowarzyszeniu z UE. Tymczasem Ukraina zmaga się z ogromną recesją.

W związku z powyższą sytuacją zwracam się do Komisji z prośbą o wyrażenie opinii w następujących kwestiach:

1. Czy w obliczu możliwego zaostrzenia stanowiska Moskwy wobec Kijowa, w następstwie podpisania umowy stowarzyszeniowej z UE, Bruksela rozważa zwiększenie pomocy gospodarczej dla Ukrainy oraz jakie dodatkowe działania zostałyby wówczas uruchomione?

2. Jakie działania ze strony instytucji podległych Komisji są rozważane na wypadek, gdyby w kolejnych sankcjach wobec Ukrainy partycypowały także: Białoruś i Kazachstan (pozostali członkowie Unii Celnej)?

3. Należy również liczyć się z prawdopodobieństwem kolejnego odcięcia przez Rosję dostaw gazu na Ukrainę. Czy i w jaki sposób instytucje europejskie zabezpieczą interesy energetyczne, również zagrożonych wówczas, krajów członkowskich?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Štefana Füleго w imieniu Komisji
(31 października 2013 r.)

1. Presja wywierana na Ukrainę w związku z możliwością podpisania przez nią układu o stowarzyszeniu, obejmującego pogłębioną i kompleksową umowę o wolnym handlu (AA/DCFTA), jest niedopuszczalna. Najskuteczniejszym sposobem zapewnienia wsparcia w tej sytuacji jest przystąpienie do podpisania układu, pod warunkiem spełnienia wymogów unijnych przez Ukrainę, i zapewnienie jego jak najszybszego tymczasowego stosowania. Ukraińska gospodarka skorzystałaby nie tylko z obniżonych stawek celnych, ale również czerpałaby korzyści z dynamizujących efektów wdrożenia pogłębionej i kompleksowej umowy o wolnym handlu poprzez poprawę klimatu gospodarczego.

Ukrainie udostępniono pomoc makrofinansową UE w wysokości do 610 mln EUR w celu uzupełnienia ewentualnego kolejnego programu MFW. Obowiązkiem Ukrainy jest zapewnienie, że spełnione są warunki dokonywania wydatków. Dostępna jest dodatkowa pomoc techniczna mająca na celu ułatwienie wdrażania DCFTA.

2. Układ o stowarzyszeniu/pogłębionej i kompleksowej strefie wolnego handlu nie stanowi przeszkody dla Ukrainy w budowaniu konstruktywnych stosunków z Eurazjatycką Unią Celną, dopóki te opierają się na poszanowaniu zasad WTO i nie pozostają w sprzeczności z DCFTA. Jeśli w wyniku swojej decyzji o ściślejszej współpracy z UE Ukraina znajdzie się pod presją, UE będzie ją wspierać w stosownych przypadkach, także na szczeblach wielostronnych.

3. Komisja regularnie zwołuje spotkania w ramach Grupy Koordynacyjnej ds. Gazu w celu ułatwienia koordynacji środków służących zapewnieniu bezpieczeństwa dostaw, zwiększenia gotowości w odniesieniu do zakłóceń w dostawach oraz wspomagania państw członkowskich w koordynacji środków krajowych w razie kryzysu. W przypadku wystąpienia zakłóceń dostaw z Rosji do UE, Komisja uruchomiłaby również mechanizm wczesnego ostrzegania UE-Rosja, który przewiduje wspólne działania mające na celu szybkie przezwyciężanie nagłych sytuacji awaryjnych, łagodzenie ich skutków i zapobieganie im w przyszłości.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009800/13
to the Commission
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(2 September 2013)

Subject: Consequences of the 'trade war' between Russia and Ukraine

The Kremlin has recently been ratcheting up its involvement in Ukraine, in clear opposition to the EU's interests in the East. Representatives of the Russian Government have openly admitted that the recent tightening of controls on Ukrainian goods was designed to discourage the Ukrainians from signing an association agreement with the EU. Ukraine is also in the grip of a major recession.

With this in mind:

1. Given that Moscow's stance towards Ukraine might well harden following the signing of the association agreement with the EU, is Brussels considering increasing its economic support for Ukraine? What other action would be taken in such circumstances?

2. What steps might the Commission and its institutions take if Belarus and Kazakhstan (the other members of the Customs Union) also take part in further sanctions against Ukraine?

3. Given that Russia might well cut off gas supplies to Ukraine once again, are the European institutions going to protect the energy interests of the Member States that will also be at risk if this happens? If so, how?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(31 October 2013)

1. Pressure on Ukraine linked to the possible signing of the Association Agreement, including its Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (AA/DCFTA), with the EU is unacceptable. The most effective way of providing support is to proceed with the signature of the Agreement, provided that Ukraine fulfils the EU's benchmarks, and to ensure the earliest possible provisional application. Besides tariff reductions, the Ukrainian economy would benefit from the dynamic effects of implementing the DCFTA through improvements of the business climate.

EU Macro-Financial Assistance of up to EUR 610m has been made available to Ukraine to complement a potential successor IMF programme. It is for Ukraine to make sure the disbursement conditions are met. Additional technical assistance is available to facilitate DCFTA implementation.

2. The AA/DCFTA does not prevent Ukraine from developing constructive relations with the Eurasian Customs Union as long as this is based on the respect of WTO rules and does not contradict the DCFTA. In case of pressure resulting from Ukraine's choice of closer association with the EU, the EU will support and stand by Ukraine, including at multilateral levels, if appropriate.

3. The Commission regularly convenes meetings in the Gas Coordination Group to facilitate the coordination of security of supply measures, improve preparedness with regard to supply disruptions, and assist MSs in coordinating national measures in the event of a crisis. Should a disruption of Russian supplies to the EU occur, the Commission would also activate the EU-Russia Early Warning Mechanism, which provides for joint actions to rapidly overcome emergencies, mitigating consequences and preventing such situations in the future.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-009801/13
alla Commissione
Francesco Enrico Speroni (EFD)
(2 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Materiale per missioni elettorali prodotto non localmente e fuori dall'Unione

Secondo la risposta a un'interrogazione, per il materiale relativo alle missioni elettorali la Commissione incoraggia acquisti sul mercato locale nonché la produzione di prodotti locali, ogniqualvolta ciò sia possibile.

Quali motivi non hanno reso possibile l'applicazione del citato principio in Paraguay, dove gli elementi di visibilità dell'UE per i membri della missione non erano prodotti né localmente né nell'Unione?

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

La Commissione incoraggia i fornitori di servizi ad acquistare gli elementi di visibilità nel paese partner in cui si svolge la missione di osservazione elettorale. L'obiettivo è quello di sostenere l'economia locale e i prodotti fabbricati sul posto che spesso sono più adeguati alle condizioni locali.

Tuttavia, conformemente alle condizioni generali degli appalti UE, i fornitori di servizi sono tenuti a proporre l'offerta più ampia possibile e a cercare i prezzi e la qualità migliore per l'acquisto del materiale necessario, a condizione che vengano rispettati i termini stabiliti per la consegna e che si tenga conto dei piani per quanto riguarda l'assegnazione delle sedi ai membri della missione di osservazione elettorale.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009801/13
to the Commission
Francesco Enrico Speroni (EFD)
(2 September 2013)

Subject: Material for election missions not produced locally or in the Union

According to the answer given to a parliamentary question, as regards all material relating to election missions, the Commission, whenever possible, encourages local purchases and the production of local products.

Why was it not possible to apply that principle in Paraguay, where EU promotion material for the members of the mission was produced neither locally nor in the Union?

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

The Commission encourages the service providers to buy visibility material in the partner country where the electoral observation mission is to take place. The objective is to support the local economy and locally manufactured products are often better adapted to the local conditions.

However, under the general terms of EU contracts service providers are obliged to tender as wide as possible and seek the best prices and quality for the acquisition of the necessary material for as long as they also comply with required delivery deadlines and take into account the deployment plans of the members of the election observation mission.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie P-009802/13
Komisii
Anna Záborská (PPE)
(2. septembra 2013)

Vec: Zlúčenie pracovného, osobného a rodinného života – vymedzenie pojmov „rodinný život“ a „osobný život“

Aké právne vymedzenia pojmov „rodina“ a „rodinný život“ používa Komisia v súvislosti s opatreniami Spoločenstva na „zlúčenie pracovného, osobného a rodinného života“?

Ktoré články v zmluvách stanovujú právny základ pre vymedzenie pojmu „rodina“ na účely a plnenie spoločnej stratégie EÚ?

Aký je rozdiel medzi „rodinným životom“ a „osobným životom“?

Odpoveď pani Redingovej v mene Komisie
(9. októbra 2013)

Zásady rešpektovania súkromného a rodinného života, ako aj ochrany rodinného a pracovného života sú ukotvené v článkoch 7 a 33 Charty základných práv Európskej únie (ďalej len „charta“).

Tieto ustanovenia neobsahujú právne vymedzenia pojmov „rodina“, „rodinný život“ a „súkromný život“. Pokiaľ ide o pojem „súkromný život“, ktorý je uvedený v článku 7 charty aj v článku 8 Európskeho dohovoru o ľudských právach, tak Európsky súd pre ľudské práva predložil túto definíciu: „Článok 8 ochraňuje právo na identitu a osobný vývoj, ako aj právo na nadviazanie a rozvíjanie vzťahov s ostatnými ľuďmi a vonkajším svetom“ ([1]). Uvedený výklad je záväzný v súvislosti s článkom 7 charty (porov. článok 52 ods. 3 charty). Pokiaľ ide o pojem „rodinný život“, z judikatúry Súdneho dvora a Európskeho súdu pre ľudské práva vyplýva, že tento pojem predovšetkým zahŕňa právo žiť a tráviť čas so svojimi blízkymi príbuznými.

([1]) Pozri vec Pretty/Spojené kráľovstvo, podnet č. 2346/02, rozsudok Európskeho súdu pre ľudské práva z 29. apríla 2002.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009802/13
to the Commission
Anna Záborská (PPE)
(2 September 2013)

Subject: Reconciliation of work, private and family life — definitions of 'family life' and 'private life'

What legal definitions of 'the family' and 'family life' does the Commission apply when dealing with Community policies on 'reconciliation between work, private and family life'?

What articles in the Treaties provide a legal basis for the definition of the concept of 'the family' for the purpose and implementation of a common EU strategy?

What is the difference between 'family life' and 'private life'?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(9 October 2013)

The principles of respect for private and family life as well as protection of family and professional life are enshrined in Articles 7 and 33 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union ('the Charter').

There are no legal definitions of the terms 'family', 'family life' and 'private life' provided in these provisions. Regarding the latter term, which is contained in Article 7 of the Charter as well as in Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights, the European Court of Human Rights has given the following definition: 'Article 8 protects a right to identity and personal development, and a right to establish and develop relationships with other human beings and the outside world' ([1]). This interpretation is binding as regards Article 7 of the Charter (cf. Article 52 (3) of the Charter). Concerning the term 'family life', it follows from the case law of the Court of Justice and of the European Court of Human Rights that this concept notably encompasses the right to live and spend time with one's close relatives.

([1]) See Case Pretty v. the United Kingdom, App no 2346/02, European Court of Human Rights judgment of 29 April 2002.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-009803/13
Rade
Anna Záborská (PPE)
(2. septembra 2013)

Vec: Zosúladenie pracovného, súkromného a rodinného života – vymedzenie pojmu „rodinný život“ a „súkromný život“

Aké vymedzenie „rodiny“ a „rodinného života“ používa Rada, pokiaľ ide o politiky Spoločenstva v oblasti rovnováhy medzi pracovným a súkromným životom (zosúladenie pracovného, súkromného a rodinného života)?

Ktoré články v zmluvách poskytujú právny základ pre Radu na vymedzenie konceptu rodiny z právneho hľadiska na účel politík Únie?

V čom spočíva rozdiel medzi „rodinným životom“ a „súkromným životom“ pri vykonávaní týchto politík?

Odpoveď
(5. novembra 2013)

„Rodina“ a „rodinný život“ nie sú v právnych predpisoch EÚ nikde vymedzené a v súčasnosti ani nebol Rade predložený žiadny návrh takejto definície. Taktiež nie je vymedzený rozdiel medzi „rodinným životom“ a „súkromným životom“.

Ak by chcela Komisia navrhnúť definíciu pojmov „rodina“, „rodinný život“ a „súkromný život“, potom by mala tiež navrhnúť právny základ, ktorý by následne preskúmala Rada alebo Rada spolu s Európskym parlamentom.

V Charte základných práv sa článok 7 zaoberá rešpektovaním súkromného a rodinného života: *„Každý má právo na rešpektovanie svojho súkromného a rodinného života, obydlia a komunikácie.“* Tu použité pojmy podliehajú výkladu Súdneho dvora a, pokiaľ ide o príslušné ustanovenie Európskeho dohovoru o ľudských právach, Európskeho súdu pre ľudské práva v Štrasburgu.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009803/13
to the Council
Anna Záborská (PPE)
(2 September 2013)

Subject: Reconciliation of work, private and family life — definitions of 'family life' and 'private life'

What definitions of 'family' and 'family life' does the Council apply when dealing with community policies on the work-life balance (reconciliation between work, private and family life)?

What articles in the Treaties provide a legal basis for the Council to define legally the concept of the family for the purpose of EU policies?

What is the difference between 'family life' and 'private life' when implementing these policies?

Reply
(5 November 2013)

There is no definition of 'family' or 'family life' in EU legislation, nor is there any proposal for such a definition currently before the Council. The difference between 'family life' and 'private life' has not been defined either.

If the Commission were to propose a definition of the concepts of 'family', 'family life' and 'private life', it would be up to the Commission to suggest the legal basis, which would then be examined in the Council, or the Council and the European Parliament.

Article 7 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights deals with the respect for private and family life: 'Everyone has the right to respect for his or her private and family life, home and communications.' The terms used here are the subject of interpretation by the Court of Justice and, as far as the corresponding provision of the European Convention of Human Rights is concerned, by the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009804/13
an die Kommission
Jutta Steinruck (S&D)
(2. September 2013)

Betrifft: Erschwernis der Jugendbegegnungen zwischen Deutschland und Frankreich

Im Rahmen der Jugendbegegnung zwischen Deutschland und Frankreich werden zunehmend hohe formale Anforderungen an die Betreuerinnen und Betreuer gestellt. Diese umfassen mittlerweile die Nennung der Namen und Geburtsnamen der Eltern sowie verschiedene Zertifikate der Unbedenklichkeit sowie der pädagogischen Eignung. Das erschwert die Maßnahmen in erheblichem Maße.

Kann die Kommission daher folgende Fragen beantworten:

Erkennt die Kommission das Problem der zunehmenden Erschwernis von Austauschmaßnahmen?

Gedenkt die Kommission, hier die ehrenamtlichen Veranstalter von Jugendaustauschmaßnahmen zu unterstützen und auch in Zukunft einen Austausch zu ermöglichen?

Antwort von Frau Vassiliou im Namen der Kommission
(15. Oktober 2013)

Der Kommission ist nicht bekannt, dass es zunehmend Schwierigkeiten bei der Organisation von Jugendbegegnungen zwischen Deutschland und Frankreich gibt. Was die von der Kommission im Rahmen des Programms „Jugend in Aktion“ finanzierten Begegnungen betrifft, so hat die Kommission keine der Anforderungen eingeführt, die in der Anfrage der Frau Abgeordneten als Beispiele angeführt werden.

Die Kommission plant, die Unterstützung der derzeit im Rahmen von „Jugend in Aktion“ organisierten Jugendbegegnungen in Zukunft zu verstärken; für den Programmplanungszeitraum 2014-2020 sind im zukünftigen Programm Erasmus+ mehr Mittel insbesondere zur Finanzierung von Jugendbegegnungen, von Projekten des Europäischen Freiwilligendienstes und von Fortbildungs- und Vernetzungsprojekten für sozialpädagogische Betreuer vorgesehen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009804/13
to the Commission
Jutta Steinruck (S&D)
(2 September 2013)

Subject: Difficulty of organising youth exchanges between Germany and France

More and more formal requirements are being made of coordinators of youth exchanges between Germany and France. These requirements now include giving their parents'names and birth names as well as various certificates attesting to their conduct and suitability for teaching. This makes it much more difficult to organise exchanges.

Is the Commission aware of the increasing difficulty of organising exchanges?

Does the Commission plan to support youth exchange organising volunteers and enable exchanges to continue in future?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Vassiliou au nom de la Commission
(15 octobre 2013)

La Commission n'est pas informée de difficultés croissantes d'organiser des échanges de jeunes entre l'Allemagne et la France. En ce qui concerne les échanges que finance l'Union européenne à travers le programme Jeunesse en Action, la Commission n'a introduit aucune exigence qui corresponde aux exemples évoqués par l'Honorable Parlementaire.

La Commission prévoit de renforcer à l'avenir le soutien aux échanges de jeunes actuellement assuré par Jeunesse en Action: sur la période 2014-2020, le futur programme Erasmus+ devrait disposer de moyens budgétaires accrus pour notamment financer des échanges de jeunes, des expériences de Service volontaire européen et des activités de formation et de mise en réseau proposées aux animateurs socio-éducatifs.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009805/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE), Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE), Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE) y Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(2 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Cierre de la cuenta Twitter del activista por la lengua Jaume Flor — posible violación de la libertad de expresión por razones ideológicas y políticas

Mientras que, el 31 de agosto de 2013, los estudiantes valencianos están a punto de comenzar las clases y el nuevo año escolar, el activista en favor de la lengua valenciana/catalana Jaume Flor ha visto su cuenta Twitter cerrada después de organizar un *tweet* colectivo por el derecho a estudiar en catalán en el País Valenciano ([1]).

Jaume Flor es un experto en promover *tweets* en Twitter en favor de causas relacionadas con la libertad del país y los derechos lingüísticos de los catalanoparlantes.

Jaume Flor animaba a todos a expresar en Twitter «el rechazo más firme a la conculcación del derecho a estudiar en valenciano a miles de niños valencianos con la etiqueta #vullestudiarenvalencià y la mención @AlbertoFabra».

A la luz de lo anterior,

1. ¿Cree la Comisión que el cierre de la cuenta Twitter del activista representa una violación de la libertad de expresión de un ciudadano europeo?

2. ¿Piensa la Comisión proponer una normativa a favor de la protección de la libertad de expresión en las nuevas tecnologías y las redes sociales?

Respuesta de la Sra. Kroes en nombre de la Comisión
(22 de noviembre de 2013)

El derecho a la información y la libertad de expresión están recogidos en el artículo 11 de la Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales de la Unión Europea. Sin embargo, según el artículo 51, apartado 1, de la Carta, esta se aplica a los Estados miembros únicamente cuando apliquen el Derecho de la Unión Europea. En otros ámbitos, son aplicables las disposiciones de los Estados miembros sobre el derecho a la información y la libertad de expresión. Basándose en los hechos expuestos en la pregunta, la Comisión considera que no existe una relación con el Derecho de la UE.

Al mismo tiempo, la Comisión trata de garantizar el respeto de la libertad de los medios de comunicación y el pluralismo, dentro de sus competencias, y está reflexionando actualmente sobre un posible seguimiento en el marco de la consulta pública sobre el informe del Grupo independiente de Alto Nivel sobre Libertad y Pluralismo en los Medios de Comunicación.

([1]) http://www.vilaweb.cat/noticia/4141346/20130902/tremosa-porta-brusselles-censura-twitter-limpulsor-vullestudiarenvalencia.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009805/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE), Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE), Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE) and Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(2 September 2013)

Subject: Twitter account of language activist Jaume Flor shut down — possible violation of freedom of expression for ideological and political reasons

On 31 August 2013, as Valencian students were preparing to start their first classes of the new school year, activist Jaume Flor, a campaigner for the Valencian/Catalan language, saw his Twitter account shut down after he organised a Twitter campaign calling for people in the Valencian region to have the right to study in Catalan ([1]).

Jaume Flor is an expert in organising Twitter campaigns to promote causes relating to Valencian independence and the linguistic rights of Catalan speakers.

He sent out a tweet urging people to express their 'rejection in the strongest possible terms of the violation of thousands of Valencian children's right to study in Valencian using the hashtag #vullestudiarenvalencià and the mention @AlbertoFabra'.

1. Does the Commission think that the shutting down of Jaume Flor's Twitter account is a violation of the right to freedom of expression guaranteed under EC law?

2. Does it intend to propose rules aimed at safeguarding the freedom of expression of usersof new technologies and social networks?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(22 November 2013)

The right to information and freedom of expression is enshrined in Article 11 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. However, according to its Article 51(1), the Charter applies to Member States only when they are implementing European Union law. In other areas, Member States' provisions on the right to information and freedom of expression apply. Based on the facts as referred to in the question, the Commission considers that there is no link to EC law.

At the same time the Commission seeks to ensure respect for media freedom and pluralism within its competences. It is currently reflecting possible follow up to the public consultation on the report of the independent High Level Group on Media Freedom and Pluralism.

([1]) http://www.vilaweb.cat/noticia/4141346/20130902/tremosa-porta-brusselles-censura-twitter-limpulsor-vullestudiarenvalencia.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009806/13
alla Commissione
Lara Comi (PPE)
(2 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Concorrenza nella vendita di sostanze liquide negli aeroporti

Premesso che:

— la vigente regolamentazione europea prevede ad oggi una serie di restrizioni circa il trasporto dei liquidi nei voli aerei da aeroporti europei;

— tra le varie regole, vi è quella di non poter portare a mano una semplice bottiglia d'acqua, anche della più piccola dimensione standard, che viene requisita al momento del controllo di sicurezza;

— questa limitazione costringe i cittadini ad acquistare bottiglie di acqua o di altri liquidi nella parte interna dell'aeroporto antistante la zona per l'imbarco;

— accade troppo spesso che i punti vendita nella zona interna dell'aeroporto, ovvero quella riservata ai passeggeri che devono imbarcarsi su un volo, applicano prezzi molto elevati sulle bevande, anche sulla semplice acqua minerale, con un costo che supera anche di dieci volte il prezzo medio del prodotto;

— analoga situazione si riscontra anche per altre bevande e per i prezzi che vengono applicati sugli stessi aerei;

— bere è una funzione fisiologica essenziale dell'essere umano;

— nel rispetto delle regole sulla sicurezza, i cittadini passeggeri sono pertanto costretti ad acquistare acqua o altre bevande a costi notevolmente superiori a quelli medi applicabili nel relativo paese di imbarco;

— questi comportamenti sembrano avvantaggiare le imprese che svolgono attività commerciale all'interno degli aeroporti, in maniera del tutto ingiustificata e dannosa per i consumatori europei;

tanto premesso,

senza voler entrare nel merito delle regole vigenti applicabili all'interno dell'UE, si domanda alla Commissione:

1. come giudica questa situazione e se ritiene che si tratti di un comportamento distorsivo della concorrenza e di un danno ingiusto e ingiustificato ai consumatori europei;

2. quali rimedi ha posto o intende porre in essere per eliminarla o quali rimedi possono mettere in campo i cittadini stessi per difendersi da questi comportamenti lesivi dei loro diritti.

Risposta di Joaquín Almunia a nome della Commissione
(28 ottobre 2013)

Le attuali restrizioni sul trasporto di liquidi nel bagaglio a mano sono state introdotte per gravi motivi di sicurezza. Dal 2006 solo quantità limitate di liquidi possono essere portate oltre i varchi per i controlli di sicurezza. La minaccia rappresentata dagli esplosivi liquidi sussiste ancora. Pertanto la Commissione ha stabilito una tabella di marcia per sostituire le restrizioni sui liquidi con metodi di rilevamento di esplosivi basati sulla tecnologia al fine di migliorare la comodità dei passeggeri, mantenendo nel contempo elevati livelli di sicurezza dell'aviazione dell'UE.

Probabilmente, limitando le fonti di approvvigionamento di alcuni beni oltre i varchi per i controlli di sicurezza, le misure di sicurezza hanno inciso sui prezzi, in particolare se il numero dei negozi nella zona interna degli aeroporti riservata alle partenze è limitato.

Tuttavia, non vi sono indicazioni del fatto che tale effetto derivi da una violazione delle norme antitrust dell'UE, che vietano accordi tra concorrenti aventi per oggetto o per effetto la restrizione della concorrenza e proibiscono gli abusi di posizione dominante in una parte considerevole del mercato interno. Entrambi i divieti vanno applicati solo nella misura in cui eventuali abusi possano incidere in maniera sostanziale sugli scambi tra Stati membri.

La politica antitrust dell'UE mira a promuovere prezzi più bassi e beni concorrenziali per i consumatori. Tuttavia, in mancanza di indicazioni di una violazione delle norme antitrust, la Commissione non può intervenire.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009806/13
to the Commission
Lara Comi (PPE)
(2 September 2013)

Subject: Competition in the sale of liquids at airports

European regulations have imposed a number of restrictions on the amount of liquids that may be carried on flights from European airports. Under one of those rules, ordinary bottles of water, even of the smallest standard size, may not be carried in passengers' hand baggage: they are confiscated when passengers go through the security checkpoints. Because of this restriction, passengers are forced to buy bottles of water or other liquids airside, in the airport area immediately adjoining the boarding gates. It is too often the case that airside shops, in the area only for passengers about to board, charge very high prices for drinks, including plain mineral water, which can cost as much as ten times the average price. The same applies to other drinks and to inflight prices. Drinking is physiologically essential for the human body. It follows from the above that passengers, in order to comply with the security regulations, have to buy water or other drinks at a cost far above the average going rates in the countries of departure. Pricing practices of this sort appear to be benefiting firms which do business airside, but, apart from being wholly unjustified, they are harming European consumers.

Without going into the merits of the rules applying at EU airports:

1. How does the Commission view this situation? Does it believe that competition is being distorted and unfair damage needlessly caused to European consumers?

2. What steps has it taken or will it take to remedy the situation? Alternatively, what remedies can citizens themselves employ in order to protect themselves from such practices and the resulting infringement of their rights?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(28 October 2013)

The current restrictions on carrying liquids in cabin baggage were put in place for serious security reasons. Since 2006 only limited quantities may be taken beyond security checkpoints. The threat from liquid explosives persists. Therefore the Commission has established a roadmap on how to replace liquid restictions with technology based explosive detection methods in order to facilitate passenger convenience while keeping high levels of EU aviation security.

Arguably, by limiting the sources of supply of some goods after the security checkpoints, the security measures may have had an impact on prices, notably if the number of shops in the secured area of the airport is limited.

However, there are no indications that such an effect results from an infringement of EU antitrust rules. The rules prevent agreements between competitors which have as their object or effect restriction of competition. They also prohibit abuses of a dominant position in a substantial part of the internal market. Both prohibitions only apply to the extent that the conduct may have a significant effect on trade between Member States.

The EU's antitrust policy aims at promoting lower prices and competitive goods for consumers. However, in the absence of indications of an infringement of antitrust rules, the Commission cannot intervene.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009807/13
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(2. September 2013)

Betrifft: Verfolgung von Kopten in Ägypten

Während der gegenwärtigen Krise in Ägypten werden Angehörige der christlichen Gemeinschaft der Kopten nach wie vor von Islamisten drangsaliert. Die Kopten stellen mit insgesamt 7,5 Millionen Menschen die größte christliche Minderheit im arabischen Nahen Osten dar. Kopten haben die Absetzung des ägyptischen Präsidenten Mursi unterstützt, und die ersten Angriffe auf sie ereigneten sich kurz nachdem Anhänger des gestürzten Präsidenten gewaltsam auseinandergetrieben worden waren. Mehr als 60 Kirchen wurden in ganz Ägypten teilweise oder völlig zerstört. Kopten wurden zusammengeschlagen oder getötet, ihre Läden in Brand gesetzt und Bibeln verbrannt. In Wandschmierereien an koptischen Kirchen wird Christen „Feuer und Hölle" angedroht.

Die Kommission wird ersucht, dazu folgende Fragen zu beantworten:

1. Beabsichtigt die Kommission eine Untersuchungskommission zum Schutz von religiösen Minderheiten in Ägypten einzurichten? Falls nicht, weshalb nicht?

2. Könnte die Verfolgung von Kopten die Kommission dazu bewegen, ihre Politik im Hinblick auf Ägypten zu überdenken? Falls ja, in welchem Maße und in welcher Weise?

3. In seiner Entschließung vom 27. Oktober 2011 hat das Parlament gefordert, „dass die EU Maßnahmen verabschieden sollte, die im Fall gravierender Verletzungen der Menschenrechte von Bürgern in Ägypten zur Anwendung gelangen." Hat die Kommission die jüngsten Gräueltaten gegen die Gemeinschaft der Kopten bereits entsprechend berücksichtigt?

4. Wie gedenkt die Kommission zu reagieren, um die Achtung der Grundrechte, der Religionsfreiheit und des Rechts auf Freiheit und Sicherheit für die Glaubensgemeinschaft der Kopten zu gewährleisten?

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

Die Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin hat aufs Deutlichste die brutale Gewalt, die Morde und Angriffe, auch auf Kirchen, verurteilt, die sich Mitte August nach der Auflösung der Sit-Ins der Muslimbruderschaft ereigneten. Am 21. August 2013 berief die Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin eine außerordentliche Sitzung des Rates „Auswärtige Angelegenheiten" zum Thema Ägypten ein, auf der die EU-Außenminister Schlussfolgerungen annahmen, die sich ausdrücklich auch auf die Zerstörung vieler Kirchen und auf gezielte Übergriffe gegen die koptische Gemeinschaft bezogen.

Die EU weiß um die Einschränkungen, denen verschiedene religiöse Minderheiten in Ägypten ausgesetzt sind, und ist besorgt darüber. Sie verurteilt alle Formen von Intoleranz, Diskriminierung und Gewalt gegen Personen aufgrund ihrer Religion oder ihres Glaubens, gleich wo sie stattfinden und unabhängig von der Glaubensrichtung. Die Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin hat die ägyptischen Behörden mehrfach dazu aufgefordert, die Religions- und Glaubensfreiheit im Land sicherzustellen.

Die EU-Delegation in Kairo verfolgt Fälle religiös motivierter Gewalt aufmerksam und betont bei ihren Kontakten mit den ägyptischen Behörden, dass Diskriminierungen aus religiösen Gründen vermieden werden sollten. Um zu einer besseren Achtung der Religions- und Glaubensfreiheit in Ägypten beizutragen, ist die EU bestrebt, mit den relevanten Akteuren im Land sowie mit regionalen und internationalen Organisationen, die die Werte und Ziele der EU in diesem Bereich teilen, zusammenzuarbeiten.

Die EU ist der Auffassung, dass Zusammenarbeit und politischer Dialog die geeignetsten Wege sind, um die Regierung in Kairo zu ermutigen und darauf zu drängen, konkrete Maßnahmen zum Schutz der Kopten und anderer religiöser Minderheiten zu treffen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009807/13
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(2 September 2013)

Subject: Persecution of the Coptic community in Egypt

In the current Egyptian crisis, the Coptic Christian community has been and is still being harassed by Islamists. With about 7.5 million members, this community is the most important Christian minority in the Arab Middle East. Copts supported the deposing of former President Mursi and the first attacks against them happened shortly after the violent dispersal of supporters of the now deposed president. All over Egypt, more than 60 churches have been partially or totally destroyed. Copts have been killed or beaten up; shops and Bibles have been burned. Threatening graffiti has been written on the walls of Coptic churches promising 'fire and hell' to Christians.

Can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Does the Commission plan to set up a committee of inquiry on the protection of religious minorities in Egypt? If not, why not?

2. Could the acts of persecution carried out against the Coptic community bring the Commission to review its policies vis-à-vis Egypt and, if so, to what degree and how?

3. In its resolution of 27 October 2011, Parliament stated that 'measures should be adopted by the EU in the event of serious violations of the human rights of any citizens in Egypt'. Has the Commission already taken these recent atrocities against the Coptic community into account?

4. How does the Commission plan to react in order to ensure respect for fundamental rights, freedom of religion and the right to liberty and security for the Coptic community?

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

The HR/VP condemned, in the clearest possible terms, the extreme violence, killings and attacks including on churches that followed the dispersal in mid-August of the Muslim Brotherhood supported sit-ins. On 21 August 2013, the HR/VP convened an extra-ordinary Foreign Affairs Council on Egypt where EU Foreign Ministers adopted conclusions which also specifically referred to the destruction of many churches and the targeting of the Coptic community.

The EU is aware and concerned about the constraints that different religious minorities face in Egypt and condemns all forms of intolerance, discrimination and violence against persons because of their religion or belief, wherever it takes place and regardless of the religion. The HR/VP repeatedly calls on the Egyptian authorities to ensure freedom of religion or belief in the country.

The EU Delegation in Cairo is closely following cases of sectarian violence and emphasises the importance of avoiding discrimination on religious grounds in its contacts with Egyptian authorities. In order to support the improvement of freedom of religion or belief in Egypt, the EU is keen to engage with the relevant stakeholders in the country as well as with the regional and international organisations sharing EU's values and objectives in this respect.

The EU considers that cooperation and political dialogue are the most appropriate channels to encourage and put pressure on Cairo's Government so that it will undertake concrete actions in order to protect Copts and other religious minorities.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009808/13
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(2. September 2013)

Betrifft: PRISM/Überwachungsprogramme und EU-Rechtsvorschriften

Angesichts der eklatanten Verstöße gegen die Rechte von EU-Bürgern durch US-Überwachungsprogramme (PRISM) sowie angesichts der von den G29 unlängst gegenüber der Kommission vorgebrachten Bedenken wird die Kommission um die Beantwortung der folgenden Fragen gebeten:

1. Laut den EU-Behörden, die die Freiheit im Internet überwachen, müssen Überlegungen über die nationalen Rechtsvorschriften in den Mitgliedstaaten angestellt werden, und Viviane Reding hat klargestellt, dass sie die Rechte von EU-Bürgern angesichts der Sammlung personenbezogener Daten und des damit verbundenen Missbrauchs durch die USA stärken möchte. Welche Kriterien und Bedingungen werden angewandt, um diese beiden Ziele zu verfolgen?

2. Welche von PRISM und damit zusammenhängenden Überwachungsprogrammen gesammelten Informationen werden von EU-Behörden bzw. europäischen Überwachungssystemen mit Ausnahme des Militärs ebenfalls genutzt?

3. In welchem Maße entspricht dies EU-Rechtsvorschriften?

4. Wird die Kommission die Konsequenzen und Erkenntnisse des EU-Überwachungsskandals bei der geplanten neuen Datenschutzregelung angemessen berücksichtigen?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(11. November 2013)

Die Kommission verweist den Herrn Abgeordneten auf ihre Antworten auf die Anfragen zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009773/2013 und E-006932/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009808/13
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(2 September 2013)

Subject: Prism/surveillance programmes and EU legislation

Following the abuse of European citizens' rights by the US Prism surveillance programme and concerns recently expressed to the Commission by the G29, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. According to the European authorities monitoring Internet freedom, further consideration needs to be given to national legislation in the Member States, and Mrs Viviane Reding has made it clear that she wishes to strengthen European citizens' rights in response to the collection and abuse of personal data by the United States. What criteria and conditions will be adopted to pursue these two aims?

2. Which items of information collected via Prism and related surveillance programmes are also used by European authorities or European surveillance mechanisms — excluding in the military domain?

3. To what extent does this process comply with European legislation?

4. Will the Commission properly reflect and incorporate the results and outcomes of the EU surveillance scandal in its planned new regulations on data protection?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(11 November 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to written questions E-009773/2013 and E-006932/2013.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009810/13
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(2. September 2013)

Betrifft: Verarbeitete Tierproteine gefährden die Gesundheit von Menschen und die Lebensmittelsicherheit

Obwohl Tierfutter in der EU sehr streng kontrolliert wird, findet man in Lebensmitteln immer wieder genetisch veränderte Organismen (GMO), Dioxin und Antibiotika. Eine Reihe von Lebensmittelskandalen hat zutage gefördert, dass es in der Tierfutterindustrie viel mehr Schlupflöcher in Bezug auf die Lebensmittelsicherheit gibt als in anderen Branchen. Ungeachtet der strengen EU-Richtlinien gibt es noch einiges zu tun. Trotz Berichten aus einigen Mitgliedstaaten, in denen davon abgeraten wird, hat die Kommission im Februar 2013 beschlossen, dass Aquakulturbetreiber ab dem 1. Juni 2013 verarbeitete Tierproteine wieder verwenden dürfen.

1. Auf der Grundlage welcher Berichte hat die Kommission beschlossen, die Verwendung von verarbeiteten Tierproteinen wieder zuzulassen? Wurden externe Studien — aus der Zivilgesellschaft — in Auftrag gegeben bzw. berücksichtigt?

2. Mit welchen Verfahren wird die Produktion verarbeiteter Tierproteine künftig kontrolliert?

3. Hat die Kommission Pläne für kurz- oder mittelfristige Kontrollen und Studien, um zu gewährleisten, dass die Lebensmittelsicherheit angemessen kontrolliert und sie durch verarbeitete Tierproteine nicht beeinträchtigt wird?

4. Handelt es sich bei der Genehmigung für Aquakulturbetreiber, verarbeitete Tierproteine zu verwenden, um einen heimlichen Versuch oder eine vorbereitende Maßnahme, die Genehmigung später auch auf andere Bereiche der Landwirtschaft auszuweiten?

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission
(4. November 2013)

1. Mit der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 56/2013 ([1]) der Kommission wird die Verwendung verarbeiteter tierischer Eiweiße (VTE), die aus anderen Nutztieren als Wiederkäuern (d. h. vor allem Schweinen und Geflügel) gewonnen werden, in Futtermitteln für Tiere in Aquakultur erneut zugelassen. Die Verordnung gilt seit dem 1. Juni 2013 und steht im Einklang mit den jüngsten wissenschaftlichen Stellungnahmen ([2]) der Europäischen Behörde für Lebensmittelsicherheit (EFSA), denen zufolge die Gefahr der Übertragung boviner spongiformer Enzephalopathie (BSE) zwischen Nichtwiederkäuern vernachlässigbar ist, solange die Rückführung innerhalb einer Spezies (Kannibalismus) verhindert wird. Bei der Vorbereitung der Verordnung berücksichtigte die Kommission auch die Schlussfolgerungen des Rates vom 29. November 2010 ([3]) und die Entschließung des Europäischen Parlaments vom 6. Juli 2011 ([4]).

2. Die Verordnung der Kommission in Verbindung mit der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1069/2009 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates ([5]) und der dazugehörigen Durchführungsverordnung (EU) Nr. 142/2011 ([6]) enthält strenge Anforderungen an die Rückverfolgbarkeit und die analytischen Kontrollen, die in allen Mitgliedstaaten entlang der VTE-Produktionskette durchzuführen sind, um jegliche Kreuzkontamination zu verhindern. Nach Auffassung der Kommission wird das hohe Verbraucherschutzniveau durch die korrekte Anwendung und Durchsetzung dieser Verordnungen aufrechterhalten.

3. Ab 2014 werden die Inspektionsdienste der Kommission beginnen, in den Mitgliedstaaten Audits durchzuführen, um die Einhaltung der Kommissionsverordnung (EU) Nr. 56/2013 zu prüfen.

([1]) ABl. L 21, 24.1.2013, S. 3.
([2]) Opinion of the Scientific Panel on Biological Hazards on a request from the European Parliament on the assessment of the health risks of feeding of ruminants with fishmeal in relation to the risk of TSE, The EFSA Journal (2007) 443, 1-26.
Opinion of the Scientific Panel on Biological Hazards on a request from the European Parliament on Certain Aspects related to the Feeding of Animal Proteins to Farm Animals, The EFSA Journal (2007) 576, 1-41.
Opinion of the Scientific Panel on Biological Hazards on a revision of the quantitative risk assessment (QRA) of the BSE risk posed by processed animal proteins (PAPs), EFSA Journal 2011;9(1):1947.
([3]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/de/10/st13/st13889-ad01re01.de10.pdf
([4]) Angenommener Text, P7_TA(2011)0328.
([5]) ABl. L 300 vom 14.11.2009, S. 1.
([6]) ABl. L 54 vom 26.11.2011, S. 1.

4. Im Einklang mit ihrer Mitteilung vom 16. Juli 2010 ([7]) wird die Kommission eine Änderung der Bestimmungen zum Verfütterungsverbot nur in Betracht ziehen, wenn solide wissenschaftliche Erkenntnisse vorliegen und belastbare Kontrollinstrumente verfügbar sind.

([7]) Zweiter Fahrplan für die TSE-Bekämpfung — Ein Strategiepapier zum Thema transmissible spongiforme Enzephalopathien (2010-2015), KOM(2010)384.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009810/13
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(2 September 2013)

Subject: Processed animal proteins and risks to human health and food safety

Despite very tight controls on animal feed in the EU, GMOs, dioxins and antibiotics can be found in various foods. Several different food scandals in the animal feed industry have revealed considerably more loopholes in the area of food safety than in other industries. Although the EU does issue rigid guidelines, some challenges remain in this area. In February 2013, the Commission decided that processed animal proteins could be used again by fish farmers as of 1 June 2013, despite adverse reports from some Member States.

1. On which reports did the Commission base its decision to reauthorise the use of processed animal proteins? Were external studies — from civil society — commissioned or taken into account?

2. Which kind of procedures will be used to control the production of processed animal proteins?

3. Does the Commission have plans for any short or medium-term checks and studies to ensure that food safety is properly controlled and not subject to shortcomings caused by processed animal proteins?

4. Is the authorisation for fish farmers to use processed animal proteins a discreet or preliminary first step towards subsequently expanding this authorisation to other agricultural sectors?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(4 November 2013)

1. Commission Regulation (EU) No 56/2013 ([1]) aims to re-authorise the use of processed animal protein (PAP) derived from non-ruminant farmed animals (i.e. mainly from pigs and poultry) in feed for aquaculture animals. It is applicable from 1 June 2013 and is in line with the latest scientific opinions ([2]) of the European Food safety Authority (EFSA) which indicate that the risk of transmission of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) between non-ruminant animals is negligible provided that intra-species recycling (cannibalism) is prevented. When drafting this text, the Commission took also into account the Council conclusions of 29 November 2010 ([3]) and the European Parliament resolution of 6 July 2011 ([4]).

2. This Commission Regulation, read together with Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council ([5]) and its Implementing Regulation (EU) No 142/2011 ([6]), provide for very strict traceability requirements and analytical controls to be applied by the Member States all along the PAP production chain in order to prevent any kind of cross-contamination. The Commission believes that with the correct implementation and enforcement of these Regulations, the current high level of consumer protection would be maintained

3. As from 2014, the Commission inspection services intend to start conducting audits in Member States in order to check on compliance with the requirements provided for in Commission Regulation (EU) No 56/2013.

4. In line with its communication adopted on 16 July 2010 ([7]), the Commission will continue to consider the review of the feed ban rules only if supported by solid scientific basis and robust control tools.

([1]) OJ L21, 24.1.2013, p.3.
([2]) Opinion of the Scientific Panel on Biological Hazards on a request from the European Parliament on the assessment of the health risks of feeding of ruminants with fishmeal in relation to the risk of TSE, The EFSA Journal (2007), 443, 1-26.
Opinion of the Scientific Panel on Biological Hazards on a request from the European Parliament on Certain Aspects related to the Feeding of Animal Proteins to Farm Animals, The EFSA Journal (2007) Journal number 576, 1-41.
Opinion of the Scientific Panel on Biological Hazards on a revision of the quantitative risk assessment (QRA) of the BSE risk posed by processed animal protein (PAPs), EFSA Journal 2011;9(1):1947.
([3]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/10/st13/st13889-ad01re01.en10.pdf
([4]) Text adopted, P7_TA(2011)0328.
([5]) OJ L 300, 14.11.2009, p. 1.
([6]) OJ L 54, 26.11.2011, p. 1.
([7]) TSE Road Map 2 — A strategy paper on Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies for 2010-2015- COM/2010/0384.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009811/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Charles Tannock (ECR)
(2 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR- Criminal charges against Andrew Hall in Thailand

On 2 January 2013 the Finnish-based NGO, Finnwatch, published the report, 'Cheap Has a High Price'. The report documented alleged exploitation of migrant workers by the National Fruit Company in Thailand and made other claims of human rights abuses.

The report alleged that workers were being forced to work in cramped, overheated and dangerous working environments; that workers were hit by managers and security guards; that passports and identity papers were confiscated and not returned upon request and that wages were below the legal requirement, with compulsory overtime being enforced. The report also accused the company of using child labour.

Since the publication of the report, its chief author, British citizen Andrew Hall, is being sued for defamation by the company in question. He is being charged under the Thai Criminal Code sections 90, 91, 236, 328 and 332; sections 3 and 4 of the Computer Crimes Act 2007 have also been levelled. If found guilty, Mr Hall could face up to 7 years in prison and fines in excess of USD 10 million.

Campaigners claim that the charges are an attempt by the company to silence its critics and prevent alleged abuses from being scrutinised. It is also claimed that the charges represent an assault on free speech and could act to undermine the work of human rights' groups in Thailand.

Would the High Representative/Vice-President raise the case of this EU citizen with the Thai authorities, especially in the light of its potential to affect similar human rights activism in the country?

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

The EU Delegation in Thailand follows this case very closely, which includes direct contacts with Andrew Hall and trial observation. It does so in close cooperation with the most concerned Member States.

The case is between two private parties and is now before a Thai court. The EU will continue to follow the trial in full respect of the independence of the Thai judicial system.

Overall, support and outreach to human rights defenders is an important part of the EU's work in Thailand, in cooperation with Member States.

Examples of this work include trial observations on Human Rights Defenders' cases on issues ranging from freedom of expression to land rights, detention visit of Human Right Defenders, EU statements on court rulings, meetings across country with Human Rights Defenders, organisation of meetings between visiting Members of the European Parliament and senior European External Action Service (EEAS) officials with Human Rights Defenders and the organisation of seminars on Issues and Challenges Faced by Human Rights Defenders.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009812/13
à la Commission (Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante)
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(2 septembre 2013)

Objet: VP/HR — Organisation par l'Union européenne d'une conférence pour la paix

Les récentes attaques chimiques en Syrie ont fait réagir la communauté internationale. L'utilisation d'armes chimiques contre la population avait été considérée comme la «ligne rouge» à ne pas franchir sous peine d'intervention des États tiers.

En effet, l'utilisation d'armes chimiques en temps de guerre est interdite par la Convention sur l'interdiction des armes chimiques de 1992, à laquelle tous les États européens sont parties.

Puisque tous les États européens sont parties à la Convention sur l'interdiction des armes chimiques, la Haute Représentante estime-t-elle que l'Union européenne pourrait organiser une conférence pour la paix afin d'évoquer les perspectives d'après-crise en Syrie et jouer un rôle d'interlocuteur privilégié pour tous les États parties à cette convention?

Réponse donnée par M^{me} Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(12 novembre 2013)

La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante de la Commission européenne a répété à de nombreuses reprises que la réponse au conflit syrien ne pouvait être que politique. L'initiative internationale visant à détruire le programme nucléaire syrien constitue une occasion de relancer les efforts déployés en vue de l'organisation d'une conférence de paix sur la Syrie.

L'UE procède actuellement à la mise en place d'un soutien spécifique à la mission d'inspection de l'OIAC en Syrie pour instaurer des conditions propices à une solution négociée de la crise.

L'UE a exprimé tout son soutien à la tenue d'une conférence de paix, qui serait convoquée par les Nations unies et s'appuierait sur le communiqué de Genève de juin 2012.

Cette conférence réunirait les deux parties au conflit autour de la table des négociations, en présence, éventuellement, d'acteurs internationaux. Elle est actuellement prévue pour novembre 2013. L'UE entretient des contacts avec les intervenants clés, dont les Nations unies, les États-Unis et la Russie, afin de définir les possibilités d'un soutien concret à la préparation, à l'organisation et au suivi de la conférence.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009812/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(2 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Organisation by the European Union of a peace conference

The recent chemical weapons attacks in Syria have provoked an outcry among the international community. Warnings had been given that the use of chemical weapons against the population was the 'red line' that, if crossed, would lead to action by other countries.

The use of chemical weapons in warfare is banned by the 1992 Chemical Weapons Convention, to which all European states are party.

Since all European countries are States Party to the Chemical Weapons Convention, does the High Representative think that the European Union could convene a peace conference to discuss the future of Syria after the crisis, at which the EU could act as a negotiator for all States Party to the Convention?

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

The HR/VP has reiterated on numerous occasions that the Syrian conflict can only be solved through a political process. The international initiative aimed at destroying Syria's nuclear programme provides an opportunity for a revival of efforts toward organising a peace conference on Syria.

The EU is in the process of implementing specific support for the OPCW inspection mission in Syria, with a view to promoting an environment conducive to a negotiated solution of the crisis.

The EU has stated its full support for the convening of a peace conference, which would be convened by the United Nations and build upon the Geneva Communique agreed in June 2012.

The conference would bring to the two parties of the conflict to the negotiations table, with international presence as appropriate. It is currently planned to take place in November 2013.

The EU is in contact with relevant key players, including the UN, USA and Russia, to identify possibilities of tangible support related to the preparations for, organisation of, and follow-up to the conference.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009813/13
à la Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(2 septembre 2013)

Objet: Gaz réfrigérant R1234yf dans les voitures

Depuis le 12 juin 2013, la France a bloqué l'immatriculation des derniers modèles Mercedes vendus sur le territoire français, au motif que la marque ne respectait pas la nouvelle norme européenne imposant l'utilisation d'un nouveau gaz réfrigérant, le R1234yf, jugé moins polluant.

En effet, l'Agence fédérale allemande pour l'automobile a demandé aux constructeurs allemands de ne pas appliquer la réglementation européenne, puisqu'après avoir mené une enquête préliminaire sur des prototypes utilisant le nouveau gaz, elle a constaté que le gaz incriminé présentait des risques potentiels de combustion. L'agence a donc demandé à la Commission de mener de plus amples investigations pour évaluer les risques de ce gaz réfrigérant dans la climatisation de véhicules.

Au moment de l'adoption du règlement européen rendant obligatoire l'utilisation du R1234yf dans les voitures, quel organisme la Commission a-t-elle mandaté pour étudier l'impact des gaz réfrigérants?

Estime-t-elle nécessaire de mener des investigations supplémentaires pour évaluer les risques potentiels soulevés par l'agence allemande? Cela peut-il influer sur l'application actuelle du règlement, qui rend obligatoire l'utilisation de ce gaz dans les nouvelles voitures à partir du 1er juillet 2013?

Réponse donnée par M. Tajani au nom de la Commission
(17 octobre 2013)

La Commission renvoie l'Honorable Parlementaire aux réponses qu'elle a données aux questions E-008870/2013 et E-008990/2013 sur le même sujet.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009813/13
to the Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(2 September 2013)

Subject: Use of R1234yf coolant in motor vehicle air-conditioning systems

Since 12 June 2013, France has been refusing to register new Mercedes vehicles on the grounds that they do not comply with the new EU standard requiring the use in vehicle air-conditioning systems of the new, more environment-friendly, refrigerant gas R1234yf.

Following preliminary tests carried out on prototypes fitted with systems using the new gas, during which it was found that the gas could present a fire risk, Germany's Federal Motor Transport Authority (KBA) asked German manufacturers not to apply the new EU rules. The authority asked the Commission to carry out further investigations into the risks of using this coolant in motor vehicle air-conditioning systems.

What body carried out impact assessments on refrigerant gases for the Commission prior to the adoption of the regulation making it compulsory for R1234yf to be used in new motor vehicles from 1 July 2013?

Would the Commission agree that further investigations should be carried out in order to assess the possible risks highlighted by the KBA? What implications could the findings of such investigations have for the implementation of the above regulation?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(17 October 2013)

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to the replies to questions E-008870/2013 and E-008990/2013 on the same subject.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-009814/13
do Komisji
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(3 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Rozbudowa rosyjskiej kolei szerokotorowej

W polskiej opinii publicznej coraz częściej poruszany jest temat projektu rozbudowy rosyjskiej kolei szerokotorowej do Wiednia. Projekt ma przewidywać połączenie kolejowe z Rosji przez Kazachstan, Ukrainę i Słowację do Austrii. Główne obawy wzbudza chęć ominięcia Polski przy tranzycie ze wschodu.

O takich planach negatywnie wypowiadają się także przedstawiciele Polskich Kolei Państwowych, ponieważ projekt może być zagrożeniem dla linii LHS – towarowego połączenia szerokotorowego do Sławkowa.

W związku z powyższym proszę o odpowiedź:

Czy Komisja uważa, że rozbudowa kolei szerokotorowej nie stanowiłaby zagrożenia dla konkurencyjności Polski i Unii Europejskiej?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Siima Kallasa w imieniu Komisji
(7 października 2013 r.)

Rosyjskie plany przedłużenia linii kolejowej o szerokości toru 1 520 mm z Rosji do Austrii nie wchodzą w zakres sieci TEN-T Unii Europejskiej i dla tego projektu nie zostaną udostępnione żadne fundusze unijne. Jeśli zainteresowane państwa członkowskie będą realizować ten projekt, będą musiały zapewnić przestrzeganie wszystkich wymagań technicznych przewidzianych w prawie UE, w tym mających zastosowanie do systemów kolejowych o szerokości toru 1 520 mm.

Komisja jest zdania, że rozwój konkurencyjnych usług międzynarodowego transportu kolejowego powinien koncentrować się na realizacji korytarzy towarowych ustanowionych na mocy rozporządzenia nr 913/2010 ([1]). Korytarze nr 6, 8 i 9 dochodzą do wschodniej granicy UE, przy czym korytarz nr 8 przechodzi przez Polskę.

([1]) Rozporządzenie Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady (UE) nr 913/2010 z dnia 22 września 2010 r. w sprawie europejskiej sieci kolejowej ukierunkowanej na konkurencyjny transport towarowy, Dz.U. L 276 z 20.10.2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009814/13
to the Commission
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: Extension of Russian broad-gauge railway

A plan to extend a Russian broad-gauge railway line to Vienna is the subject of increasing concern in Poland. The plan is to build a railway line from Russia through Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Slovakia to Austria. The main cause for concern is that the project seeks to build a transit route from the east which bypasses Poland.

Representatives of Polish National Railways also take a negative view of the plan, as the project could be a threat to the LHS broad-gauge freight line to Sławków.

Does the Commission not consider that the extension of this Russian broad-gauge railway line would be a threat to the competitiveness of Poland and the European Union?

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

Russian plans to extend a 1520 mm gauge railway line from Russia to Austria do not fall within the European Union TEN-T network and no EU funding will be made available for this project. In case where the Member States concerned implement the project, they will need to ensure that all technical requirements provided for in EC law, including those applying to 1520 mm gauge railway systems, are respected.

The Commission considers that the development of competitive international rail freight should focus on the implementation of the Rail Freight Corridors established under Regulation No 913/2010 ([1]). Corridor 6, 8 and 9 reach the Eastern borders of the EU, with Corridor 8 running through Poland.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 913/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 September 2010 concerning a European rail network for competitive freight, OJ L 276, 20.10.2010.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-009815/13
do Komisji
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(3 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Przymusowe leczenie psychiatryczne na Białorusi

Jak podaje Amnesty International białoruski psychiatra, Ihar Pastnou, został zatrzymany i poddany przymusowemu leczeniu w szpitalu, w którym pracował, po serii krytycznych wypowiedzi dotyczących systemu opieki zdrowotnej w Witebsku. Z powodu wygłaszanych opinii Ihar Pastnou wszedł w konflikt ze swoimi przełożonymi, a 16 sierpnia 2013 r. komisja psychiatryczna szpitala, w którym pracuje orzekła, że wymaga on przymusowego leczenia ze względu na „psychotyczne zaburzenie osobowości z manią w kierunku prześladowania autorytetów".

Zgodnie z punktem 16 *Zasad ochrony osób z zaburzeniami psychicznymi ONZ*, przymusowe leczenie psychiatryczne może być stosowane jedynie w przypadkach najcięższych zaburzeń, przez najkrótszy możliwy czas, gdy osoba stanowi bezpośrednie lub nieuchronne zagrożenie dla siebie lub innych.

W wydanej decyzji sąd stwierdza, że wymaga on przymusowego leczenia psychiatrycznego ze względu na „utrzymujące się zaburzenie psychotyczne", z powodu którego stanowi on zagrożenie dla samego siebie oraz otoczenia. Sąd jednak nie wyjaśnia w jaki sposób Ihar Pastnou zagraża otoczeniu, wspominając jedynie o publikacjach internetowych.

Uznawanie za „chorych psychicznie" i przymusowe leczenia było jednym z popularnych narzędzi represji wobec jednostek, których zachowania nie odpowiadały władzy w czasach ZSRR. Dziś, jak widać na przykładzie Ihara Pastnou, ten rodzaj represji jest wykorzystywany przez władze Białorusi.

W zawiązku z powyższym:

Czy Komisja zamierza zareagować w sprawie przymusowo leczonego białoruskiego psychiatry Ihara Pastnou?

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-009831/13
do Komisji
Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(3 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wyrok dla białoruskiego lekarza psychiatry

21 sierpnia sąd obwodu witebskiego skazał białoruskiego lekarza psychiatrę, Ihara Pastnoua na przymusowe leczenie psychiatryczne. Ihar Pastnou krytykował rząd, nieprawidłowości w systemie opieki zdrowotnej w Witebsku i informował na swoim kanale na YouTube o malwersacjach finansowych związanych z władzą.

Nie ma najmniejszych wątpliwości, że proces Ihara Pastnoua i wyrok sądu mają charakter polityczny. Według prawa, były lekarz ma 10 dni, żeby odwołać się od decyzji sądu. Oburzającym jest jednak fakt, że w szpitalu psychiatrycznym nie pozwolono mu skorzystać z długopisu i kartki papieru, by mógł napisać odwołanie. W związku z zaistniałą sytuacją Ihar Pastou rozpoczął głodówkę.

Sprawa Ihara Pastnoua po raz kolejny dobitnie pokazuje, że na Białorusi łamane są prawa człowieka, a jakakolwiek krytyka reżimu Aleksandra Łukaszenki niesie poważne konsekwencje i jest surowo karana.

W związku z tymi doniesieniami, zwracam się z zapytaniem, czy Komisja ma zamiar podjąć interwencję w sprawie wyroku dla Ihara Pastnoua i wyrazić zdecydowany sprzeciw wobec niesprawiedliwych i motywowanych politycznie procesów na Białorusi?

Wspólna odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji

(16 października 2013 r.)

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca zna tę sytuację. Podobnie jak w innych sprawach związanych z prawami człowieka, również w tym przypadku wykorzystujemy każdą okazję, aby poruszyć z władzami białoruskimi kwestie budzące zaniepokojenie UE. Obejmuje to podnoszenie kwestii dotyczących więźniów politycznych, praw mniejszości oraz innych problemów i spraw związanych z poszanowaniem praw człowieka i demokracji podczas wszelkich kontaktów z białoruską administracją.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009815/13
to the Commission
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: Compulsory psychiatric treatment in Belarus

According to Amnesty International, Igor Postnov, a Belarusian psychiatrist, was detained and forced to undergo psychiatric treatment in the hospital where he works following his criticism of the healthcare system in Vitebsk. Igor Postnov had been in conflict with his managers for his outspoken views, and on 16 August a psychiatric commission at the hospital where he works concluded that he required forced psychiatric treatment for a 'psychopathic personality disorder with a mania for persecuting the authorities'.

According to principle 16 of the UN's 'Principles for the protection of persons with mental illness', involuntary psychiatric treatment should only be resorted to in cases of severe mental illness, for the shortest possible time and where there is an immediate or imminent risk that the person will harm themselves or others.

The court order stated that Postnov required psychiatric treatment against his will because of a 'persistent delusional disorder' which meant that he presented a danger to himself and others. The court did not explain, however, how he represents a danger to society, and mentions only his publications on the Internet.

Classifying someone as 'mentally ill' and imposing forced treatment on them was a common means of repression against individuals whose behaviour was disapproved of in the Soviet era From the case of Igor Postnov it appears that this type of repression is still used today by the Belarusian authorities.

Does the Commission intend to take action in response to the compulsory psychiatric treatment of Igor Postnov?

Question for written answer E-009831/13
to the Commission
Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: Sentencing of Belarusian psychiatrist

On 21 August a court in Vitebsk sentenced Belarusian psychiatrist Igor Postnov to compulsory psychiatric treatment. Postnov had criticised the government and highlighted irregularities in the healthcare system in Vitebsk, and spoken on his YouTube channel about financial misappropriation connected to the authorities.

There is no doubt whatsoever that Postnov's trial and the sentence handed down were politically motivated. Under the law, he has 10 days to lodge an appeal against the judgment. Quite shockingly, in the psychiatric hospital he was not allowed to use a pen and paper to write an appeal. As a result, Igor Postnov has begun a hunger strike.

The case of Igor Postnov shows clearly once again that human rights are violated in Belarus, and that any criticism of Alexander Lukashenko's regime has serious consequences and is severely punished.

Does the Commission intend to take any action in response to the sentence handed down against Igor Postnov and take a firm stand against unjust and politically motivated trials in Belarus?

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

The HR/VP is aware of this case. In this case, as well as in the other human rights related cases, every opportunity is taken to raise the EU's concerns with the Belarusian authorities. This includes raising the questions related to the political prisoners, rights of minorities as well as other issues and cases related to respect of human rights and democracy in any contacts with the Belarusian administration.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-009816/13
alla Commissione
Erminia Mazzoni (PPE)
(3 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Messa al bando dei sacchi biodegradabili

Considerando:

— che la Legge n. 296 del 2006 («Finanziaria 2007») ha previsto il divieto di commercializzazione dei sacchi per asporto di merci non biodegradabili, fissato inizialmente all'1.1.2010, poi posticipato all'1.1.2011;

— che il Decreto Legge n. 2 del 2012 recante «misure straordinarie e urgenti in materia ambientale» (poi convertito nella Legge n. 28/2012) ha introdotto un'ulteriore proroga dell'entrata in vigore del divieto di commercializzazione, limitando ulteriormente la commercializzazione soltanto ai sacchi monouso compostabili o di bioplastica;

— il Decreto Interministeriale n. 452, concernente l'individuazione delle caratteristiche tecniche dei sacchetti per l'asporto merci in attuazione dell'articolo 2, comma 2 del D.l. 25.1.2012 n.2 convertito, con modificazioni, dalla legge 24.3.2012 n. 28.

Visto:

— la direttiva 94/62/CE sugli imballaggi, che indica il compostaggio solo quale una delle possibilità di recupero dei rifiuti da imballaggio;

— l'articolo 18 della medesima direttiva, che prevede che «gli Stati non possono ostacolare l'immissione sul mercato nel loro territorio di imballaggi conformi alle disposizioni della presente direttiva»;

— il principio fondamentale dell'ordinamento comunitario di libera circolazione delle merci e il divieto di restrizione all'importazione ed esportazione delle merci che non sia giustificata dalle particolari ragioni di cui all'articolo 36, espressi nel Titolo II, Parte Terza del TFUE;

— che la normativa italiana ha di fatto e di diritto posto fuori commercio ogni altra tipologia di sacchetto da asporto che non sia corrispondente alle caratteristiche Uni EN 13432/2001, cioè non biodegradabile in condizioni di compostaggio, avvantaggiando di fatto un unico produttore e mettendo in ginocchio un intero comparto (produttori di sacchetti, produttori di macchine, distributori, commercianti, ecc.), senza avere effetti benefici sull'ambiente, tanto meno sulla occupazione;

— la procedura di infrazione 4030/2011 per violazione delle direttive1994/62/CE e 1998/34/CE.

Può la Commissione comunicare quale sia lo stato della procedura di infrazione in corso e quali siano le ragioni contro dedotte dalla Repubblica italiana.

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(11 ottobre 2013)

Come indicato dall'onorevole parlamentare, la Commissione era motivata dal timore che il divieto sui sacchetti di plastica non compostabili proposto dal Governo italiano costituisse una potenziale violazione del principio della libera circolazione delle merci e ha quindi lanciato il procedimento d'infrazione n. 2011/4030. La procedura è in corso ed è nella fase dell'invio della lettera di costituzione in mora ai sensi dell'articolo 258 del TFUE. In particolare, la Commissione sta valutando l'impatto del nuovo decreto interministeriale 542, volto all'individuazione delle ulteriori caratteristiche tecniche che i sacchetti in plastica dovrebbero rispettare per essere commercializzati in Italia.

La principale argomentazione addotta dalle autorità italiane per l'introduzione di un divieto sui sacchetti di plastica non biodegradabili consiste nell'impatto complessivamente negativo dei rifiuti di plastica sull'ambiente. Si tratta di un impatto particolarmente grave soprattutto per l'ambiente marino, un problema recentemente affrontato nel Libro verde della Commissione sulla consultazione pubblica riguardante i rifiuti di plastica. ([1])

([1]) COM(2013)0123 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009816/13
to the Commission
Erminia Mazzoni (PPE)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: Banning of biodegradable bags

Under the 2006 Italian Law No 296 (the 'Finance Act 2007') the marketing of non-biodegradable carrier bags was to have been prohibited, initially with effect from 1 January 2010, a date subsequently put back to 1 January 2011. The 2012 Decree-Law No 2, laying down urgent special measures concerning the environment (later converted into Law No 28/2012), again postponed the entry into force of the marketing ban and further narrowed the range of bags allowed on the market, which was thus confined to compostable disposable types or bags made from bioplastic material. Interdepartmental Order No 452 has laid down the technical specifications for carrier bags pursuant to Article 2(2) of Decree-Law No 2 of 25 January 2012, which has been converted, with some changes, into Law No 28 of 24 March 2012.

Directive 94/62/EC on packaging treats composting as just one possible way of recovering packaging waste; Article 18, moreover, prohibits Member States from 'imped[ing] the placing on the market of their territory of packaging which satisfies the provisions of this directive'. Free movement of goods is a fundamental principle of EC law and their import and export may not be restricted other than for the special reasons set out in Article 36 of the TFEU (Part Three, Title II). The Italian legislation has, de jure and de facto, ruled out the sale of every type of carrier bag not matching the UNI EN 13432:2001 standard, in other words, bags which are not biodegradable by means of composting. In practice, it is favouring a single producer and bringing an entire sector to its knees (carrier bag manufacturers, makers of machines, distributors, retailers, etc.), without affording any benefits to the environment, to say nothing of employment. Infringement procedure 4030/2011 has been initiated for breach of Directives 1994/62/EC and 1998/34/EC.

What stage has the infringement procedure reached and what counter-arguments has it elicited from Italy by way of a response?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(11 October 2013)

As stated by the Honourable Member, the Commission was motivated by concerns that the proposed ban on non-compostable plastic bags by the Italian Government constituted a potential breach of the principle of free movement of goods to launch infringement procedure 2011/4030. This procedure is ongoing and at the stage of Letter of Formal Notice under Article 258. In particular, the Commission is currently assessing the impact of the new inter-ministerial Decree no. 542, aimed at setting further technical characteristics that plastic bags should comply with in order to be marketed in Italy.

The main argument used by the Italian authorities for introducing a ban on non-biodegradable carrying bags is the overall negative impact of plastic waste on the environment. These impacts are particularly negative, notably in the marine environment; an issue recently addressed in the Commission's Green Paper consultation on Plastic Waste. ([1])

([1]) COM(2013) 0123.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009818/13
an die Kommission
Jo Leinen (S&D)
(3. September 2013)

Betrifft: Förderung deutsch-arabischer Kinderliteratur

Die Förderung der Mehrsprachigkeit ist in der Europäischen Union von großer Bedeutung. Neben den Amtssprachen sollten Migrantensprachen wie Arabisch nicht vernachlässigt werden. Arabische Kinderliteratur kann vielseitig in Schulen, Kindergärten und Bibliotheken eingesetzt werden. Zweisprachige Bücher sind für den kulturellen Austausch besonders sinnvoll.

1. Gibt es EU-Fördermittel für die Übersetzung und das Verlegen arabischer Kinderliteratur?

2. Gibt es EU-Fördermittel für arabisch-deutsche Ausgaben von Bilderbüchern, deren Original aus einem arabischen Land stammt?

3. Ist grenzüberschreitende Zusammenarbeit von Verlagen förderungsfähig? Wenn ja: Was sind die Bedingungen?

4. Über welche europaweiten Kanäle könnte man arabisch-deutsche Bücher besser bekannt machen?

Antwort von Frau Vassiliou im Namen der Kommission
(5. November 2013)

Die Förderung der Mehrsprachigkeit in der Europäischen Union ist von zentraler Bedeutung. In den Bereichen Mehrsprachigkeit und Sprachenlernen bietet die Europäische Kommission finanzielle Unterstützung in Form der (Ko)Finanzierung von Projekten, die den Sprachunterricht und die Förderung von Sprachen, auch von Nicht-EU-Sprachen, betreffen.

Aus dem derzeitigen Programm für lebenslanges Lernen wurden seit 2007 mehrere Bildungsprojekte kofinanziert, die die Vermittlung von Nicht-EU-Sprachen, darunter auch Arabisch, fördern. Zu den übergeordneten Prioritäten des neuen Programms Erasmus+, das das Programm für lebenslanges Lernen ab dem Jahr 2014 ablösen wird, zählen das Sprachenlernen und die sprachliche Vielfalt. Dieses Programm wird Finanzierungsmöglichkeiten für strategische Partnerschaften und Maßnahmen für eine breite Palette von Sprachen bieten, auch für Nicht-EU-Sprachen.

Im Rahmen des neuen Programms „Kreatives Europa“, das ebenfalls im Jahr 2014 anlaufen wird, werden kulturelle Projekte auch im Verlagsbereich unterstützt. Die genauen Einzelheiten müssen noch festgelegt werden; grundsätzlich können jedoch Verlage, die bestimmte Kriterien erfüllen, Finanzhilfen für die Übersetzung oder Veröffentlichung arabischer Literatur in deutscher Sprache beantragen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009818/13
to the Commission
Jo Leinen (S&D)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: Promoting German-Arabic children's literature

The promotion of multilingualism is of great importance in the European Union. In addition to the official languages, the languages of immigrants, such as Arabic, should not be neglected. There are many ways in which Arabic children's literature can be used in schools, kindergartens and libraries. Bilingual books are particularly useful for cultural exchanges.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Is any EU funding available for the translation and the publication of Arabic children's literature?

2. Is any EU funding available for Arabic-German editions of picture books originating in an Arab country?

3. Is cross-border cooperation between publishers eligible for aid? If so, what are the conditions?

4. Through which Europe-wide channels could Arabic-German books become better known?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(5 November 2013)

The promotion of multilingualism in the European Union is of key importance. In the area of multilingualism and language learning, the Commission provides financial help by way of (co)financing projects aimed at teaching and promoting languages, including non-EU languages.

The current Lifelong Learning Programme has co-funded several educational projects since 2007 which promote the teaching of non-EU languages, including Arabic. The new Erasmus+ programme which will replace the Lifelong Learning Programme in 2014 has language learning and linguistic diversity as an over-arching priority. It will create funding opportunities for strategic partnerships and actions targeting a wide array of languages including non-EU languages.

The new 'Creative Europe' programme, which will also be launched in 2014, will support cultural projects including publishing. Details are yet to be finalised, but in principle, publishing companies that meet certain criteria may be eligible to apply for funding for translating or publishing Arabic literary works in German.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009819/13
an die Kommission
Jo Leinen (S&D)
(3. September 2013)

Betrifft: Förderung einer Verschwellungsanlage aufgrund der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1638/2006

Armenien möchte zur Förderung des Umwelt- und Naturschutzes ein „Pilotprojekt" in Form einer patentrechtlich geschützten „Verschwellungsanlage" für Müll und organische Abfälle mit gleichzeitiger Trennung von verwertbaren Rohstoffen errichten. Die Anlage soll außerdem für rund 30 000 Haushalte Strom erzeugen.

Laut der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1638/2006 zur Festlegung allgemeiner Bestimmungen zur Schaffung eines Europäischen Nachbarschafts- und Partnerschaftsinstruments stehen für solche Projekte bis 2013 11 181 000 000 EUR zur Verfügung.

1. Sind diese Mittel inzwischen ausgeschöpft oder stehen noch Gelder zur Verfügung?

2. Wird die Förderung solcher Projekte in der nächsten Periode 2014-2020 weitergeführt?

Antwort von Herrn Füle im Namen der Kommission
(29. Oktober 2013)

Die Kommission setzt den Herrn Abgeordneten in Kenntnis, dass alle im Rahmen des Europäischen Nachbarschafts- und Partnerschaftsinstruments (ENPI) für Armenien vorgesehenen Mittel für den Zeitraum 2007-2013 bereits programmiert wurden. Das Projekt Verschwellungsanlage zählt derzeit nicht zu den von der armenischen Regierung und der Europäischen Union festgelegten Prioritäten.

Die Prioritäten für die Bereiche, die im Planungszeitraum 2014-2020 finanziell unterstützt werden sollen, werden derzeit mit der armenischen Regierung und anderen Akteuren erörtert.

Im Bereich Abfallbewirtschaftung und erneuerbare Energien unterstützt die Kommission mehrere regionale Programme zur Verbesserung der nationalen politischen und rechtlichen Rahmenbedingungen und zum Aufbau nationaler Kapazitäten für Abfallbewirtschaftung und erneuerbare Energien, die mit dem Besitzstand der EU im Einklang stehen und deren Erfahrungen berücksichtigen. So wurden ENPI-Mittel für ein regionales Programm zur Abfallbewirtschaftung bereitgestellt, mit dem in einer Pilotregion jedes Landes der Östlichen Partnerschaft die Entwicklung einer auf europäischen Normen basierenden Strategie für die Abfallbewirtschaftung unterstützt wurde.

Der von dem Herrn Abgeordneten genannte Projektvorschlag benötigt möglicherweise eine Investitionsfinanzierung, die von den regionalen Programmen nicht geleistet werden kann. Er könnte jedoch von einer der europäischen Finanzinstitutionen (EIB [1], EBWE [2], AFD [3], KfW [4] usw.) unterstützt werden. Sollte die armenische Regierung einen solchen Antrag stellen, könnte für die Kosten für technische Hilfe und vorbereitende Studien für Pilotprojekte im Bereich Abfallbewirtschaftung und Energieerzeugung aus erneuerbaren Quellen eine Unterstützung aus der Nachbarschaftsinvestitionsfazilität des ENPI in Betracht gezogen werden.

---

[1] Europäische Investitionsbank.
[2] Europäische Bank für Wiederaufbau und Entwicklung.
[3] Agence française de développement.
[4] Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009819/13
to the Commission
Jo Leinen (S&D)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: Funding for a resource recovery facility under Regulation (EC) No 1638/2006

In an effort to protect the environment and conserve nature, Armenia intends to set up a pilot project involving a patented resource recovery facility for rubbish and organic waste which will also separate off recyclable raw materials. The facility will also generate enough electricity to supply approximately 30 000 households.

In accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1638/2006 laying down general provisions establishing a European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument, EUR 11 181 000 000 is available for such projects over the programming period ending in 2013.

1. Has this funding now been exhausted?

2. Will funding for such projects be continued in the 2014-2020 programming period?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(29 October 2013)

The Commission would like to inform the Honourable Member that all the funds for Armenia under the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) have been programmed for the period 2007-2013. Priorities are set by the Armenian Government and the European Union, and this project has not been included in the present priorities.

As concerns the next programming period 2014-2020, priorities for the areas to be financially supported are currently being discussed with the Armenian Government and other stakeholders.

Concerning waste management and renewables, the Commission supports a number of regional programmes aiming to improve national policy and regulatory frameworks and to develop national capacities on waste management and on renewable energy in line with the EU experience and *acquis*. In this context, ENPI funds have been made available for a regional programme on waste governance that has supported the development of a strategy for waste governance based on European standards in a pilot region of each Eastern Partnership country.

The project proposal referred to by the Honourable Member may require investment funding that the regional programmes cannot cover but could be supported by one of the European financial institutions (EIB ([1]), EBRD ([2]), AFD ([3]), KfW ([4]), etc.). If such a request were made by the Armenian Government, support from the ENPI Neighbourhood Investment Facility for the cost of some technical assistance and preparatory studies for pilot projects in the field of waste management and renewable energy generation could be considered.

([1]) European Investment Bank.
([2]) European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.
([3]) Agence Française de développement.
([4]) Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009820/13
an die Kommission
Jörg Leichtfried (S&D)
(3. September 2013)

Betrifft: Direktes Abbuchen der Kaution für Mietautos

Das weltweit tätige US-amerikanische Mietwagenunternehmen Hertz (The Hertz Corporation) führt in seinen Allgemeinen Geschäftsbedingungen (AGBs) die Inanspruchnahme der Kaution für gemietete PKWs als Blockieren, also Reservieren der entsprechenden Summe auf dem Kreditkartenkonto an und praktiziert dieses auch entsprechend.

In gewissen rechtlichen Firmenkonstellationen, in den AGBs genauer als „Hertz-Lizenznehmer" bezeichnet, in denen unabhängige Unternehmen unter der Marke Hertz agieren, kann jedoch von oben genannter Praxis abgewichen werden, da die AGBs ausdrücklich nicht für jene Firmenkonstellationen gültig sind. Dieses Abweichen äußert sich durch direktes Abbuchen statt Blockieren der jeweiligen Kaution und nachträgliches Rücküberweisen, wird nach jetzigem Kenntnisstand in Teilen der Europäischen Union, beispielsweise Teneriffa, praktiziert und wird durch keine online einsehbaren AGBs gedeckt.

Diese Sachlage berührt den Verbraucherschutz auf mehrfache Weise. Zum einen führt die oftmals online durchgeführte Buchung und das Nichtvorhandensein der AGBs in digitaler Form zu einer schwerwiegenden Informationsasymetrie zu Lasten der Verbraucher. Zum anderen ist die Praxis des Abbuchens und Rücküberweisens anstatt Blockierens im Kern bereits konsumentenschädigend, da nicht nur versteckte Zinskosten anfallen, sondern durch das hervorgerufene Gläubigerverhältnis und eine nicht auszuschließende Insolvenz ein Verlustrisiko in Bezug auf die Kaution besteht.

1. Besitzt die Kommission Kenntnisse über das obengenannte Missverhältnis?

2. Wenn die Kommission keinerlei Kenntnis über die obengenannte Praxis hat: Plant die Kommission Nachforschungen in dieser Sache anzustellen?

3. Plant die Kommission Maßnahmen, um hier eine sachgerechte, verbraucherfreundliche Ausgestaltung des Mietverhältnisses herbeizuführen, einerseits durch eine rechtliche Kopplung der Online-Buchungen an einen unmittelbaren Zugriff auf die AGBs, andererseits durch das rechtliche Reduzieren der Zurückhaltung der Kaution auf das oben erwähnte Blockieren?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(11. November 2013)

Die Kommission hatte bislang keine Kenntnis von den vom Herrn Abgeordneten angeführten Praktiken in Bezug auf das direkte Abbuchen von Mietkautionen.

Nach EU-Recht müssen Gewerbetreibende im Sinne der Fernabsatzrichtlinie ([1]), die ab dem 13. Juni 2014 durch die Richtlinie über die Rechte der Verbraucher ([2]) aufgehoben wird, Verbraucher vor dem Online-Vertragsabschluss auch über die Zahlungsmodalitäten informieren. Nach Vertragsschluss muss der Gewerbetreibende dem Verbraucher eine Bestätigung dieser Informationen auf einem dauerhaften Datenträger (z. B. per E-Mail) übermitteln. Gemäß der Richtlinie über den elektronischen Geschäftsverkehr ([3]) müssen die Vertragsbedingungen so zur Verfügung gestellt werden, dass der Empfänger sie speichern und reproduzieren kann.

Die Richtlinie über unlautere Geschäftspraktiken ([4]) kann ebenfalls greifen, wenn Verbraucher in der EU nachweislich durch Irreführung zu geschäftlichen Entscheidungen veranlasst werden, die sie ansonsten nicht getroffen hätten. Hierunter fällt auch, wenn der Gewerbetreibende es unterlässt, wesentliche Informationen über den Preis und die Zahlungsmodalitäten bereitzustellen, so dass die Verbraucher keine Entscheidung in Kenntnis der Sachlage treffen können.

([1]) Richtlinie 97/7/EG über den Verbraucherschutz bei Vertragsabschlüssen im Fernabsatz, ABl. L 144 vom 4.6.1997, S. 19.
([2]) Richtlinie 2011/83/EU über die Rechte der Verbraucher, ABl. L 304 vom 22.11.2011, S. 64.
([3]) Richtlinie 2000/31/EG über bestimmte rechtliche Aspekte der Dienste der Informationsgesellschaft, insbesondere des elektronischen Geschäftsverkehrs, im Binnenmarkt („Richtlinie über den elektronischen Geschäftsverkehr"), ABl. L 178 vom 17.7.2000, S. 1.
([4]) Richtlinie 2005/29/EG über unlautere Geschäftspraktiken, ABl. L 149 vom 11.6.2005, S. 22.

In erster Linie obliegt es den nationalen Behörden und Gerichten, möglichen Verstößen von in ihrem Hoheitsgebiet tätigen einzelnen Unternehmen gegen EU-Rechtsvorschriften nachzugehen. Angesichts der bisherigen Erfahrungen muss jedoch insbesondere in Fällen, in denen das gleiche Problem wiederholt in verschiedenen Mitgliedstaaten auftritt, die Durchsetzung besser koordiniert werden. Deswegen hat die Kommission im Hinblick auf die Überarbeitung der Verordnung über die Zusammenarbeit im Verbraucherschutz ([5]) eine öffentliche Konsultation eingeleitet, um Möglichkeiten für verstärkte Mechanismen zu sondieren, mit denen im Binnenmarkt weithin verbreitete Verstöße gegen die EU-Verbraucherschutzvorschriften angegangen werden können. Die Kommission wäre dem Herrn Abgeordneten für die Mitteilung weiterer Sachverhalte, die auf Verstöße gegen Unionsrecht hindeuten, dankbar.

([5]) Verordnung (EG) Nr. 2006/2004 über die Zusammenarbeit zwischen den für die Durchsetzung der Verbraucherschutzgesetze zuständigen nationalen Behörden, ABl. L 364 vom 9.12.2004, S. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009820/13
to the Commission
Jörg Leichtfried (S&D)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: Direct debiting the deposit on hire cars

In its General Terms and Conditions (GTC), the global US-based car rental company Hertz (The Hertz Corporation) invokes the right to block the deposit on hire cars, i.e. to reserve the equivalent sum on the customer's credit card account; and this is in fact how it operates.

However, some legal corporate structures, designated in the GTC more precisely as 'Hertz Licensees', in which independent companies operate under the Hertz name, sometimes depart from the above practice, as the GTC specifically state that they do not apply to these corporate structures. They directly debit — instead of blocking — the deposit and subsequently refund it; this is, to my knowledge, practised in parts of the European Union, for example, Tenerife, and is not covered by any GTC available online.

This situation raises a number of consumer protection issues. Firstly, the fact that bookings are often made online in the absence of GTC in digital form means that important information is being withheld from consumers. Secondly, the practice of debiting and refunding, instead of blocking, is in itself prejudicial to consumers, since the consumer not only incurs hidden interest costs, but risks losing the deposit owing to the creditor relationship thereby created and the fact that insolvency cannot be ruled out.

1. Is the Commission aware of the abovementioned anomaly?

2. If not: does it intend to investigate this matter?

3. Does it plan to take measures to create fit-for-purpose, user-friendly rental agreements, firstly by introducing a statutory requirement that consumers making online bookings must have direct access to the GTC and, secondly, by legally limiting the scope of the lessor in withholding the deposit to the practice of blocking mentioned above?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(11 November 2013)

The Commission was so far not aware of the practices reported by the Honourable Member concerning the direct debit of deposits.

Under EC law, the Distance Selling Directive ([1]), to be replaced by the Consumer Rights Directive ([2]) as from 13 June 2014, requires traders to inform consumers prior to the online conclusion of the contract also about the arrangements for payment. After the conclusion of the contract, the trader has to provide the consumer with a confirmation of this information on a durable medium (such as e-mail). The E-commerce Directive ([3]) provides that terms and conditions must be made available in a way allowing the recipient to store and reproduce them.

The Unfair Commercial Practices Directive ([4]) can also come into play if evidence shows that EU consumers were misled into entering transactions they would not have entered otherwise, including if the trader omitted to provide material information on the price and arrangements for payment, thus preventing consumers to take an informed decision.

([1]) Directive 97/7/EC on the protection of consumers in respect of distance contracts, OJ L 144, 4.6.1997, p. 19.
([2]) Directive 2011/83/EU on consumer rights, OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p. 64.
([3]) Directive 2000/31/EC on certain legal aspects of information society services, in particular electronic commerce, in the internal market (Directive on electronic commerce), OJ L L178, 17.7.2000, p. 1.
([4]) Directive 2005/29/EC on unfair commercial practices, OJ L 149, 11.6.2005, p. 22.

National authorities and courts are primarily competent to investigate any potential breach of EU legislation by individual companies operating on their territory. However, experience has shown a need for improving coordinated enforcement, in particular where a recurring problem arises in different Member States. In order to address this issue, the Commission launched a public consultation on the review of the Consumer Protection Cooperation (CPC) Regulation ([5]) to explore options for strengthened mechanisms to tackle infringements of EU consumer rules occurring widely in the Single Market. The Commission would welcome receiving from the Honourable Member any further factual element pointing to an EU relevant breach of Union legislation.

([5]) Regulation 2006/2004/EC on cooperation between national authorities responsible for the enforcement of consumer protection laws, OJ L 364, 9.12.2004, p.1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009821/13
to the Commission
Gay Mitchell (PPE)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: EU and private sector engagement in development cooperation

As mentioned in the Agenda for Change, the Commission would like to enhance its engagement with the private sector in development cooperation. It is important to analyse properly the diversity of the private sector, identify which private sector activities the Commission will interact with and establish how the Commission will support additionality to enhance development before implementing policy objectives. It is important to be aware that not all private sector activities will automatically reduce poverty in developing countries.

What, therefore, is the Commission's plan for setting out a clear policy on EU engagement with the private sector in development cooperation?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(22 October 2013)

The private sector has a crucial role to play in achieving inclusive and sustainable growth. Without businesses creating jobs, innovating and providing poor people with affordable access to basic services like water and sanitation, sustainable energy, telecommunication, or financial services, we would not have witnessed this remarkable decline in global poverty over the last three decades. Obviously, it is not only what the private sector does which is important but also how it does it — hence the need to ensure that companies take responsibility for their workers, communities and the environment. The Commission believes the EU has a role in encouraging productive investment and business practices in developing countries that are responsible in social, environmental and fiscal terms. Working more closely with the private sector, both from the EU and in partner countries, towards achieving common development goals can moreover be a way to enhance the effectiveness of the EU's support to private sector development.

The Commission is working on defining a clear policy that formulates in more operational terms a strategy for implementing the directions given in the 'Agenda for Change' ([1]) on working with the private sector in development cooperation. This policy will include principles and conditions to guide the EU's engagement with the private sector. It will adopt a differentiated approach to private sector support and partnerships that takes account of the diversity of private sector actors and their respective strengths and support needs, with the ultimate aim to support local private sector development and the creation of decent jobs that offer a real escape from poverty.

([1]) COM(2011) 637 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009822/13
to the Commission
George Lyon (ALDE)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: Update: Implementation of Council Directive 1999/74/EC of 19 July 1999 laying down minimum standards for the protection of laying hens

Council Directive 1999/74/EC of 19 July 1999 laying down minimum standards for the protection of laying hens, bans the use of battery cages as of 1 January 2012.

Firstly, can the Commission provide an update on the Member States which have confirmed that they are fully compliant with the new rules?

Secondly, can the Commission provide a detailed update on what infringement proceedings have been initiated against those Member States which are not fully compliant?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(18 October 2013)

Only two Member States remain non-compliant with the ban on un-enriched cages for laying hens ([1]); Italy and Greece. On 25 April 2013 both were referred to the European Court of Justice for failure to comply with Union law. These cases are thus with the Court and the Commission must await its ruling.

([1]) Council Directive 1999/74/EC laying down minimum standards for the protection of laying hens; OJ L 203, 3.8.1999, p. 53.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009824/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(3 septembre 2013)

Objet: Interdire l'IP tracking

Les plaintes émanant de consommateurs à travers l'Europe ne cessent d'augmenter. Certains voyagistes truquent leurs tarifs et arnaquent les consommateurs en ligne.

Créer la pénurie pour pousser à l'achat impulsif. La recette est connue et fait partie de l'arsenal de tout bon commercial. Cette pratique, même si elle est tolérée car de notoriété publique, devrait déjà être sanctionnée.

Moins connue du grand public en revanche et totalement scandaleuse: la pratique de l'IP tracking. Cette technique marketing permet à des sites, en particulier à des sites de tourisme, de surtaxer les clients qui réservent des billets ou des séjours en ligne: cela représente annuellement des millions de victimes à travers l'Europe.

1. Que compte faire la Commission pour combattre l'IP tracking?

2. La Commission compte-t-elle sanctionner le fait de créer la pénurie pour pousser à l'achat impulsif?

3. La Commission compte-t-elle légiférer via une directive ou un règlement? En guise d'exemple, dans certaines législations, il existe l'interdiction de tout automatisme dans la prise de décision. L'idée est d'interdire les procédés qui altèrent, ou sont susceptibles d'altérer de manière substantielle, le comportement du consommateur normalement informé et raisonnablement attentif et avisé à l'égard d'un bien ou d'un service.

4. Est-ce que l'idée d'une brigade européenne consacrée à ce genre de traques séduit la Commission?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Reding au nom de la Commission
(5 novembre 2013)

En ce qui concerne l'utilisation des technologies de ciblage, comme le suivi des consommateurs au moyen des adresses IP, en vue d'ajuster les offres commerciales, la Commission renvoie l'Honorable Parlementaire à la réponse conjointe donnée aux questions E-000956/13, P-001257/13 et E-001574/13.

La Commission procède actuellement à la révision de ses orientations pour l'application de la directive 2005/29/CE [SEC(2009)1666], en tenant compte des nouvelles pratiques, telles que le marketing en ligne basé sur le suivi des consommateurs.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009824/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: Banning IP tracking

Complaints from consumers across Europe continue to mount. Some travel firms are fixing their rates and ripping off online customers.

Creating a shortage to encourage impulse buying: it's a familiar tactic and part of the arsenal of any good salesperson. But this practice, even though tolerated because it is so widespread, should be penalised.

Less familiar to the public, however, and something which is absolutely scandalous, is the practice of IP tracking. This is a marketing technique where websites, especially tourism websites, overcharge customers who book tickets or holidays online, and it claims millions of victims Europe-wide every year.

1. What action does the Commission intend to take to tackle IP tracking.

2. Does the Commission intend to introduce penalties for the practice of creating a shortage to encourage impulse buying?

3. Does the Commission intend to adopt a directive or a regulation in this area? Some legal systems ban any automatic linkage in decision-making, with the idea being to ban procedures which alter, or are likely to alter, in a substantial way the behaviour of a reasonably well-informed and reasonably observant and circumspect consumer in respect of a product or service.

4. Would the Commission consider setting up an EU unit to deal with this type of tracking?

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

Regarding the use of targeting technologies, such as tracking consumers through IP addresses, to adjust commercial offers, the Commission refers the Honourable Member to its joint answer given to questions E-000956/13, P-001257/13 and E-001574/13.

The Commission is currently reviewing its Guidance on the application of the directive 2005/29/EC (SEC(2009)1666), taking into account such newer practices, as online marketing based on tracking of consumers.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009825/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(3 septembre 2013)

Objet: Aubagio

Sanofi et sa filiale Genzyme ont indiqué que la Commission avait délivré une autorisation de mise sur le marché à Aubagio (tériflunomide) 14 mg, en une prise orale par jour, dans le traitement des adultes atteints de sclérose en plaques récurrente-rémittente.

1. Sur quoi la Commission s'est-elle basée pour délivrer cette autorisation?

2. La Commission possède-t-elle des statistiques fiables sur le nombre de citoyens européens souffrant de la sclérose en plaques et sur les tendances affichées par la maladie au cours des dernières années?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(18 octobre 2013)

La décision d'exécution de la Commission ([1]) autorisant la mise sur le marché du médicament Aubagio (ayant pour substance active le tériflunomide) a été adoptée le 26 août 2013. Ce médicament sert au traitement de patients adultes atteints de sclérose en plaques récurrente-rémittente. L'autorisation de mise sur le marché a été délivrée en vertu du règlement (CE) n° 726/2004 du Parlement européen et du Conseil, c'est-à-dire via la procédure centralisée et, en tant que telle, est valide dans tous les États membres de l'Union européenne (UE).

La décision de la Commission a été adoptée conformément à l'avis scientifique du comité des médicaments à usage humain de l'Agence européenne des médicaments ([2]). Ce comité a conclu que les avantages liés à l'utilisation de ce médicament étaient supérieurs à ses risques. Les études ont montré qu'Aubagio réduit les rechutes et retarde la progression de l'invalidité chez les patients atteints de sclérose en plaques récurrente-rémittente. Bien que ses effets soient modestes, ils ont été considérés comme cliniquement pertinents et similaires à ceux d'autres traitements de la sclérose en plaques.

La Commission ne dispose pas à présent de statistiques sur le nombre de citoyens européens atteints de sclérose en plaques. Cependant, certains projets sur la sclérose en plaques réalisés dans le cadre des programmes de santé de l'UE «Registre européen de la sclérose en plaques» ([3]) et «Multiple Sclerosis — Information Dividend» ([4]) ainsi que la subvention de fonctionnement à la Plateforme européenne de la sclérose en plaques ([5]) remédieront à l'absence de données sur les répercussions de cette maladie en Europe. De plus, la Commission dispose par l'intermédiaire d'Eurostat de données sur les taux de mortalité et le nombre de décès par âge/sexe dus à la sclérose en plaques.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/documents/community-register/html/h838.htm
([2]) http://www.ema.europa.eu/ema/index.jsp?curl=pages/medicines/human/medicines/002514/human_med_001645.jsp&mid=WC0b01ac058001d124
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=20101213
([4]) http://www.ms-id.org/
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=20123302

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009825/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: Aubagio

Sanofi and its subsidiary Genzyme have stated that the Commission has issued authorisation to market Aubagio (teriflunomide), in the form of a 14 mg tablet to be taken once a day by mouth, in order to treat adults suffering from relapsing forms of multiple sclerosis.

1. On what grounds did the Commission issue the marketing authorisation?

2. Does it have accurate statistics showing how many European citizens are suffering frommultiple sclerosis and illustrating recent trends concerning the disease?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(18 October 2013)

The Commission Implementing Decision ([1]) on granting marketing authorisation for the medicinal product Aubagio (the active substance teriflunomide) was adopted on 26 August 2013. Aubagio is used for the treatment of adult patients with relapsing remitting multiple sclerosis (MS). The marketing authorisation was granted under Regulation (EC) No 726/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council, i.e. via the centralised procedure and as such is valid in all EU Member States.

The Commission decision was adopted in accordance with the scientific opinion of the Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use (CHMP) of the European Medicines Agency ([2]). The CHMP concluded that benefits related to the use of the medicine are greater than its risks. In studies, Aubagio was shown to reduce relapses and delay the progression of disability in patients with relapsing-remitting MS. Although the effects were modest, they were considered to be clinically relevant and similar to other MS treatments.

The Commission does not at present have statistics available on how many European citizens are suffering from MS. However, projects under EU Health Programmes focusing on multiple sclerosis: European Register for MS ([3]), MS — the information Dividend ([4]) and the operating grant to the European MS Platform ([5]) will address the lack of data on the burden of MS in Europe. In addition, data on death rates and numbers of death by gender/age due to MS is available to the Commission from Eurostat.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/documents/community-register/html/h838.htm
([2]) http://www.ema.europa.eu/ema/index.jsp?curl=pages/medicines/human/medicines/002514/human_med_001645.jsp&mid=WC0b01ac058001d124
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=20101213
([4]) http://www.ms-id.org/
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=20123302

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009826/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(3 septembre 2013)

Objet: Maintien de l'itinérance

La commissaire européenne chargée des nouvelles technologies, Neelie Kroes, ne se cache pas de son ambition d'abolir l'itinérance intraeuropéenne en 2014. Un paquet législatif, dont l'objectif final sera la création d'un marché unique des télécommunications, doit être présenté le 10 septembre. Neelie Kroes avait préparé une proposition consistant à faire baisser les tarifs de l'itinérance, de 90 % dans certains cas, mais ce texte ne sera finalement pas présenté, a appris Reuters.

La commissaire visait un prix maximum de 3 centimes d'euro la minute pour les appels intraeuropéens (- 70 % par rapport aux nouveaux tarifs de juillet, déjà en nette baisse), et de 1,5 centime par Mo de données.

1. D'après nos informations, la dernière version du texte ne parle plus du tout des baisses de tarifs. Qu'en est-il?

2. Le lobbying des opérateurs historiques tels qu'Orange, Telecom Italia, Telefonica et Deutsche Telekom aurait-il eu raison de ces bonnes intentions?

3. La commissaire ne s'est-elle pas trop avancée en parlant dans tous les médias de 2014?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Kroes au nom de la Commission
(16 octobre 2013)

La proposition relative à un continent connecté, adoptée par la Commission le 11 septembre 2013, s'inspire du règlement sur l'itinérance et entend mettre un terme aux tarifs élevés de ce service en rendant le marché plus concurrentiel. La Commission a la ferme intention d'atteindre l'objectif fixé dans la stratégie numérique pour l'Europe, à savoir faire en sorte que la différence entre les tarifs en itinérance et les tarifs nationaux soit proche de zéro.

La Commission estime qu'il est important d'inciter les opérateurs à trouver des accords qui leur permettent de réduire les coûts de gros liés à l'itinérance et, partant, d'aligner les tarifs des services d'itinérance sur les tarifs nationaux (roam like at home) à partir de 2014, c'est-à-dire bien avant la date prévue par l'actuel règlement. Grâce au texte proposé, les utilisateurs européens pourraient bénéficier des mêmes tarifs que ceux pratiqués dans leur pays d'origine lorsqu'ils utilisent le réseau d'un opérateur d'un autre pays de l'Union. La Commission espère que les citoyens pourront effectivement disposer de telles offres à partir de 2014 et que celles-ci seront progressivement étendues à tous les services de détail d'ici à 2016. Il est également important de noter que la Commission invite les opérateurs à abandonner définitivement la surtaxe des appels reçus au sein de l'UE (à partir de juillet 2014). Il appartient maintenant au Parlement européen, en collaboration avec le Conseil, de veiller à ce que les citoyens européens bénéficient de conditions avantageuses plus nombreuses en 2014, comme le propose la Commission.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009826/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: Maintaining roaming

The Commissioner responsible for new technologies, Neelie Kroes, has made no secret of her desire to abolish intra-European roaming in 2014. A legislative package which aims ultimately to establish a single market for telecommunications is due to be published on 10 September. Ms Kroes had drafted a proposal that would have seen roaming charges come down by 90% in some cases, but, according to Reuters, that text will not now be brought forward.

The Commissioner was planning a maximum price of 3 cents per minute for intra-European calls (70% less than the new rates introduced in July, which were already a substantial reduction), and 1.5 cents per Mb of data.

1. Our information is that the latest version of the text makes no mention of reductions in tariffs. Where do things now stand?

2. Was it lobbying by incumbent operators, such as Orange, Telecom Italia, Telefonica and Deutsche Telekom, that caused Ms Kroes to have a change of heart?

3. Is the Commissioner not getting ahead of herself by talking in all the media about 2014?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(16 October 2013)

The Connected Continent proposal that the Commission adopted on 11 September 2013 builds on the Roaming Regulation and proposes a solution to end high roaming charges by reinforcing competitive market conditions. The Commission is strongly committed to achieving the target set by the Digital Agenda for Europe, namely for the difference between roaming and national tariffs to approach zero.

The Commission considers that it is important to incentivise operators to find agreements which allow them to reduce wholesale roaming costs and thus enable them to provide roaming services at the level of domestic prices (roam-like-at-home) starting in 2014, and much quicker than the current Regulation foresees. As a result of the proposal European users would be able, when roaming in any other EU country, to benefit from the same rates as in their home country. The Commission expects that citizens will indeed have such offers available as of 2014 and that this availability will be gradually extended so that by 2016 it applies to all retail packages. It is also important to note that the Commission proposes to put an end altogether (as of July 2014) to charges for receiving calls while travelling within the EU. It is now up to the European Parliament, working with the Council, to make sure that European citizens get more benefits in 2014, as proposed by the Commission.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009827/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(3 septembre 2013)

Objet: La Commission tue la neutralité du net

Dans son article 20, le projet de règlement prétend protéger la neutralité du net en interdisant les restrictions d'accès imposées par les opérateurs (blocage ou bridage). Mais dans le même temps, il autorise d'autres formes de discrimination inacceptables. Il permettrait en effet aux opérateurs de passer des accords commerciaux avec certains gros fournisseurs de contenus comme *Google*, *Apple* et consorts. En échange d'importantes sommes d'argent versées aux opérateurs, ce club de privilégiés bénéficierait d'un trafic prioritaire sur les réseaux et donc, par définition, tout le reste du trafic se trouverait d'emblée non prioritaire. Cela fait des années que le lobby des opérateurs souhaite pouvoir mettre en œuvre ces modèles économiques. Des fuites récentes indiquent que dans ce projet, Neelie Kroes reprend leurs propositions.

1. La Commission partage-t-elle notre avis quant au fait que donner un tel pouvoir aux opérateurs est résolument contraire au principe de neutralité, qui garantit à la fois la liberté de communication des utilisateurs et, par ricochet, la concurrence et l'innovation dans l'économie numérique?

2. Ne pense-t-elle pas que les plus petits acteurs, les innovateurs, les nouveaux entrants, eux, n'auront pas les moyens de bénéficier d'un trafic prioritaire?

3. N'est-il pas évident que les opérateurs seront en outre découragés d'investir dans davantage de bande passante, puisque la congestion d'internet rendrait plus attractifs les accès rendus prioritaires? Ils seraient alors en mesure de dégager plus de marges de bénéfices pour moins d'investissement. En définitive, c'est l'ensemble de la société qui serait perdante.

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Kroes au nom de la Commission
(15 octobre 2013)

La Commission est fermement résolue à défendre l'internet ouvert et à promouvoir la qualité des services d'accès à l'internet. La proposition «continent connecté» adoptée le 11 septembre 2013 ([1]) interdit les fournisseurs d'accès à l'internet de bloquer, de ralentir, de dégrader ou de traiter de manière discriminatoire le trafic ([2]); elle établit donc une réelle neutralité de l'internet. Parallèlement, afin de répondre à la demande des utilisateurs finaux en matière de meilleure qualité de services, la proposition permet la fourniture de services spécialisés de qualité supérieure, dont de nombreux exemples sont déjà sur le marché aujourd'hui, comme IPTV, l'utilisation de nuages à haute intensité de données par les entreprises, certaines applications de santé en ligne ou de vidéoconférence. Toutefois, la proposition de règlement indique clairement que les services spécialisés ne doivent pas entraîner la dégradation de la qualité des services d'accès à l'internet. De plus, ces services ne peuvent pas être «commercialisés ou largement utilisés comme produit de substitution à un service d'accès à l'internet» ([3]). À titre de sauvegarde, les autorités réglementaires nationales contrôlent non seulement la qualité des services d'accès à l'internet mais ils doivent également garantir le maintien de la disponibilité de services d'accès à l'internet non discriminatoires et ils auront le pouvoir d'imposer des exigences minimales de qualité de service. Dès lors, la proposition permet à tous les acteurs d'atteindre les utilisateurs finaux avec leurs contenus, applications et services, en fonction de leurs besoins.

La proposition renforce également la transparence et les droits des utilisateurs finaux. Par exemple, les utilisateurs finaux recevront des informations sur la vitesse réelle de la connexion et auront à leur disposition des voies de recours en cas d'écart significatif et non provisoire.

([1]) Proposition de règlement du Parlement européen et du Conseil établissant des mesures relatives au marché unique européen des communications électroniques et visant à faire de l'Europe un continent connecté, et modifiant les directives 2002/20/CE, 2002/21/CE et 2002/22/CE ainsi que les règlements (CE) n° 1211/2009 et (UE) n° 531/2012, COM(2013) 0627 final.

([2]) Ces mesures sont justifiées uniquement à titre exceptionnel et dans un nombre limité de cas de gestion raisonnable de trafic.

([3]) Article 2, point 15, de la proposition.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009827/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: Commission sounds the death knell for net neutrality

Article 20 of the proposal for a regulation currently under preparation ostensibly seeks to protect the neutrality of the Internet by banning operator-imposed access restrictions which block or throttle rival services. At the same time however, the proposal would allow other unacceptable forms of discrimination to be practised, in that it would enable operators to conclude commercial agreements with large content providers such as Google and Apple. In exchange for large payments, operators would give content from this elite club of providers priority on their networks; all other traffic would therefore be 'non-priority'. Operators have been lobbying for this type of arrangement for many years now. Recent leaks would tend to indicate that Neelie Kroes's proposals are set to give them what they want.

1. Would the Commission agree that giving powers of this kind to Internet providers is totally contrary to the principle of net neutrality, which guarantees freedom of expression for users and, at the same time, fosters competition and innovation in the digital economy?

2. Would it not agree that this arrangement would make it impossible for small players, innovators and new entrants to gain 'priority traffic' status?

3. Would it not agree, furthermore, that operators would have no incentive to invest in more bandwidth, because congestion on the net would make these priority arrangements still more sought after? Operators would thus be able to make larger profits while investing less. And society as a whole would suffer.

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(15 October 2013)

The Commission is fully committed to defending the open Internet and to promoting the quality of Internet access services. The Connected Continent proposal adopted on 11 September 2013 ([1]) prohibits providers of Internet access service to block, throttle, degrade or discriminate traffic ([2]), and thus delivers effective net neutrality. At the same time, to meet end-users' demand for better service quality, the proposal allows the provision of enhanced quality for specialized services, many of which are already in the market today, like IPTV, data-intensive cloud use by business, certain e-Health applications or videoconferencing. However, the proposed regulation makes it clear that specialized services must not lead to quality of the Internet access services. Also, such quality of feedback services must not be 'marketed or widely used as a substitute for Internet access services' ([3]). As a safeguard, National Regulatory Authorities shall not only monitor the quality of Internet access services but they must also ensure the continued availability of non-discriminatory Internet access and will have the power to impose minimum quality of service requirements. Thus the proposal enables all players to reach end-users with their content, applications and services, depending on their needs.

The proposal also strengthens transparency and reinforces end-users' rights. For example, end-users would be provided with information on actual speed of the connection and in case of significant and non-temporary discrepancies remedies would be made available.

([1]) Proposal for a regulation of the European parliament and of the Council laying down measures concerning the European single market for electronic communications and to achieve a Connected Continent, and amending Directives 2002/20/EC, 2002/21/EC and 2002/22/EC and Regulations (EC) No 1211/2009 and (EU) No 531/2012; COM(2013) 0627 final.

([2]) Such measures are justified only exceptionally and in a limited number of cases of reasonable traffic management.

([3]) Article 2 point 15 of the proposal.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009829/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(3 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Aumento del 9 % del finanziamento ai partiti europei

I c.d. «partiti europei» entità politiche notoriamente fantomatiche esistenti solo come atto notorio, sede più o meno fittizia, attività esterne di pura facciata hanno ricevuto da Bruxelles un aumento del 9 % del già cospicuo finanziamento.

Non ritiene la Commissione che tale esorbitante regalia ai pressoché inesistenti «partiti europei» sia in stridente e vergognoso contrasto con la strategia di spending review, dalla stessa raccomandata ai paesi membri?

Intende la Commissione avvalersi della specifica competenza dell'Olaf per sottoporre ad adeguati e approfonditi controllo e verifica di congruità delle spese pregresse di tali partiti imputate al finanziamento europeo, viste le ricorrenti notizie relative a «gonfiamenti» delle spese e/o risarcimenti richiesti per servizi in realtà inesistenti?

Risposta di José Manuel Barroso a nome della Commissione
(7 ottobre 2013)

Responsabile dell'applicazione del regolamento (CE) n. 2004/2003 relativo allo statuto e al finanziamento dei partiti politici a livello europeo è il Parlamento europeo. In tale veste quest'ultimo gestisce la pertinente linea di bilancio della sezione I (Parlamento europeo) del bilancio generale dell'Unione europea. Per maggiori informazioni sull'eventuale aumento degli importi assegnati ai partiti politici a livello europeo la Commissione invita l'on. parlamentare a rivolgersi al Parlamento.

Tuttavia, la Commissione desidera precisare che non condivide l'opinione dell'on. parlamentare secondo cui i partiti politici europei sarebbero «pressoché inesistenti»; al contrario, ritiene che tali partiti contribuiscano in misura estremamente rilevante al dibattito a livello europeo, al processo decisionale democratico nell'UE e a far sì che i cittadini si avvicinino alla politica e alle istituzioni europee.

La Commissione ricorda inoltre che il controllo sui finanziamenti europei assegnati ai partiti politici a livello europeo a norma del regolamento (CE) n. 2004/2003 è esercitato dall'ordinatore responsabile del Parlamento europeo conformemente al regolamento finanziario e alle relative modalità di esecuzione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009829/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: 9% more funding for European political parties

European political parties, as they are called — notoriously shadowy political entities existing only in the form of statutory declarations, whose headquarters are, to a greater or lesser degree, fictions, and whose external activities are merely a façade — have received a 9% cash injection from Brussels, adding to their already substantial funding.

Does not the Commission believe that to bestow such inordinate largesse upon the near non-existent 'European parties' is blatantly and disgracefully at odds with the spending review strategy which it is advocating for Member States?

Will it make use of OLAF's specific powers in order to carry out the necessary thorough check and determine the appropriateness of the parties' earlier expenditure financed from European sources, bearing in mind the repeated reports of 'over-inflation' in their spending and/or the payments requested for services never actually rendered?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(7 October 2013)

The European Parliament is responsible for the implementation of Regulation (EC) 2004/2003 governing political parties at European level and the rules regarding their funding. As such, it manages the corresponding budget line listed in Section I (European Parliament) of the general budget of the European Union. For more details on any possible increase of the amounts granted to political parties at European level, the Commission invites the Honourable Member to contact the Parliament.

The Commission, however, does not share the opinion of the Honourable Member on a 'near non-existence' of European political parties and considers on the contrary that these parties make a very important contribution to the European debate, to democratic decision-making in the EU and to bring citizens closer to European politics and institutions.

The Commission would also like to recall that the control of EU funding granted to political parties at European level under Regulation (EC) 2004/2003 is exercised in accordance with the Financial Regulation and its implementing provisions by the responsible Authorising officer of the European Parliament.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-009830/13
aan de Commissie
Patricia van der Kammen (NI) en Lucas Hartong (NI)
(3 september 2013)

Betreft: EU-snelheidsbegrenzers

In „The Guardian" ([1]) en op de website van de Commissie ([2]) is te lezen dat de Europese Commissie aan plannen werkt om in alle auto's snelheidsbegrenzers verplicht te maken.

1. Is de Commissie bekend met het bericht „UK fights EU bid to introduce speed limit devices"[(1)]?

2. Klopt het dat de Commissie aan plannen werkt om de installatie van snelheidsbegrenzers in voertuigen verplicht te stellen?

3. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat de verplichte installatie van snelheidsbegrenzers wederom een voorbeeld is van de absurde en doorgeslagen regeldrang en beheersdrift van de Commissie? Zo nee, waarom niet?

4. Is de Commissie inmiddels tot het inzicht gekomen dat haar bemoeizucht Orwelliaanse trekken vertoont? Zo nee, wat is daarvoor nodig?

5. Deelt de Commissie de mening van de PVV dat de Nederlandse burgers deze vreselijke betutteling door de Commissie niet nodig hebben en ook niet zitten te wachten op deze verregaande invasieve bemoeienis met zaken waar de landen zelf over kunnen en zouden moeten beslissen? Zo nee, waarom niet?

6. Is de Commissie bereid om haar idiote plannen per direct naar de prullenbak te verwijzen? Zo nee, waarom niet?

7. Hoeveel belastinggeld heeft de Commissie inmiddels verstrekt en besteed aan onderzoek voor dit project?

8. Is de Commissie bereid verdere verstrekking van geld aan dit soort bemoeizucht direct te staken? Zo nee, waarom niet?

Antwoord van de heer Kallas namens de Commissie
(14 oktober 2013)

De Commissie werkt niet aan plannen om in alle auto's snelheidsbegrenzers verplicht te maken en is niet op de hoogte van het rapport „UK fights EU bid to introduce speed limit devices".

De Commissie heeft in 2013 een ex-postevaluatiestudie opgestart inzake de toepassing van Richtlijn 92/6/EEG ([3]) betreffende snelheidsbegrenzers van bedrijfsvoertuigen. De algemene doelstelling van deze studie bestaat in het verstrekken van een onafhankelijke, externe evaluatie van de verkeersveiligheid en van de milieu- en economische effecten van de geldende wetgeving. In overeenstemming met de uitdrukkelijke oproep aan de Commissie van het Europees Parlement ([4]) *„een voorstel uit te werken om voertuigen uit te rusten met „systemen voor intelligente snelheidsaanpassing", met inbegrip van een tijdschema, details inzake de goedkeuringsprocedure en een beschrijving van de vereiste wegeninfrastructuur"* wordt in deze studie ook de mogelijke toepassing van intelligente snelheidshulpsystemen in lichte bedrijfsvoertuigen onderzocht.

([1]) http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/sep/01/uk-fights-eu-speed-limit-devices.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/specialist/knowledge/esave/esafety_measures_known_safety_effects/intelligent_speed_adaptation_isa.htm
([3]) PB L 57 van 2.3.1992, blz. 27-28. zoals gewijzigd door Richtlijn 2002/85/EG (PB L 327, 4.12.2002).
([4]) Verslag over de verkeersveiligheid in Europa 2011-2020 (2010/2235(INI)) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+REPORT+A7-2011-0264+0+DOC+XML+V0//NL

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009830/13
to the Commission
Patricia van der Kammen (NI) and Lucas Hartong (NI)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: EU speed limiters

According to *'The Guardian'* ([1]) and the Commission's website ([2]), the Commission is working on plans to make it compulsory to instal speed limiters in all cars.

1. Is the Commission familiar with the report 'UK fights EU bid to introduce speed limit devices'[1]?

2. Is it true that the Commission is working on plans to make it compulsory to instal speed limiters in vehicles?

3. Does the Commission agree that the compulsory installation of speed limiters is yet another instance of the Commission's absurd and excessive mania for regulation and control? If not, why not?

4. Has the Commission now realised that its meddling is taking on Orwellian features? If not, what still needs to happen in order for this realisation to dawn?

5. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that people in the Netherlands do not need to be nannied in this awful way and have no desire to accept this far-reaching invasive interference in matters on which countries themselves can and should take decisions? If not, why not?

6. Will the Commission immediately consign its idiotic plans to the wastepaper basket? If not, why not?

7. How much tax revenue has the Commission so far spent on research for this project?

8. Will the Commission immediately halt any further funding of such meddling? If not, why not?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(14 October 2013)

The Commission is not working on plans concerning compulsory installation of speed limitation devices in all cars and is not aware of the report 'UK fights EU bid to introduce speed limit devices'.

The Commission has launched in 2013 an ex-post evaluation study on the application of Directive 92/6/EEC ([3]) on speed limitation devices of commercial vehicles. The general purpose of the study is to provide an independent, external evaluation of the road safety, environmental and economic effects of the legislation in force. In line with the explicit call on the Commission of the European Parliament ([4]) to 'draw up a proposal to fit vehicles with "intelligent speed assistance systems" which incorporate a timetable, details of an approval procedure and a description of the requisite road infrastructure', the study also assesses possible application of intelligent speed assistance systems to light commercial vehicles.

([1]) http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/sep/01/uk-fights-eu-speed-limit-devices
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/specialist/knowledge/esave/esafety_measures_known_safety_effects/intelligent_speed_adaptation_isa.htm
([3]) OJ L 57, 2.3.1992, p. 27 as amended by Directive 2002/85/EC (OJ L 327, 4.12.2002).
([4]) Report on European road safety 2011-2020 (2010/2235(INI)) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=REPORT&reference=A7-2011-0264&language=EN

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-009832/13
a la Comisión
Salvador Garriga Polledo (PPE)
(3 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Tax Lease holandés — Apertura de expediente

En relación con el régimen de Tax Lease holandés, en diciembre de 2012 se denunció ante la Comisión Europea la amortización anticipada y acelerada disponible para los ejercicios 2009, 2010 y 2011 por su carácter selectivo, al excluir de su ámbito de aplicación determinados bienes. Asimismo, fue denunciada la combinación de esta medida con otros incentivos fiscales en el marco de las estructuras de arrendamiento financiero para la adquisición de buques, que permiten evitar la reversión de la amortización y la tributación de la plusvalía puesta de manifiesto con la venta del buque, obteniendo un ahorro fiscal definitivo.

Ya en su comparecencia el pasado 28 de mayo ante la Comisión de Asuntos Económicos y Monetarios del Parlamento Europeo, el Comisario de Competencia, Joaquín Almunia, manifestó que la CE estaba investigando el asunto de referencia. Sin embargo, a fecha de hoy, no se ha producido la apertura de un expediente de investigación al país denunciado por los hechos anteriormente referidos.

¿A qué se debe el retraso en la apertura del expediente? ¿Necesita la Comisión información adicional para hacerlo? ¿Daña ese retraso la igualdad de trato con otros países que ya han sido objeto de investigación y decisión por parte de la Comisión?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(7 de octubre de 2013)

La evaluación de las medidas objeto de la denuncia está en marcha. La Comisión ha analizado las respuestas de las autoridades neerlandesas hasta la fecha y a mediados de septiembre les remitió una solicitud de información adicional.

La Comisión debe establecer en primer lugar si las diferentes medidas de que se trata entran en el ámbito de aplicación de las normas sobre ayudas estatales y a continuación evaluar la compatibilidad de cada una de las medidas individualmente. Solo las evaluará en su conjunto si se puede demostrar que existen claros vínculos entre ellas, establecidos por la legislación o por la práctica administrativa.

Cuando se haya completado la información, si existen serias dudas, la Comisión incoará el procedimiento de investigación formal a tenor del artículo 4, apartado 4, del Reglamento (CE) n° 659/99 del Consejo por el que se establecen disposiciones de aplicación del artículo 93 del Tratado CE ([1]). Si en última instancia la Comisión constatara la existencia de ayuda incompatible, ordenaría su recuperación con intereses calculados desde la fecha en que se concedió la ayuda.

La duración de la investigación depende de la complejidad de las medidas a examen. Las medidas fiscales y las operaciones de arrendamiento fiscal pueden mostrar un nivel de complejidad que justifique objetivamente una investigación más larga. Ello no supone discriminación alguna. A la vista de las circunstancias objetivas de este asunto, la Comisión considera que no lo está tratando de forma diferente a casos similares de otros Estados miembros.

([1]) DO L 83 de 27.3.1999, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009832/13
to the Commission
Salvador Garriga Polledo (PPE)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: Dutch tax lease system — opening of investigation

In December 2012 a complaint was submitted to the Commission in respect of the Dutch tax lease system, in particular the accelerated depreciation provisions in place in the financial years 2009-2011. According to the complaint, the provisions were selective because they excluded certain goods. The complaint also criticised the fact that these provisions were combined with other tax incentives provided for under the financial leasing arrangements for the acquisition of vessels. These made it possible for investors to avoid paying back tax saved under the depreciation arrangements and to avoid the capital gains tax due on the sale of a vessel, equating to a permanent tax saving.

At the meeting of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs of 28 May 2013, Competition Commissioner Joaquín Almunia said that the Commission was investigating the matter. However, no investigation has yet been launched in respect of the Netherlands' tax lease system.

What is the reason for this delay? Does the Commission need more information before it can open an investigation? Does it think that the delay runs counter to the principle of equal treatment given that the Commission has previously investigated and ruled on cases concerning other countries?

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

The assessment of the measures targeted by the complaint is ongoing. The Commission has analysed the answers provided by the Dutch authorities so far and sent them an additionnal request for information mid-September.

The Commission must first establish whether the different measures concerned fall within the scope of state aid rules and then assess the compatibility of each of the measures individually. It will only assess them together if clear links between them — established by law or by administrative practice — can be demonstrated.

When the information is complete, if serious doubts exist, the Commission will open the formal investigation procedure in accordance with Article 4(4) of Council Regulation (EC) No 659/99 laying down detailed rules for the application of Article 93 of the EC Treaty ([1]). If the Commission were to ultimately identify incompatible aid, it would order its recovery with interest calculated as from the date the aid was awarded.

The duration of an investigation depends on the complexity of the measures under scrutiny. Tax measures and tax lease operations may exhibit a level of complexity which objectively justifies a lengthier investigation. This does not imply discrimination. In the light of the objective circumstances of this case, the Commission considers that it is not treating it any differently from similar cases in other Member States.

([1]) OJEC L 83 of 27.3.1999, p.1.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-009833/13
an die Kommission
Cornelia Ernst (GUE/NGL)
(3. September 2013)

Betrifft: Altersgrenze für Lehrkräfte in Projekten, die vom ESF gefördert werden

Im Bundesland Sachsen (Deutschland) erging die Entscheidung, dass eine Lehrkraft, die in einem vom ESF geförderten Projekt als Lehrkraft tätig ist, nicht älter als 65 Jahre alt sein darf.

Welches ist die Rechtsgrundlage für diese Entscheidung?

Antwort von Herrn Andor im Namen der Kommission
(10. Oktober 2013)

In der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1083/2006 ([1]) mit allgemeinen Bestimmungen unter anderem über den ESF heißt es, dass die Regeln für die Förderfähigkeit der Ausgaben bis auf die in den Verordnungen der einzelnen Fonds vorgesehenen Ausnahmen auf nationaler Ebene festgelegt werden. Auch wenn die Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1081/2006 ([2]) über den ESF keine Altersgrenzen vorsieht, kann die Europäische Kommission demnach nicht ausschließen, dass nach nationalen oder subnationalen Bestimmungen implizite oder explizite Altersgrenzen bestehen.

([1]) Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1083/2006 des Rates vom 11. Juli 2006 mit allgemeinen Bestimmungen über den Europäischen Fonds für regionale Entwicklung, den Europäischen Sozialfonds und den Kohäsionsfonds und zur Aufhebung der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1260/1999 (ABl. L 210 vom 31.7.2006).

([2]) Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1081/2006 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 5. Juli 2006 über den Europäischen Fonds für regionale Entwicklung und zur Aufhebung der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1784/1999 (ABl. L 210 vom 31.7.2006).

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009833/13
to the Commission
Cornelia Ernst (GUE/NGL)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: Age limit for teachers in ESF-funded projects

In Saxony, Germany, a decision has been taken to the effect that no teacher aged over 65 may participate in ESF-funded projects.

What is the legal basis for this decision?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(10 October 2013)

Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 ([1]) laying down general provisions *inter alia* on the ESF states that the rules on the eligibility of expenditure are to be laid down at national level, subject to the exceptions provided for in the specific Regulations for each Fund. While Regulation (EC) No 1081/2006 ([2]) on the ESF lays down no age limitations, the European Commission cannot therefore exclude that implicit or explicit age limitations are in place according to national or sub-national regulations.

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 of 11 July 2006 laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999, OJ L 210, 31.7.2006.

([2]) Regulation (EC) No 1081/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 on the European Social Fund and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1784/1999, OJ L 210, 31.7.2006.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-009834/13
do Komisji
Wojciech Michał Olejniczak (S&D)
(3 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Etykietowanie produktów żywnościowych niezawierających organizmów zmodyfikowanych genetycznie

Rozporządzenie (WE) nr 1829/2003 w sprawie genetycznie zmodyfikowanej żywności i paszy wprowadza obowiązek umieszczania odpowiednich etykiet na wszystkich środkach spożywczych zawierających organizmy zmodyfikowane genetycznie lub wyprodukowane z organizmów zmodyfikowanych genetycznie. Czy istnieją jednak jakieś przepisy UE, które mogłyby pozwolić na bardziej elastyczne podejście do etykietowania produktów rolnych i środków spożywczych jeśli chodzi o zawartość organizmów zmodyfikowanych genetycznie? Odnosi się to do niewystępowania organizmów zmodyfikowanych genetycznie w składnikach tych produktów ani na żadnym etapie procesu produkcji, o czym informują etykiety, takie jak „brak organizmów zmodyfikowanych genetycznie", „bez organizmów zmodyfikowanych genetycznie", „wolne od organizmów zmodyfikowanych genetycznie" itp.

Konkretniej, czy istnieją przepisy UE, które pozwalałyby na nieujawnianie konsumentom informacji dotyczących pasz dla zwierząt użytych w procesie produkcji żywności, które mogą zawierać organizmy zmodyfikowane genetycznie (z wyłączeniem technicznie niemożliwej do uniknięcia zawartości organizmów zmodyfikowanych genetycznie nieprzekraczającej 0,9 % ciężaru paszy)? Podsumowując, czy zgodnie z przepisami UE na produktach rolnych i środkach spożywczych można arbitralnie umieścić etykietę, taką jak „wolne od organizmów zmodyfikowanych genetycznie" lub „wyprodukowane z paszy zwierzęcej wolnej od organizmów zmodyfikowanych genetycznie"?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Tonia Borga w imieniu Komisji
(26 września 2013 r.)

Współprawodawcy zdecydowali, że rozporządzenie (WE) nr 1829/2003 ([1]) ma zastosowanie jedynie do żywności i paszy zawierającej, składającej się lub wyprodukowanej z GMO, ale nie do żywności i paszy „z zawartością" GMO. Motyw 16 rozporządzenia określa, że czynnikiem decydującym jest to, czy materiał uzyskany z genetycznie zmodyfikowanego materiału źródłowego występuje w żywności lub paszy. W związku z tym produkty uzyskane ze zwierząt żywionych GMO, takie jak jaja, mięso lub mleko, nie podlegają ani wymaganiom zezwolenia, ani wymaganiom etykietowania określonym w tym rozporządzeniu.

W wyniku petycji z 2007 r., w której wezwano do etykietowania takich produktów, Komisja zwróciła się do EFSA z prośbą o wyjaśnienie, czy transgeny lub ich produkty mogą zostać włączone do tkanek zwierzęcych lub produktów. EFSA stwierdził, że do chwili obecnej wiele badań doświadczalnych z udziałem zwierząt gospodarskich wykazało, że w tkankach, płynach lub produktach jadalnych pochodzących od zwierząt takich kurczaki, bydło, świnie czy przepiórki nie wykryto fragmentów rekombinacyjnego DNA czy protein pochodzących z genetycznie zmodyfikowanych roślin spożytych przez te zwierzęta. Na tej podstawie Komisja stwierdziła, że właściwe jest utrzymanie obecnie obowiązującego podejścia legislacyjnego.

Jednak przepisy UE nie zakazują stosowania etykiet „wolne od GM" sygnalizujących, że środki spożywcze nie zawierają upraw zmodyfikowanych genetycznie lub zostały wyprodukowane bez użycia GMO, pod warunkiem że są one zgodne z ogólnymi przepisami dotyczącymi etykietowania żywności ([2]). Takie etykiety są przygotowywane w kilku państwach członkowskich, a Komisja zainicjowała badanie w celu lepszego zrozumienia zakresu i specyfikacji tych etykiety w UE. Wyniki tego badania zostaną udostępnione na stronie internetowej Komisji w nadchodzących miesiącach.

([1]) Dz.U. L 268 z 18.10.2003.
([2]) Dyrektywa 2000/13/WE w sprawie zbliżenia ustawodawstw państw członkowskich w zakresie etykietowania, prezentacji i reklamy środków spożywczych. Dz.U. L 109 z 6.5.2000, s. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009834/13
to the Commission
Wojciech Michał Olejniczak (S&D)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: Labelling of GMO-free food products

Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 on genetically modified food and feed introduces an obligation for all foodstuffs containing genetically modified organisms (GMOs) or produced from GMOs to bear an appropriate label. That said, is there any EU legislation which could allow for a more relaxed approach to the labelling of agricultural products and foodstuffs with regard to GMO content? This relates both to the lack of GMO material in the contents of these products as well as their absence at any stage of the production process, which is expressed by means of labels such as 'non-GMO', 'without GMO', 'GMO-free' etc.

More specifically, is there any EU legislation which could allow for the non-disclosure of information to consumers relating to animal feed used in the process of food production which may contain GMOs (excluding technically unavoidable GMO contents of less than 0.9% of the feed mass)? To summarise, as provided for in EU legislation, is it allowed to arbitrarily assign labels such as 'GMO-free' or 'produced from animals fed with GMO-free feed' to agricultural products and foodstuffs?

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

The co-legislators decided that regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 ([1]) only applies to food and feed containing, consisting of or produced from a GMO, but not to food and feed produced 'with' a GMO. Recital 16 of the regulation provides that the determining factor is whether or not material derived from the GM source material is present in the food or in the feed. Consequently, products obtained from animals fed with GMOs, such as eggs, meat or milk, are subject neither to the authorisation requirements nor to the labelling requirements referred to in the regulation.

Following a petition in 2007 asking for the labelling of such products, the Commission asked EFSA to clarify if transgenes or their products may be incorporated into animal tissues or products. EFSA concluded that, to date, a large number of experimental studies with livestock have shown that recombinant DNA fragments or proteins derived from GM plants ingested by farm animals like broilers, cattle, pigs or quails have not been detected in their tissues, fluids or edible products. On this basis, the Commission concluded that it was appropriate to maintain the current legislative approach.

However the EU legislation does not forbid the use of 'GM-free' labels signalling that foodstuffs do not contain GM crops, or were produced not using GMOs, provided that they respect the general rules on food labelling ([2]). Such labels are being developed in several Member States and the Commission has launched a study to gain a better understanding of the scopes and specifications of these labels in the EU. The findings of this study will be made available on the related Commission's website in the coming months.

([1]) OJ L 268, 18.10.2003.
([2]) Directive 2000/13/EC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the labelling, presentation and advertising of foodstuffs. OJ L 109, 6.5.2000.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009835/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(3 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Independencia del nuevo organismo regulador en el Estado español

En fecha reciente, ha trascendido que los integrantes del Consejo del nuevo organismo regulador de España serán elegidos mediante un sistema de cuotas.

Estas cuotas serían repartidas entre los distintos partidos políticos según su peso ponderado en el Parlamento español.

Por otro lado, la Comisión ha remarcado insistentemente la importancia que el organismo regulador sea independiente. En su respuesta a la pregunta E-003358/2013, dice: «la Comisión otorga gran importancia a los requisitos que impone el nuevo marco regulador de la UE en relación con la independencia de las autoridades reguladoras nacionales. Parece ser que el proyecto de ley refuerza la participación y el control del Parlamento en el nombramiento de los miembros del Consejo. En particular, dicho proyecto establece que tales miembros serán designados previa consulta del Parlamento, que tendrá un derecho de veto respecto a los candidatos propuestos.».

A la luz de lo anterior:

¿Considera la Comisión que elegir el Consejo de gobierno de un organismo regulador mediante cuotas asignadas a los partidos políticos es compatible con su independencia?

¿Cree que la nominación de militantes y ex-altos cargos de los partidos políticos lamina la independencia del órgano?

Respuesta de la Sra. Kroes en nombre de la Comisión
(10 de octubre de 2013)

Como se indicaba en nuestra respuesta a la pregunta parlamentaria E-003358/2013, la Comisión concede una gran importancia a la independencia de las autoridades nacionales de reglamentación. El marco regulador de la UE en materia de comunicaciones electrónicas contiene una serie de requisitos a este respecto. En particular, la Directiva 2002/21/CE, en su versión modificada por la Directiva 2009/140/CE ([1]), dispone, entre otras cosas, que los Estados miembros garantizarán que estas autoridades sean jurídicamente distintas y funcionalmente independientes de todas las entidades suministradoras de redes, equipos o servicios de comunicaciones electrónicas, y que actuarán con independencia y no solicitarán o aceptarán instrucciones de ningún otro organismo en el ejercicio de determinadas tareas asignadas en virtud de la legislación nacional por la que se aplica el Derecho de la UE.

No obstante, el procedimiento para el nombramiento de los miembros del consejo de las autoridades nacionales de reglamentación es competencia nacional. La legislación de la Comisión Nacional de los Mercados y la Competencia (CNMC) ha reforzado la participación parlamentaria en el proceso de nombramiento de los miembros del consejo de la nueva autoridad otorgando al Parlamento un poder de veto sobre la propuesta del Gobierno. A efectos de la aplicación de este procedimiento nacional, la propuesta del Gobierno de los nuevos miembros del Consejo de administración de la CNMC fue adoptada el 30 de agosto ([2]), y la audiencia parlamentaria de los candidatos propuestos tuvo lugar el 5 de septiembre de 2013.

La Comisión continuará vigilando estrechamente la aplicación de la reforma de la CNMC con el fin de garantizar su compatibilidad con los requisitos pertinentes establecidos en virtud del Derecho de la UE.

([1]) DO L 337 de 18.12.2009, p. 37.
([2]) http://www.lamoncloa.gob.es/ConsejodeMinistros/Referencias/_2013/refc20130830.htm#ComisionMercados

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009835/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: Independence of the new regulatory body in Spain

It recently transpired that the members of the Board of the new Spanish regulating body are to be elected by means of a quota system.

These quotas will be attributed to the various political parties according to their weight in the Spanish parliament.

The Commission, on the other hand, has repeatedly stressed that the regulating body must be independent. In its response to Written Question E-003358/2013, it said that 'the Commission attaches great importance to the requirements under the EU regulatory framework regarding the independence of national regulatory authorities. The draft law seems to reinforce the involvement and control of the Parliament in the appointment process of the members of the Board. In particular, the draft law foresees that the members of the Board will be appointed following consultation of the Parliament which will have the right to veto the proposed candidates.'

In the light of the above:

Does the Commission consider the election of the governing board of a regulatory body by means of quotas assigned to political parties to be compatible with that body's independence?

Does it consider that the nomination of activists and former leaders of political parties will limit the independence of the regulatory body?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(10 October 2013)

As indicated in our reply to PQ E-003358/2013, the Commission attaches great importance to the independence of national regulatory authorities. The EU regulatory framework for electronic communications contains a number of requirements in this regard. In particular, Directive 2002/21/EC, as amended by Directive 2009/140/EC ([1]), provides, amongst others, that Member States shall guarantee that these authorities are legally distinct from and functionally independent of all organisations providing electronic communications networks, equipment or services, and that they shall act independently and not seek or take instructions from any other body in the exercise of certain tasks under national law implementing EC law.

However, the procedure for the appointment of the members of the board of the national regulatory authorities is a national competence. The CNMC law has reinforced the parliamentary involvement in the appointment process of the members of the board of the new authority by giving the Parliament a veto power over the Government proposal. In application of this national procedure, the Government proposal of the new Members of the Board of the CNMC was adopted on 30 August ([2]) and the parliamentary hearing of the proposed candidates took place on 5 September 2013.

The Commission will continue to monitor closely the implementation of the CNMC reform in order to guarantee its compatibility with the relevant requirements under EC law.

([1]) OJ L 337, 18.12.2009, p.37.
([2]) http://www.lamoncloa.gob.es/ConsejodeMinistros/Referencias/_2013/refc20130830.htm#ComisionMercados

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009836/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(3 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Venta de participaciones industriales a organismo estatal por parte de una entidad financiera rescatada

BFA-Bankia ha vendido el total de sus participaciones industriales a la SEPI (Sociedad Española de Participaciones Industriales), una entidad de carácter público.

Esta venta, que significa el 20,14 % de las acciones de la empresa, ha resultado por valor de 337 millones de euros, que reducen el montante de la deuda de BFA-Bankia pero aumentan el déficit del Estado español ([1]).

La Comisión se ha pronunciado en repetidas ocasiones sobre la importancia de que BFA-Bankia proceda a vender sus participaciones industriales con la mayor celeridad posible. Pero no sobre si estas ventas se pueden realizar a entidades públicas.

A la luz de lo anterior:

¿Considera la Comisión que esta venta es compatible con las normas sobre ayudas de estado vigentes en los Tratados de la UE?

¿Investigará la Comisión si ha existido un trato preferencial en esta operación producida entre dos entidades de titularidad pública?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(9 de octubre de 2013)

En virtud de la decisión de reestructuración aprobada por la Comisión en noviembre de 2012, las autoridades españolas se comprometieron a que BFA-Bankia vendiera sus participaciones industriales. La venta deberá realizarse en condiciones de mercado. La decisión no especifica si los compradores tienen que ser públicos o privados. Hasta el momento, la Comisión no tiene indicios de que la venta no se realizara en condiciones de mercado.

Aunque la Comisión sigue el proceso de reestructuración de BFA-Bankia como parte de los procedimientos de control normales, incluida la venta de participaciones industriales, por el momento, no hay una investigación ad hoc prevista por lo que se refiere a su venta.

([1]) http://blogs.elconfidencial.com/mercados/el-inversor-inteligente/2013-08-08/indra-y-el-despilfarro-del-gobierno_16351/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009836/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: Sale of industrial shares to a state body by a bailed-out bank

BFA-Bankia has sold all its industrial shares to SEPI, the Spanish Industrial Holding Company, which is a public body.

The EUR 337 million sale of 20.14% of the company's shares reduces BFA-Bankia's debt but increases Spain's national deficit.

The Commission has repeatedly stressed that BFA-Bankia needs to sell its industrial shares as quickly as possible, but has not stated whether or not they can be sold to public bodies.

In the light of the above:

Does the Commission consider this sale compatible with the existing rules on state aid established in the EU Treaties?

Will the Commission investigate whether this transaction between two public bodies constitutes preferential treatment?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(9 October 2013)

Under the terms of the restructuring decision as approved by the Commission in November 2012, the Spanish authorities have committed to BFA-Bankia selling its industrial shares. Any such sale has to take place on commercial terms. The decision does not specify whether the buyers have to be public or private. So far, the Commission has no indication that the sale did not take place under commercial terms.

While the Commission is following the restructuring process of BFA-Bankia as part of its normal monitoring procedures, including the sale of industrial shares, so far there is no ad hoc investigation expected as regards their sale.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009837/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(3 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Financiación de Sareb a entidades compradoras

Ha salido a la luz que Sareb (banco malo creado a raíz de las condiciones acordadas en el MoU del préstamo europeo para el sector financiero español) ha prestado dinero a un fondo de capital que ha participado en la llamada Operación Bull ([1]). La sociedad ha financiado el 40 % de su importe, es decir, 40 de los 100 millones en que se ha valorado.

Esta medida, sumada a que Sareb tenga el 49 % de las acciones del vehículo financiero que actúa como comprador, ha hecho que Sareb tenga un 70 % del riesgo de la operación.

Este hecho se contradice con la voluntad expresada en su página web de que «entre las funciones de Sareb no se contempla dar financiación para adquirir los activos de la sociedad» ([2]).

A la luz de lo anterior,

¿Cree la Comisión que esta práctica está de acuerdo con el objetivo de Sareb de reducir las pérdidas para los contribuyentes?

¿Está de acuerdo la Comisión en que Sareb dé crédito a posibles compradores a pesar de que ello aumenta notablemente sus riesgos?

¿Cree la Comisión que esta acción contradice los principios enunciados en la propia página web de Sareb?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(18 de octubre de 2013)

La creación de Sareb ha constituido un elemento importante del programa de ayuda al sector financiero español para facilitar, a su debido tiempo y de manera ordenada, la desinversión de los «activos heredados» relacionados con los sectores de desarrollo inmobiliario y de la construcción.

Es importante recordar que, con objeto de optimizar el nivel de recuperación y de preservación del valor, con vistas a minimizar también el coste para el contribuyente, se concedió a Sareb un período de hasta 15 años. Además, Sareb es una empresa de propiedad mayoritariamente privada, aunque con una importante participación pública minoritaria que asciende al 45 % del capital de la empresa. Por último, su equipo de gestión lo componen personas con un alto grado de profesionalidad, incluidos expertos en el mercado inmobiliario español.

Como empresa privada gestionada por profesionales, Sareb toma decisiones de manera independiente con el fin de cumplir mejor sus objetivos. Al mismo tiempo, la Comisión, de consuno con las autoridades españolas, está siguiendo de cerca la evolución de la situación relativa a Sareb para garantizar que ésta actúa en consonancia con el espíritu del Protocolo de Acuerdo.

([1]) http://www.elconfidencial.com/vivienda/2013-08-29/sareb-presta-dinero-a-los-fondos-para-que-se-le-compren-sus-propios-inmuebles_22221/?utm_source=buffer&utm_campaign=Buffer&utm_content=bufferc77da&utm_medium=twitter

([2]) http://www.sareb.es/cms/estatico/srb/sareb/web/es/portal/sobre_sareb/faqs/index.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009837/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: Funding of purchasing bodies by Sareb

It has come to light that Sareb (the bad bank created under the terms of the memorandum of understanding for the European loan to the Spanish financial sector) lent money to an equity fund which took part in Operation Bull ([1]). The company funded 40% of the amount, in other words, EUR 40 million out of the EUR 100 million at which it was valued.

This measure, added to the fact that Sareb owns a 49% stake in the financial vehicle acting as purchaser, means that Sareb is liable for 70% of the operation's risk.

This contradicts the affirmation on the bad bank's website that 'Sareb's functions do not include providing funding for the purpose of acquiring the firm's assets' ([2]).

In light of the above:

Does the Commission consider this practice to be in line with Sareb's aim of reducing losses for taxpayers?

Does the Commission agree with Sareb providing credit to possible purchasers despite this decidedly increasing its own risk?

Does the Commission feel that this behaviour contradicts the principles outlined on Sareb's own website?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(18 October 2013)

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.

It is important to recall that in order to optimize the level of recovery and value preservation with a view to also minimise the cost to the taxpayer, Sareb was given a timeframe of up to 15 years. In addition, Sareb is a majority-private owned company, although with an important public minority stake amounting to 45% of its capital. Finally, its management team compromises of highly professional individuals, including experts in the Spanish real estate market.

As a private company, managed by professional staff, Sareb takes decisions independently in order to best fulfil its goals. At the same time, the Commission together with the Spanish authorities are monitoring closely the developments related to Sareb to ensure that it performs in line with the spirit of the MoU.

([1]) http://www.elconfidencial.com/vivienda/2013-08-29/sareb-presta-dinero-a-los-fondos-para-que-se-le-compren-sus-propios-inmuebles_22221/?utm_source=buffer&utm_campaign=Buffer&utm_content=bufferc77da&utm_medium=twitter

([2]) http://www.sareb.es/cms/estatico/srb/sareb/web/es/portal/sobre_sareb/faqs/index.html

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009838/13
a la Comisión
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(3 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Accidente de tren en las inmediaciones de Santiago de Compostela y medidas de seguridad ferroviaria en la EU

El pasado 24 de julio, en la curva «A Grandeira» (Angrois), próxima a Santiago de Compostela, se produjo el descarrilamiento de un TALGO Serie 720 operado por Renfe que viajaba con 218 pasajeros de diferentes nacionalidades a bordo y circulaba con exceso de velocidad. El accidente causó 79 fallecidos y más de un centenar de heridos. Es el accidente ferroviario más grave de España desde 1944 y de Europa desde el año 2000.

Las autoridades españolas mantienen abiertas investigaciones sobre el accidente. El sistema de seguridad en el lugar del siniestro es el Anuncio de Señales y Frenado Automático (ASFA), después de una transición a realizar por el tren desde el Sistema Europeo de Gestión del Tráfico Ferroviario (ERTMS) / Sistema de Control Ferroviario Europeo (ETCS), que rige en otros tramos del recorrido con origen en Madrid. En la UE se estudian diversas opciones para el frenado de trenes en marcha (EATS, STPS, ECUC, etc.).

En los últimos catorce años han ocurrido ya once accidentes de tren muy graves en diversos Estados miembros de la UE (Polonia, Bélgica, Italia, Alemania, Hungría, Reino Unido, Austria y España). Días después del accidente de Santiago, en Suiza colisionaban frontalmente dos trenes de pasajeros en Granges-Marnand con el balance de 1 muerto y 26 heridos (5 de ellos graves).

¿Considera la Comisión necesario proceder a revisar y a incrementar la armonización de los actuales sistemas de seguridad en la EU al objeto de incrementar la seguridad del tráfico ferroviario y evitar accidentes como el ocurrido en las inmediaciones de Santiago?

Respuesta del Sr. Kallas en nombre de la Comisión
(16 de octubre de 2013)

La armonización de los sistemas de seguridad a nivel de la UE sigue siendo una prioridad para la Comisión, perseguida a través de iniciativas como el Sistema Europeo de Gestión del Tráfico Ferroviario (ERTMS/ETCS) mencionado por Su Señoría. Los Estados miembros se han comprometido con el ERTMS desde 1996 y la determinación de la Comisión a la hora de impulsar su despliegue es firme ([1]).

La tecnología también debe complementarse con la gestión de la seguridad y el control por parte de las empresas ferroviarias y el administrador de la infraestructura, así como con la supervisión por parte de las autoridades nacionales de seguridad (ANS).

La Directiva 2004/49/CE de seguridad ferroviaria ([2]) ya ha puesto en práctica un marco, por el que se atribuye la responsabilidad principal de las operaciones ferroviarias a las empresas ferroviarias y a los administradores de la infraestructura. Desde la entrada en vigor de dicha Directiva, estos operadores tienen la obligación de instaurar un sistema de gestión de la seguridad y disponer de un certificado de seguridad o una autorización de seguridad (respectivamente) antes de comenzar las operaciones. Las autoridades nacionales de seguridad emiten los certificados de seguridad y la autorización de seguridad y supervisan a los operadores.

Las propuestas del cuarto paquete ferroviario contribuyen a mejorar el ámbito de la seguridad. Más concretamente, la Agencia Ferroviaria Europea (AFE) expedirá los certificados de seguridad a las empresas ferroviarias, a fin de garantizar una evaluación más transparente y armonizada de su capacidad en la gestión de la seguridad. La supervisión seguirá siendo una tarea de las autoridades nacionales de seguridad, si bien la Agencia Ferroviaria Europea garantizará una mejor coordinación de esta actividad.

En caso de que las investigaciones en curso de los accidentes mencionados por Su Señoría revelen la necesidad de actuar a nivel de la UE, la Comisión adoptará medidas en el ámbito de sus competencias o presentará propuestas legislativas adecuadas con carácter de urgencia.

([1]) Para más información, la Comisión remite a Su Señoría a su respuesta a las preguntas escritas E-009478/2013 y E-009495/2013, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=ES

([2]) Directiva 2004/49/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 29 de abril de 2004, sobre la seguridad de los ferrocarriles comunitarios y por la que se modifican la Directiva 95/18/CE del Consejo sobre concesión de licencias a las empresas ferroviarias y la Directiva 2001/14/CE relativa a la adjudicación de la capacidad de infraestructura ferroviaria, aplicación de cánones por su utilización y certificación de la seguridad (DO L 164 de 30.4.2004).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009838/13
to the Commission
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: Train crash near Santiago de Compostela and rail safety measures in the EU

On 24 July 2013, a TALGO 720 series train, operated by Renfe, derailed at the A Grandeira curve in the immediate vicinity of Santiago de Compostela with 218 passengers on board and while travelling in excess of the speed limit. The accident caused the deaths of 79 people, with over a hundred injured. It was Spain's most serious rail accident since 1944 and the worst in Europe since 2000.

The Spanish authorities are still investigating the accident. At the point where it took place, the ASFA (Signal Alert and Automatic Braking) safety system is in operation, following the train's transition from the European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS)/European Train Control System (ETCS), which operates on other stretches of the journey from Madrid. A number of different systems for braking trains in motion (EATS, STPS, ECUC, etc) are currently being studied in the EU.

During the last 14 years there have already been 11 serious train accidents in several EU Member States (Poland, Belgium, Italy, Germany, Hungary, United Kingdom, Austria and Spain) A few days after the accident at Santiago de Compostela, two passenger trains collided head-on at Granges-Marnand in Switzerland, leaving one person dead and 26 injured (five of them seriously so).

Does the Commission see a need to review and increase the harmonisation of the safety systems currently used in the EU, to make rail travel safer and prevent accidents like the one which took place just outside Santiago?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(16 October 2013)

Harmonisation of safety systems at EU level continues to be a priority for the Commission, pursued through intiatives such as the European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS/ETCS) mentioned by the Honourable Member. Member States have committed to ERTMS since 1996, and the Commission determination to push its deployment is firm ([1]).

Technology must also be accompanied by safety management and monitoring by the railway undertakings and infrastructure manager as well as by supervision by the National Safety Authorities (NSA).

Directive 2004/49/EC on railway safety ([2]) has already put in place a framework, attributing main responsibility for railway operations to the railway undertakings and infrastructure managers. Since the entry into force of this directive, these operators have the obligation to establish a safety management system and be granted a safety certificate or a safety authorisation (respectively) before starting operations. NSAs deliver safety certificates and safety authorisation, and supervise the operators.

The proposals of the 4th railway package further contribute to improve the safety framework. More specifically, the European Railway Agency (ERA) will deliver the safety certificates to the railway undertakings, ensuring a more transparent and harmonised assessment of their capability in managing safety. Supervision will remain a task of the NSAs, while ERA will ensure a better coordination of this activity.

Should the ongoing investigations into the accidents referred to by the Honourable Member reveal a need for further action at EU level, the Commission will adopt measures within the limit of its competences or present appropriate legislative proposals as a matter of urgency.

([1]) For more details, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to written questions E-009478/2013 and E-009495/2013, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=EN

([2]) Directive 2004/49/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on safety on the Community's railways and amending Council Directive 95/18/EC on the licensing of railway undertakings and Directive 2001/14/EC on the allocation of railway infrastructure capacity and the levying of charges for the use of railway infrastructure and safety certification (OJ L 164, 30.4.2004).

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009839/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(3 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Despilfarro de fondos europeos en Cantabria

El pasado 13 de mayo, László Ándor, Comisario de Empleo y Asuntos Sociales, participó en un debate celebrado por la Fundación Fuhem donde afirmó que España ha despilfarrado los fondos europeos de cohesión al haber desarrollado políticas poco inteligentes.

El Comisario llegó a sostener que este despilfarro se encuentra en la base de los problemas de competitividad que lleva arrastrando la economía española. Los fondos de cohesión en España se han despilfarrado en la construcción de infraestructuras inútiles o duplicadas que no han mejorado en nada la competitividad. Estas infraestructuras tan solo han beneficiado a las grandes compañías de la construcción, que en última instancia han sido las grandes perceptoras de los fondos europeos.

Durante años, estos fondos se han estado empleando para beneficiar a las citadas empresas, y en la actualidad ha aparecido información sobre los supuestos pagos que dichas compañías realizaban a la cúpula del partido que gestionaba los proyectos. Esto podría explicar la lógica con la que las autoridades españolas han estado elaborando los proyectos financiados con fondos europeos, y es por ello que resulta necesario recabar la mayor información posible sobre la evaluación que la Comisión ha realizado de dichos proyectos.

A la vista de las críticas lanzadas por el Comisario sobre la ejecución de dichos fondos, consideramos necesario conocer qué proyectos, a la luz de las evaluaciones que la Comisión ha debido realizar, son considerados como «poco inteligentes» y cuáles son las alternativas que la Comisión Europea entiende que podrían haber sido ejecutadas en su lugar. Cantabria es una de las regiones europeas con mayor desempleo y por eso urge conocer cómo evalúa el Comisario los proyectos realizados en la región.

¿Qué proyectos financiados con los fondos de cohesión constituyen para la Comisión proyectos que no han servido para el impulso económico de Cantabria, sino que suponen un despilfarro de los fondos europeos?

¿Qué alternativas considera que habrían podido ser financiadas en Cantabria para generar un incremento de la actividad económica y un descenso del desempleo?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(16 de octubre de 2013)

La Comisión se permite remitir a Su Señoría a sus respuestas a las preguntas escritas siguientes: E-5454/13, E-5885/13, E-6360/13, E-6691/2013, E-7043/2013, E-7662/2013, E-8153/2013 y E-8904/13.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009839/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: Squandering of public funds in Cantabria

On 13 May 2013 the European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, László Ándor, took part in a debate organised by the Fuhem Foundation during which he said that Spain had wasted European cohesion funding on ill thought-out policies.

Mr Ándor said that this was one reason for the competitiveness problems besetting the Spanish economy. Spain has wasted cohesion funding on useless or redundant infrastructure projects which have done nothing to improve the country's competitiveness. The projects have benefited only major construction companies, which have ultimately been the main recipients of European funding.

For years the companies in question have prospered as a result, and now information has emerged suggesting that they made payments to the leaders of the political party responsible for the projects. This could explain the thinking behind the Spanish authorities' choice of projects to be funded with EU money, and it is essential, therefore, to gather as much information as possible about the way in which the Commission evaluated these projects.

In light of the Commissioner's criticisms of the way this funding has been used, we feel it is important to know which projects have been shown by the Commission's assessments to have been 'ill thought-out' and what alternative projects the Commission feels could have been carried out in their place. Given that Cantabria is one of the regions with the highest rates of unemployment in Europe, it is vital to understand how the Commissioner views the projects implemented in the region.

In the Commission's eyes, which of the projects financed from cohesion funds did nothing to boost the Cantabrian economy and merely wasted European money?

What alternative projects does the Commission think could have been funded in Cantabria in order to boost economic activity and bring down unemployment?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(16 October 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to written questions E-5454/13, E-5885/13, E-6360/13, E-6691/2013, E-7043/2013, E-7662/2013, E-8153/2013 and E-8904/13.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-009840/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE)
(3 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Εκκρεμή συνταξιοδοτικά δικαιώματα

Σύμφωνα με πρόσφατα δημοσιεύματα του ελληνικού τύπου, π.χ. ([1]), ο αριθμός των εκκρεμών αιτήσεων για συντάξεις και εφάπαξ προσεγγίζει τις 360 000. Αναλυτικά, στο δημοσίευμα αναφέρεται ότι στο ΙΚΑ εκκρεμούν τουλάχιστον 155 000 αιτήματα για κύρια και επικουρική σύνταξη. Στα υπόλοιπα Ταμεία εκκρεμούν περίπου 150 000 αιτήσεις για κύριες και επικουρικές συντάξεις, ενώ πάνω από 50 000 άτομα περιμένουν το εφάπαξ.

Συγκεκριμένα, στο ΙΚΑ εκκρεμούν 85 000 αιτήσεις για κύρια σύνταξη και 70 000 αιτήσεις για επικουρική σύνταξη, στον ΟΓΑ εκκρεμούν οι αιτήσεις για σύνταξη 60 000 αγροτών, στο Δημόσιο εκκρεμούν 30 000 αιτήσεις, στον ΟΑΕΕ 15 000 αιτήσεις, ενώ στο Ενιαίο Ταμείο Ανεξάρτητα Απασχολούμενων (ΕΤΑΑ) πάνω από 7 000 αιτήσεις.

Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη τα παραπάνω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή, με την ιδιότητά της ως μέρους της τρόικα:

Είναι ενήμερη για τον αριθμό των εκκρεμών συνταξιοδοτικών δικαιωμάτων;

Ποιά είναι η εκτίμηση του δημοσιονομικού βάρους άμεσα όπως και μακροπρόθεσμα, όταν οι εκκρεμείς αιτήσεις εγκριθούν;

Έχει γίνει πρόβλεψη στα ασφαλιστικά ταμεία, ώστε τα εκκρεμή συνταξιοδοτικά δικαιώματα να περιλαμβάνονται στο έλλειμμα των ετών στα οποία αντιστοιχούν;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(25 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή είναι ενήμερη για τον μεγάλο αριθμό εκκρεμών αιτήσεων για συντάξεις και εφάπαξ. Το αίτημα σχετικά με τον αριθμό των αιτήσεων θα πρέπει να διαβιβαστεί στο ελληνικό Υπουργείο Εργασίας, το οποίο έχει την εποπτεία των διαφόρων ταμείων κοινωνικής ασφάλισης. Η τεχνική βοήθεια που παρέχεται στην Ελλάδα στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος οικονομικής προσαρμογής αποσκοπεί στον εκσυγχρονισμό του διοικητικού συστήματος και στον τομέα των συντάξεων. Η αποτελεσματική υλοποίηση αυτού του προγράμματος αναμένεται να μειώσει σημαντικά τον χρόνο διεκπεραίωσης των αιτήσεων.

Ο αριθμός των εκκρεμών αιτήσεων ενδέχεται να υπερβαίνει τον αριθμό των συνταξιούχων, καθώς το ίδιο πρόσωπο μπορεί να υποβάλει αίτηση για κύρια σύνταξη, σύνταξη ΙΚΑ και επικουρική σύνταξη. Ένας επιπλέον λόγος για τον εκ πρώτης όψεως υψηλό αριθμό των εκκρεμών αιτήσεων είναι το γεγονός ότι το όριο συνταξιοδότησης αυξήθηκε κατά 2 έτη από την 1η Ιανουαρίου 2013. Σε αυτό οφείλονται οι εκκρεμείς αιτήσεις όσων υπέβαλαν αίτηση χωρίς, με βάση τα νέα δεδομένα, να βρίσκονται ακόμη σε ηλικία συνταξιοδότησης.

Οι ελληνικές αρχές είναι αρμόδιες να παρέχουν έγκυρες φορολογικές και στατιστικές πληροφορίες λαμβάνοντας υπόψη όλα τα διαθέσιμα στοιχεία. Η Επιτροπή εξακολουθεί να παρακολουθεί την εφαρμογή του προγράμματος προσαρμογής, συμπεριλαμβανομένων όλων των παραγόντων που επηρεάζουν τις δημόσιες δαπάνες για τις συντάξεις.

([1]) http://news247.gr/eidiseis/oikonomia/stoivagmenes_360_000_aithseis_gia_suntaksh_kai_efapaks.2359545.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009840/13
to the Commission
Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: Outstanding pension rights

According to recent Greek press reports ([1]), there are almost 360 000 applications for pensions and lump sum payments currently pending. More specifically, it is reported that at least 155 000 applications for basic and supplementary pensions are pending with IKA (the Greek Social Security Institute). The other funds have approximately 150 000 applications for basic and supplementary pensions pending, while more than 50 000 people are awaiting lump sum payments.

In particular, IKA has 85 000 applications for basic pensions and 70 000 applications for supplementary pensions pending, 60 000 farmers have pension applications pending with the OGA (Agricultural Insurance Organisation), the state pension fund has 30 000 applications pending, while the OAEE (Self-Employed Workers' Insurance Organisation) and the Unified Self-employed workers Fund (ETAA) have 15 000 applications and over 7 000 applications respectively, pending.

Bearing in mind the above, will the Commission state, in its capacity as member of the Troika:

Is it aware of the number of outstanding pension applications?

How much does it estimate the financial burden will be, both immediately and in the long term, when the pending applications are approved?

Has any provision been made by the pension funds to include the outstanding pension rights in the deficit for the years to which they relate?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(25 October 2013)

The Commission is aware of a large number of pending applications for pensions and lump-sum payments. The request on the number of applications should be addressed to the Greek Ministry of Labour which has the supervision of the many Social Security Funds. The technical assistance provided to Greece under the Economic Adjustment Programme aims at modernising the administrative system also in the field of pensions. When effectively applied it should shorten the processing times significantly.

The number of pending applications is likely to be higher than the number of relevant retirees as applications for basic pensions, IKA pensions and supplementary pensions can be submitted by the same applicant. One additional reason for the seemingly high number of pending applications is the fact that retirement ages were increased by 2 years as of 1 January 2013. This naturally results in pending applications for those who applied without having yet reached their new retirement age.

The Greek authorities are in charge of providing accurate fiscal and statistical information taking into account all available data. The Commission continues to monitor the implementation of the adjustment programme, including all factors affecting public pension expenditure.

([1]) http://news247.gr/eidiseis/oikonomia/stoivagmenes_360_000_aithseis_gia_suntaksh_kai_efapaks.2359545.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009841/13
to the Commission
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: Fourth directive on company accounts

Article 47 of the Fourth Council Directive 78/660/EEC on the annual accounts of certain types of companies provides that the annual accounts, duly approved, and the annual report, together with the opinion submitted by the person responsible for auditing the accounts, shall be published as laid down by the laws of each Member State in accordance with Article 3 of Directive 68/151/EEC. The directive goes on to make it possible for all or part of the report to be made available on request (subject to an administration fee).

1. Is the Commission satisfied that all Member States fully observe their obligations with regard to the filing and disclosure of accounts?

2. Is the Commission satisfied that Member States have adequate penalties in place to ensure that companies do file their accounts?

3a. Specifically regarding the filing of accounts in France, is the Commission aware that companies are sometimes fined for failing to file accounts and that no further action appears to be taken?

3b. Is the Commission therefore satisfied that France has robust mechanisms in place to ensure that all company accounts are filed?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(22 October 2013)

The Fourth Council Directive 78/660/EEC has been repealed and replaced in July 2013 by the new Accounting Directive 2013/34/EU. The Commission will closely monitor the transposition of this directive, which is due by July 2015. The Commission has offered assistance to the Member States during this process.

The Commission has been satisfied so far that France has transposed into its national law requirements for the relevant companies to publish annual accounts, as provided for in the Fourth Directive, as well as sanction mechanisms for the cases of non-publication. The Commission is not aware that there would be any systemic issues regarding publication in France.

The Commission informs the Honourable Member that the correct transposition of provisions relating to publication and related sanctions will be reviewed again for all the Member States as part of the transposition process for the new Directive. This will include whether these sanctions are effective, proportionate and dissuasive as foreseen by the directive.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009842/13
to the Commission
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: Airport development fees

Most airports across the European Union charge airlines landing and handling fees for the services they offer and these costs are passed onto consumers through ticket prices. However, some airports charge travellers directly instead of the airlines, and these fees are described as 'airline passenger fees' or 'airport development fees'. Notwithstanding the fact that airports which operate under this business model make clear to airlines that travellers should be informed of such fees before travelling, these charges can still come as a surprise to some passengers.

Has the Commission considered mandating that tickets include all non-optional fees, charges and taxes so that there are no unexpected additional charges? If not, has the Commission considered mandating some kind of 'tick box' authorisation drawing travellers' attention to such non-optional fees when booking their airline ticket?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(16 October 2013)

Air Services Regulation ([1]) in its Article 2.18 defines that air fares mean the prices to be paid for the carriage of passengers on air services and any conditions under which those prices apply. Articles 22-23 of the same Regulation declare the pricing freedom of air carriers and impose on air carriers the obligation to include the applicable conditions and all applicable taxes, charges, surcharges and fees which are unavoidable and foreseeable at the time of publication.

The Commission considers that these obligations are met by the air carrier and the airport if the following condition is fulfilled:

The airport collects the 'development fee' or equivalent, not the airline. Thus, air carriers cannot include it in their final price. In order however to meet the requirements of the aforementioned provisions on displaying price elements, airlines shall draw the attention of the passengers — at the beginning of the booking process — that there are fees collected at the airport before departure. In paralel, the airport too shall inform passengers about the existence of such fees in a clear and transparent manner.

The Commission considers that when the Air Services Regulation is correctly applied by all parties involved, it is ensured that passengers receive transparent information as regards the final cost of their travel by air. Passengers, that find that the regulation is not correctly applied, are advised to contact the relevant national enforcement authorities that have the power to investigate the case.

([1]) OJ L 293, 31.10.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009843/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Hmong people in Laos

Thao Moua and Pa Fue Khang, men of the ethnic Hmong people in Laos, were arrested in June 2003 after emerging from the jungle of Xieng Khouang Province, where they had been working as guides for journalists Thierry Falise and Vincent Reynaud — two EU citizens who had been researching the ill-treatment of Hmong people.

On 30 June 2003 they were all brought to trial, which lasted less than three hours. The charges against them included collaboration in the commission of an offence, possession of firearms and explosives, possession of drugs and destruction of evidence. The Laotians had no legal representation and the trial's outcome appeared from reports to be predetermined. Thao Moua and Pa Fue Khang were sentenced to 12 and 15 years respectively. The EU nationals were also sentenced, but their embassies negotiated their release shortly afterwards and the two were deported. Thao Moua and Pa Fue Khang were transferred to Samkhe prison in Vientiane, the Laotian capital.

Their trial appears to be a result of their involvement in researching a news story about the plight of the Hmong hiding in the jungle.

Is the High Representative aware of the case involving Thao Moua and Pa Fue Khang?

What representations, if any, have been made specifically on behalf of these two men?

What steps are being taken to highlight the rights of the Hmong minority vis-à-vis the Laotian Government?

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

The cases of Mr Thao Moua and Mr Pa Fue Khang are very well known by the EU and our concerns have been communicated to the Lao authorities, most recently in the context of the human rights dialogue in February 2013. Our information is that they can expect to be released no later than June 2014 and June 2017, respectively.

The situation of the Hmong and other minorities is followed closely, including by field visits. These matters are discussed regularly, and notably at the annual human rights dialogue between the Lao PDR and the EU.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009844/13
to the Commission
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: Social charges and EU regulations

Second-home owners in France are liable for capital gains tax on this additional property (as is the case in other Member States). In addition to this tax there are a number of further social charges, including the contribution sociale généralisée (CSG) and the contribution au remboursement de la dette sociale (CRDS), which are payable on the sale of a second home.

Regulation (EEC) No 1408/71 (as amended and updated) creates the single state principle for social security, meaning citizens should not be penalised for exercising their treaty rights of free movement and thus should not have to pay a double social security contribution in multiple Member States.

For citizens primarily resident outside of France, they pay social security in their country of primary residence. Nonetheless, citizens in these circumstances still appear to be liable for the CSG and CRDS, and for those resident in the UK, citizens appear to be paying social security in a country from which they will not be able to draw any benefit.

Is the Commission aware of this situation? If so, has it made any representations to the French authorities?

Does the Commission class the CSG and CRDS as social contributions or national taxes?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(21 October 2013)

The Commission's services have received complaints concerning the application of Article 11(1) of Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 (the Social Security Coordination Regulation) in cases where France levies the Contribution Sociale Généralisée (CSG) and the Contribution au Remboursement de la Dette Sociale (CRDS) on income from real estate located in France, the owners of which do not reside in that Member State and do not qualify under the French social security system.

The Commission's services contacted the French authorities for further information on this practice. After considering their reply in detail, they are of the opinion that the social allowances concerned are specifically and directly allocated to financing the social security system in France and therefore have a sufficient link with the relevant social security legislation as referred to in Article 3(1) of Regulation (EC) No 883/2004.

The Commission's services have formally registered an infringement against France. However, in the meantime the French Conseil d'Etat has referred a request to the Court of Justice for a preliminary ruling on the application of the Social Security Coordination Regulation as regards the levying of the CSG and CRDS, the outcome of which will determine further action by the Commission.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009845/13
to the Commission
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: Commission funding for Guinea and the problem of female genital mutilation (FGM)

The Commission recently announced that it would provide EUR 6 million in funding to Guinea to support governance and democracy.

1. Given that Guinea has an astonishing rate of female genital mutilation (FGM) with 98.6% of women being affected, how much of this funding is earmarked with a view to eradicating this barbaric crime against girls as young as four years of age?

2. What action is the Commission taking in Guinea to combat FGM in the country?

3. Given that the Commission is providing funding to the Ministry of Health and Public Hygiene, what is it doing to tackle the medicalisation of FGM in Guinea and to ensure that EU taxpayers' money is not used to fund clinics or healthcare professionals who are involved in genital mutilation?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(4 November 2013)

1. The support project for civil society in Guinea places priority on capacity building and funding the activities of organisations defending the rights of the most vulnerable, including victims of female genital mutilation (FGM).

Until now the EU has not had a specific project on abolishing FGM in Guinea.

2. The subject has been regularly addressed on a political level in the dialogue on Human Rights between the EU and the Guinean authorities, and their Ministry of Social Affairs is currently drawing up a plan to combat FGM. FGM — which is prohibited by law — will also be dealt with by the EU through the Justice Reform Support Project using EUR 20 million from the 10th EDF ([1]). This project includes a civil society support component to promote rights among the citizens and to provide legal and judicial assistance. Furthermore, promoting the rights of women, children and the family will be included in the training activities for the judiciary and the modernisation of the regulatory framework.

A reduction in the rate of FGM will be included in the performance indicators of the health support project aimed at improving health services in the N'Zérékoré region. The reproductive health component will be implemented by Unicef which has valuable experience in combating FGM and has achieved significant results ([2]).

3. The Commission will ensure that the legal prohibition of FGM is respected in the Ministry's health facilities and awareness-raising campaigns will be carried out among beneficiaries. The subject will be included in the sectoral dialogue between donors and the Ministry.

([1]) The implementation of the Justice Reform Support Project depends on the Council lifting the appropriate measures based on Article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement. This is conditional on the organisation of free and transparent legislative elections, currently planned for 28 September 2013.

([2]) http://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/fgm_insight_eng.pdf

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-009846/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Stavrakakis (S&D)
(3 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Επίπεδο πληρωμών από τις 31 Ιουλίου 2013

Μετά από την έγκριση του σχεδίου διορθωτικού προϋπολογισμού αριθ. 6/2012, η Επιτροπή, κατόπιν αιτήματος της αρμόδιας για τον προϋπολογισμό αρχής, υπέβαλε το σχέδιο διορθωτικού προϋπολογισμού αριθ. 2/2013, ύψους 11,2 δισ. ευρώ, που θα επιτρέπει την κάλυψη όλων των νόμιμων υποχρεώσεων πληρωμών, οι οποίες εκκρεμούσαν στα τέλη του 2012, καθώς και εκείνων που προκύπτουν πριν από το τέλος του 2013, εντός του προϋπολογισμού του τρέχοντος έτους.

Κατά τη συνεδρίαση του Συμβουλίου Ecofin της 14ης Μαΐου 2013, επιτεύχθηκε πολιτική συμφωνία για την παροχή της επιπρόσθετης χρηματοδότησης για τον προϋπολογισμό του 2013 σε δύο δόσεις, με την πρώτη να ανέρχεται σε 7,3 δισ. ευρώ, ενώ οι υπουργοί δεσμεύτηκαν να επανέλθουν στο θέμα αργότερα εντός του έτους. Ωστόσο, δεν υπήρξε επίσημη δέσμευση για το υπολειπόμενο ποσό των 3,9 δισεκατομμυρίων του σχεδίου διορθωτικού προϋπολογισμού 2/2013.

Μετά από την πολιτική συμφωνία της 27ης Ιουνίου 2013 που επιτεύχθηκε από τα θεσμικά όργανα σχετικά με το ΠΔΠ 2014-2020, το Συμβούλιο Ecofin ενέκρινε στις 9 Ιουλίου 2013 τη συμπληρωματική χρηματοδότηση ύψους 7,3 δισεκατομμυρίων για τον προϋπολογισμό του 2013 και δεσμεύτηκε να λάβει κάθε απαραίτητο πρόσθετο μέτρο για να διασφαλιστεί η πλήρης τήρηση των υποχρεώσεων της Ένωσης για το 2013. Στο πλαίσιο αυτό, βάσει πρότασης που πρόκειται να υποβάλει η Επιτροπή στις αρχές του φθινοπώρου, με βάση τις πιο πρόσφατες επικαιροποιημένες εκτιμήσεις όσον αφορά τις πιστώσεις πληρωμών, το Συμβούλιο δεσμεύεται να αποφασίσει χωρίς καθυστέρηση σχετικά με πρόσθετο σχέδιο διορθωτικού προϋπολογισμού, προκειμένου να αποφευχθούν οποιεσδήποτε ελλείψεις στις αιτιολογημένες πιστώσεις πληρωμών.

Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη όλα όσα εκτέθηκαν ανωτέρω και δεδομένου ότι το επίπεδο πληρωμών για τον προϋπολογισμό του 2013 είναι κατά 5 δισεκατομμύρια ευρώ χαμηλότερο από τις εκτιμήσεις της Επιτροπής για τις ανάγκες πληρωμών στο σχέδιο προϋπολογισμού της για το 2013, θα μπορούσε η Επιτροπή να παράσχει λεπτομερείς πληροφορίες σχετικά με το επίπεδο των πληρωμών που έλαβε μέχρι τις 31 Ιουλίου 2013; Ειδικότερα, θα μπορούσε η Επιτροπή να γνωστοποιήσει τις πληρωμές που έχουν καταβληθεί τον Ιανουάριο, τον Φεβρουάριο, τον Μάρτιο, τον Απρίλιο, τον Μάιο, τον Ιούνιο και τον Ιούλιο του 2013, ταξινομημένες ανά κράτος μέλος και ανά τομέα/πρόγραμμα πολιτικής;

Θα μπορούσε επίσης η Επιτροπή να παράσχει μία σύγκριση μεταξύ των εκτιμήσεων πληρωμών των κρατών μελών και των πραγματικών πληρωμών που έχουν καταβληθεί μέχρι τώρα στο πλαίσιο του προϋπολογισμού του 2013, ταξινομημένων ανά κράτος μέλος και ανά τομέα/πρόγραμμα πολιτικής;

Απάντηση του κ. Lewandowski εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(7 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Η αναλυτική κατανομή των έγκυρων αιτήσεων πληρωμών ([1]) που υποβλήθηκαν τον Ιούλιο για τα χρηματοδοτούμενα από το ΕΚΤ, το ΕΤΠΑ και το ΤΣ επιχειρησιακά προγράμματα της περιόδου 2007-2013 παρατίθεται στο παράρτημα I της παρούσας απάντησης, ενώ τα στοιχεία σχετικά με το ΕΤΑ και το ΕΓΤΑΑ παρατίθενται στο παράρτημα II. Τα αριθμητικά στοιχεία του πίνακα προκύπτουν από τη σύγκριση των αιτήσεων πληρωμών που υποβλήθηκαν έως το τέλος Ιουλίου 2013 με εκείνες που υποβλήθηκαν έως το τέλος Ιουνίου 2013. Η Επιτροπή μπορεί να αποφασίσει την αλλαγή χαρακτηρισμού μιας αίτησης πληρωμής από «Αποδεκτή» σε «Πλήρως απορριφθείσα» ή «Επιστραφείσα προς διόρθωση» και, συνεπώς, τα αριθμητικά στοιχεία των παραρτημάτων της παρούσας απάντησης ενδέχεται να αποτελέσουν αντικείμενο περαιτέρω προσαρμογών. Τα αρνητικά υπόλοιπα του ΕΚΤ για την Ουγγαρία, για παράδειγμα, είναι αποτέλεσμα τέτοιας αλλαγής χαρακτηρισμού.

Ανάλογα στοιχεία για τους μήνες Ιανουάριο, Φεβρουάριο, Μάρτιο, Απρίλιο, Μάιο και Ιούνιο δόθηκαν από την Επιτροπή στις ερωτήσεις E-001090/2013, E-003237/2013, E-003928/2013, E-004903/2013, E-006405/2013 και E-008097/2013 ([2]), αντίστοιχα.

Οι προβλέψεις πληρωμών των κρατών μελών δεν μπορούν να συγκριθούν άμεσα με τις πραγματικές πληρωμές που πραγματοποιήθηκαν μέχρι τώρα κατά το τρέχον έτος, λόγω του ότι οι εν λόγω πληρωμές περιλαμβάνουν το σημαντικό ποσό που αφορά τις αιτήσεις πληρωμών που ελήφθησαν πριν από το τέλος του προηγούμενου έτους και έπρεπε να καταλογιστούν στις διαθέσιμες πιστώσεις στον προϋπολογισμό του 2013.

([1]) Με εξαίρεση τα ποσά που έχουν απορριφθεί πλήρως.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009846/13
to the Commission
Georgios Stavrakakis (S&D)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: Level of payments as of 31 July 2013

After the approval of Draft Amending Budget No 6/2012, the Commission, at the request of the Budgetary Authority, came forward with Draft Amending Budget No 2/2013, amounting to EUR 11.2 billion, which will allow all legal payment obligations left pending at the end of 2012, as well as those arising before the end of 2013, to be covered in this year's budget.

At the Ecofin meeting of 14 May 2013, a political agreement was reached to provide the extra funding for the 2013 budget in two tranches, with the first one amounting to EUR 7.3 billion while the ministers committed to come back on the issue later in the year. However, there has been no formal commitment on the remaining EUR 3.9 billion of Draft Amending Budget 2/2013.

After the political agreement of 27 June 2013 reached by the institutions on the 2014-2020 MFF, the Ecofin Council, on 9 July 2013, approved the EUR 7.3 billion top-up for the 2013 Budget and committed to take all necessary additional steps to ensure that the Union's obligations for 2013 are fully honoured. In this respect, on the basis of a proposal to be made by the Commission in early autumn, based on the latest updated estimates regarding payment appropriations, the Council commits to decide, without delay, on a further draft amending budget to avoid any shortfall in justified payment appropriations.

Taking all the above into consideration and given the fact that the level of payments for the 2013 budget is EUR 5 billion lower than the Commission's estimates for payment needs in its 2013 draft budget, could the Commission provide detailed information on the level of payments received by 31 July 2013? Specifically, could the Commission inform on the payments received in the months of January, February, March, April, May, June and July 2013, broken down by Member State and policy area/programme?

Could the Commission also provide a comparison between the Member States' payment forecasts and the actual payments that have taken place thus far in the year, in the framework of the 2013 budget, broken down by Member State and by policy area/programme?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(7 October 2013)

A detailed breakdown of the valid payment claims ([1]) received in July for the 2007-2013 ESF, ERDF and CF-funded operational programmes is provided in Annex I to this reply while for EFF and EAFRD the data is included in Annex II. The figures in the table result from comparing valid payment claims submitted until the end of July 2013 with those submitted until the end of June 2013. The Commission may decide to change the status of a payment claim from 'Accepted' to 'Fully rejected' or 'Returned for corrections' and therefore the figures presented in the annexes to this reply could still undergo further adjustments. A negative ESF balance for Hungary, for instance, is the result of such changes in status.

Similar data for the months of January, February, March, April, May and June were provided by the Commission to Questions E-001090/2013, E-003237/2013, E-003928/2013, E-004903/2013, E-006405/2013 and E-008097/2013 ([2]), respectively.

Member States' payment forecasts cannot directly be compared to the actual payments that have taken place thus far in the year because the latter includes the significant amount of payment claims received before the end of last year and had to be charged on the appropriations available in the 2013 budget.

([1]) Excluding fully rejected amounts.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009847/13
alla Commissione
Crescenzio Rivellini (PPE)
(3 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Dichiarazioni del pentito Schiavone — rifiuti in Campania

— Considerata la gravità della questione riguardante lo smaltimento dei rifiuti tossici ed illegali in Campania;

— posto che le dichiarazioni del pentito della camorra Carmine Schiavone hanno evidenziato gravi connivenze e responsabilità imputabili anche ad aziende del Nord Europa in merito al traffico di rifiuti tossici;

— considerato che, alla luce di quanto affermato, risulta imprescindibile trattare la questione a livello europeo perché la Campania è territorio europeo e non è più accettabile che venga trattata come se fosse al di fuori dell'UE, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. intende la Commissione procedere al finanziamento della bonifica di un territorio europeo, come quello campano, viste anche le responsabilità delle aziende del Nord Europa e i mancati controlli dei loro governi? In caso affermativo, quali finanziamenti sono disponibili?

2. Non crede che la questione suddetta abbia un carattere d'urgenza, soprattutto per le conseguenze sulla salute dei cittadini campani ed europei?

3. Come intende agire la Commissione, eventualmente con un'inchiesta ad hoc, per definire le responsabilità italiane ed anche europee per quanto sopra evidenziato?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(30 ottobre 2013)

Il programma operativo regionale (POR) 2007-2013 per la Campania prevede alcuni progetti per la bonifica di siti contaminati nella regione. Il cofinanziamento della Commissione dipende dalla misura in cui le autorità italiane dichiarano spese per progetti previsti dal POR.

Per quanto riguarda la questione più generale del traffico illecito di rifiuti in Europa, nel luglio 2013 la Commissione ha adottato una proposta per rafforzare i controlli sulle spedizioni di rifiuti, attraverso una modifica del regolamento (CE) n. 1013/2006 ([1]). La Commissione controlla l'attuazione di detto regolamento e ogni tre anni pubblica una relazione.

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 1013/2006 relativo alle spedizioni di rifiuti, GU L 190 del 12.7.2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009847/13
to the Commission
Crescenzio Rivellini (PPE)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: Statements by the mafia informer Schiavone — waste in Campania

The disposal of toxic and illegal waste in Campania has become a very serious issue.

Statements made by the Camorra informer Carmine Schiavone have revealed that even companies in northern Europe are responsible for, and have been accomplices in, the trafficking of toxic waste.

Given that it is vital that this issue be dealt with at EU level, because Campania is part of the EU and it is no longer acceptable for it to be treated as if it were outside the EU, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Will the Commission finance the clean-up of Campania — an EU territory — given also the responsibilities of companies from northern Europe and the lack of monitoring on the part of their governments? If so, what funding is available?

2. Does it not believe that this issue is a matter of urgency, especially with regard to its impact on the health of the people of Campania and of the EU?

3. What action will the Commission take, possibly by conducting an ad hoc investigation, to determine the Italian — and European — responsibilities for these issues?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(30 October 2013)

The 2007-13 Regional Operational Programme for Campania (ROP) includes some types of projects aimed at cleaning up contaminated sites in the region. Co-financing by the Commission depends on whether the Italian authorities declare expenditures for projects covered by the ROP.

As for the more general issue of the illegal traffic of waste in Europe, in July 2013, the Commission adopted a proposal to strengthen inspections on waste shipments through an amendment to Regulation 1013/2006 ([1]). The Commission monitors the implementation of this regulation and publishes a report every three years.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1013/2006 on shipments of waste (OJ L 190, 12.7.2006).

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-009849/13
adresată Comisiei
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(3 septembrie 2013)

Subiect: Turismul viticol

În ultimii ani, turiștii preferă, din ce în ce mai mult, călătoriile educative în locul celor pasive. Un domeniu care începe să capteze tot mai mult este turismul viticol.

O vizită organizată într-o manieră detaliată într-o podgorie oferă vizitatorilor posibilitatea învățării diferitelor aspecte tehnice din procesul de fabricare a vinului, precum și a cultivării viței de vie.

Pe de altă parte, turiștii au posibilitatea să se familiarizeze cu o mare diversitate de peisaje, fără a renunța la condiții de cazare confortabile și, nu în ultimul rând, de a cunoaște mâncărurile și obiceiurile tradiționale din zonele vizitate.

În plus, consumatorii au avantajul că pot degusta vinul pentru a putea decide ce produs cumpără, mai ales în cazul în care este vorba de loturi speciale care nu se găsesc pe piață.

Cum poate sprijini Comisia eforturile autorităților locale și parteneriatele public-privat pentru derularea de proiecte, inclusiv transfrontaliere și inter-regionale, care să ducă la dezvoltarea acestui domeniu, cu efecte benefice asupra creșterii locurilor de muncă în mediul rural?

Răspuns dat de dl Tajani în numele Comisiei
(29 octombrie 2013)

Comisia sprijină autoritățile locale și parteneriatele public-privat în efortul lor de a diversifica oferta de produse turistice. Turismul cu o componentă educațională pe tema vinului și a podgoriilor a fost sprijinit prin intermediul mai multor fonduri europene (Fondul european agricol pentru dezvoltare rurală — FEADR, fonduri structurale). De exemplu, Fondul european de dezvoltare regională pentru perioada 2007-2013 a finanțat proiectul „Grand équipement de loisir culturel autour du vin", din regiunea Aquitaine, cu peste 15 milioane de euro. Puteți consulta mai multe astfel de exemple accesând baza de date a proiectelor de dezvoltare regională, gestionată de Comisia Europeană (http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/projects/stories/index_ro.cfm) precum și baza de date a Rețelei europene de dezvoltare rurală (http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/policy-in-action/rdp_view/en/view_projects_en.cfm)

Începând din 2011, Comisia a lansat cereri anuale de propuneri pentru a sprijini dezvoltarea a diferite tipuri de „itinerarii europene" (turism cultural și industrial, drumeții, ciclism etc.). Drumul vinului a fost una dintre temele eligibile. Proiectul „Secret Wine Tour", de exemplu, vizează crearea unui circuit care include șapte țări și în care degustările de vin și istoricul viticulturii sunt integrate în cadrul unei oferte turistice tradiționale.

În plus, Comisia cooperează cu Consiliul Europei pentru a dezvolta o serie de itinerarii culturale europene. Unul dintre acestea, „Iter Vitis", este conceput ca o nouă experiență turistică legată de producția de vin.

Sprijinirea investițiilor în turism rămâne un potențial domeniu de activitate pentru viitoarele programe din cadrul fondurilor structurale și de investiții, cu condiția ca acestea să fie legate de prioritățile tematice și de obiectivele fondurilor respective ([1]). Dezvoltarea acestui tip de programe va beneficia atât de sprijinul FEADR, cât și de cel al viitoarei politici de coeziune ([2]) și al modalităților inovative de finanțare ([3]).

([1]) Este deosebit de important ca aceste investiții să fie încorporate în strategii localizate și integrate de dezvoltare și să aibă o justificare economică temeinică din punctul de vedere al sustenabilității pe termen lung și al impactului asupra creșterii economice și a ocupării forței de muncă.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/esf/BlobServlet?docId=232&langId=en
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/enveco/biodiversity/pdf/BD_Finance_summary-300312.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009849/13
to the Commission
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: Wine tourism

Over recent years tourists have displayed a growing preference for educational travel as opposed to more passive forms of tourism. In this connection, wine tourism is becoming an increasingly popular choice, with visits around vineyards providing detailed information about the various technical aspects of wine making and vine cultivation.

Participants also have the opportunity to travel through a wide variety of landscapes without sacrificing any creature comforts and, not least, become acquainted with local culinary specialities and traditions.

In addition, potential purchasers are able to sample wines, including special batches not available on the market, before making a selection.

What measures can the Commission take to support efforts by local authorities and public-private partnerships to promote such initiatives, including cross-border and interregional projects, thereby helping the sector develop its potential and improving employment prospects in rural areas?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(29 October 2013)

The Commission supports local authorities and public-private partnerships in diversifying tourism products. Educational travel around wine and vineyards has been supported through several European Funds (European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development EAFRD, Structural funds). For instance, the European Regional Development Fund 2007-2013 contributed over EUR 15 million to the 'Grand équipement de loisir culturel autour du vin' project of the region of Aquitaine. More examples are provided by the Regional development projects database of the Commission (http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/projects/stories/index_en.cfm) as well as by the European Network for Rural Development's database (http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/policy-in-action/rdp_view/en/view_projects_en.cfm).

Since 2011, the Commission has launched annual Calls for Proposals to support the development of different types of European Routes: cultural and industrial tourism, hiking and cycling. Wine tourism was amongst the eligible themes. The 'Secret Wine Tour', for instance, is about developing a route through seven countries where wine tasting and viticulture history are integrated within a more traditional tourism offer.

Moreover, the Commission cooperates with the Council of Europe to develop certified European Cultural Routes. One of them, 'Iter Vitis', is conceived as a new tourism experience linked to the production of wine.

Support for tourism investments continues to be a potential activity area of the future programmes under the European Structural and Investment Funds, if they are connected to the thematic priorities and objectives of the funds ([1]). The future cohesion policy ([2]) as well as innovative financing ([3]) will contribute in this sense alongside the EAFRD.

([1]) It is of particular importance that these investments are embedded in integrated, place-based development strategies and that they have a sound economic rationale in terms of their growth and jobs impact and long-term sustainability.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/esf/BlobServlet?docId=232&langId=en
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/enveco/biodiversity/pdf/BD_Finance_summary-300312.pdf

(Slovenska različica)

Vprašanje za pisni odgovor E-009850/13
za Komisijo
Mojca Kleva Kekuš (S&D)
(3. september 2013)

Zadeva: Konvencija OZN o pravicah starejših

Name so se obrnili predstavniki Zveze društev upokojencev Slovenije (ZDUS) – nevladna, neprofitna in samopomočna organizacija, ki v Sloveniji skrbi za pravice upokojencev. Opozorili so me, da se zavzemajo za sprejetje konvencije OZN o pravicah starejših, ki so jo sprožile mednarodne nevladne organizacije leta 2010, saj so priporočila s konference Združenih narodov v Madridu iz leta 2002, ki urejajo pravice starejših, zastarela.

Po enajstih letih se je položaj starejših zaradi demografskih sprememb bistveno spremenil in v skladu s tem bi se mogli tudi dokumenti, ki urejajo to področje, ustrezno prilagoditi in spremeniti, zato se zavzemajo za podporo sprejetju omenjene konvencije.

Predstavniki ZDUS se tako pridružujejo pozivu drugih organizacij starejših v Evropi in na drugih celinah, da Organizacija združenih narodov sprejme konvencijo o pravicah starejših, kot je že sprejela konvencijo o pravicah žensk, invalidov, migrantov in podobne. Konvencija Organizacije združenih narodov za pravice starejših bi vladam posameznih držav omogočila pravni okvir in podporo pri sprejemanju zakonov za zaščito in promocijo pravic starejših oseb.

Glede na to, da večina držav članic EU ni naklonjena podpisu te konvencije, me zanima, ali se podobna strategija o kakovostnem aktivnem staranju pripravlja na ravni EU?

Kako bo Komisija v prihodnje poskrbela za najšibkejši del prebivalstva, ki največ uporablja javne socialne in zdravstvene storitve, če se pri varčevalnih ukrepih vedno začne v javnem sektorju?

Odgovor komisarja Andorja v imenu Komisije
(28. oktober 2013)

Aktivno staranje je del strategije Evropa 2020, za uspeh katere je treba med drugim omogočiti starejšim, da bodo v celoti prispevali k družbi in trgu dela. Komisija spodbuja boljše pogoje za starejše na različnih programskih področjih, kot so pokojnine, zdravstveno varstvo in dolgotrajna oskrba, zaposlovanje, IKT, boj proti diskriminaciji, izobraževanje odraslih in promet. Dober primer takšne pomoči je evropsko partnerstvo za inovacije za dejavno in zdravo staranje, ki spodbuja razvoj in razširjanje inovativnih rešitev za dejavno in zdravo staranje po vsej EU.

Čeprav je zagotavljanje socialnih in zdravstvenih storitev odgovornost držav članic, EU zagotavlja podporo prek Evropskega socialnega sklada in programskih usmeritev. Komisija s pomočjo svežnja o socialnih naložbah, sprejetega februarja 2013, in izkušenj, pridobljenih v evropskem letu aktivnega staranja in medgeneracijske solidarnosti 2012, državam članicam zagotavlja smernice za prilagoditev njihovih socialnih modelov na izzive starajoče se družbe v času omejenih javnih proračunov za ohranjanje dostopnih, ustreznih in trajnostnih socialnih, zdravstvenih in skrbstvenih storitev ([1]).

Evropska komisija se bori proti diskriminaciji starejših z vsemi sredstvi, ki so ji na razpolago. Cilj pravnega okvira EU ([2]) in Direktive 2000/78/ES je varovanje pravic starejših.

Ukrepi EU vključujejo tudi finančno pomoč državam članicam EU in civilni družbi prek programa PROGRESS, v okviru katerega se spodbuja izmenjava dobrih praks ter izvajajo kampanje za ozaveščanje, raziskave in študije na tem področju ([3]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1044&langId=sl
([2]) Vključno s členoma 21 in 25 Listine Evropske unije o temeljnih pravicah.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/age/index_sl.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009850/13
to the Commission
Mojca Kleva Kekuš (S&D)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: UN Convention on the Rights of Older Persons

I have been contacted by representatives of the Association of Pensioners' Societies of Slovenia (ZDUS), a non-governmental, non-profit, self-help organisation which advocates for pensioners' rights in Slovenia. They told me that they support the adoption of a UN Convention on the Rights of Older Persons, which international NGOs began calling for in 2010, as the recommendations concerning the rights of older people which came out of the 2002 UN conference in Madrid have become outdated.

They say that after 11 years older people's situation has changed substantially as a result of demographic changes, and that the documents governing this area should therefore be adapted accordingly. Consequently they support the adoption of the aforementioned convention.

The representatives of the ZDUS are thus joining the call of other older people's organisations in Europe and on other continents for the United Nations to adopt a Convention on the Rights of Older Persons, along the lines of the conventions it has already adopted on the rights of women, people with disabilities, migrants, etc. A UN Convention on the Rights of Older Persons would give individual governments a legal framework and support for adopting laws to protect and promote the rights of older people.

Given that a majority of Member States are not in favour of signing this convention, I am interested to know whether a similar strategy on quality active ageing is being drawn up at EU level.

How, in future, will the Commission look after the weakest section of the population, who are the biggest users of public social and health services, if cost-cutting measures always begin with the public sector?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(28 October 2013)

Active ageing is part of the Europe 2020 strategy, the success of which also depends on enabling older people to contribute fully to society and the labour market. The Commission is promoting better conditions for older people in policy areas such as pensions, health and long-term care, employment, ICT, antidiscrimination, adult education and transport. A good example of such support is the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing which is promoting the deployment and scaling up of innovative solutions for active and healthy ageing across the EU.

Although the provision of social and health services is a responsibility of Member States, the EU provides support through the European Social Fund and policy guidance. With the Social Investment Package of February 2013 and building upon the lessons learnt from the 2012 European Year on active ageing and solidarity between generations, the Commission provides guidance to Member States on how to adapt their social models to the challenges of an ageing society in times of limited public budgets, to maintain accessible, adequate and sustainable social, health and care services ([1]).

The European Commission is fighting discrimination against older people with all means at its disposal. The EU legal framework ([2]) and Directive 2000/78/EC aim at protecting the rights of older people.

EU actions furthermore include financial support to EU Member States and civil society through the PROGRESS programme, facilitating the exchange of good practices, carrying out awareness raising campaigns, surveys and studies in this area ([3]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1044&langId=en
([2]) Including Articles 21 and 25 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/age/index_en.htm

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009851/13
an die Kommission
Michael Cramer (Verts/ALE)
(3. September 2013)

Betrifft: Einhaltung der Aarhus-Konvention in den Mitgliedstaaten

Die Europäische Union ist Vertragspartei der Aarhus-Konvention über den Zugang zu Informationen sowie die Öffentlichkeitsbeteiligung im Bereich des Umweltschutzes. Mit der Richtlinie 2003/35/EG wird die Konvention in EU-Recht umgesetzt und die Mitgliedstaaten zur Übertragung in nationales Recht verpflichtet. Im Rahmen der Planungen für neue Mammut-Parkplätze für LKW an den Rastanlagen Münsterland Ost und West entlang der Bundesautobahn A1 werden die Verpflichtungen der Aarhus-Konvention nach vorliegenden Informationen durch die Bundesrepublik Deutschland missachtet. Kann die Kommission dazu folgende Fragen beantworten:

1. Welche Verpflichtungen in Bezug auf Transparenz und Bürgerbeteiligung ergeben sich nach Auffassung der Kommission für die deutschen Behörden aus der oben genannten Richtlinie bei der Planung neuer Rastplätze?

2. Wie stellt die Kommission sicher, dass die zuständigen Bundesbehörden diesen Verpflichtungen nachkommen?

3. Wie wird die Kommission sicherstellen, dass Bürgerinnen und Bürger sowie Umwelt- und Naturschutzverbände den ihnen zustehenden Zugang zu allen relevanten Informationen erhalten?

4. Hält die Kommission es für rechtmäßig, wenn vertragliche Vereinbarungen die Regelungen der ersten und zweiten Säule der Aarhus-Konvention einer Öffentlichkeitsbeteiligung außer Kraft setzen? Wenn ja, warum? Wenn nein, warum nicht?

5. Welche Maßnahmen wird die Kommission zur Durchsetzung des geltenden EU-Rechts im vorliegenden Fall ergreifen?

Antwort von Herrn Potočnik im Namen der Kommission
(31. Oktober 2013)

1. Mit der Richtlinie 2003/35/EG wurden die Vorschriften der Aarhus-Konvention in Bezug auf die Öffentlichkeitsbeteiligung an Entscheidungsverfahren, den Zugang zu Informationen und den Zugang zu Gerichten in die Richtlinie 2011/92 über die Umweltverträglichkeitsprüfung bei bestimmten öffentlichen und privaten Projekte ([1]) (UVP-Richtlinie) aufgenommen.

Nach der UVP-Richtlinie muss vor Genehmigung von in Anhang I der UVP-Richtlinie genannten Projekten sowie von Projekten gemäß Anhang II der Richtlinie, bei denen aufgrund eines UVP-Screenings mit erheblichen Auswirkungen auf die Umwelt zu rechnen ist, eine Umweltverträglichkeitsprüfung durchgeführt werden. Die UVP-Richtlinie enthält Bestimmungen für eine obligatorische Beteiligung der Öffentlichkeit und den Zugang zu Informationen.

2. Es obliegt hauptsächlich den nationalen Behörden sicherzustellen, dass die Anforderungen der UVP-Richtlinie erfüllt werden. Nach Artikel 11 der UVP-Richtlinie müssen die Mitgliedstaaten außerdem den Zugang zu einem Überprüfungsverfahren vor einem Gericht sicherstellen, damit die materiellrechtliche und die verfahrensrechtliche Rechtmäßigkeit von Entscheidungen, Handlungen oder Unterlassungen, für die die Bestimmungen dieser Richtlinie über die Öffentlichkeitsbeteiligung gelten, angefochten werden können. Die Umsetzung des EU-Rechts fällt in erster Linie in die Zuständigkeit des Mitgliedstaats.

3. In den Artikeln 5 und 6 der UVP-Richtlinie ist die Information der Öffentlichkeit und die Möglichkeit, zu dem Projekt Stellung zu nehmen, geregelt.

4. Vertragliche Vereinbarungen können keinen Vorrang vor den Anforderungen der UVP-Richtlinie haben.

5. Der Kommission liegen keine Informationen vor, anhand deren sie beurteilen könnte, ob die Anforderungen der UVP-Richtlinie in diesem Fall eingehalten wurden oder nicht.

([1]) ABl. L 26 vom 28.1.2012, S. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009851/13
to the Commission
Michael Cramer (Verts/ALE)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: Compliance with the Århus Convention in Member States

The EU is a party to the Århus Convention on access to information and public participation for environmental protection purposes. Directive 2003/35/EC transposes the Convention into EC law and imposes an obligation on Member States to implement it in their national law. Regarding the gigantic projected new lorry parks at the Münsterland Ost and West service areas on the A1 motorway, it appears, according to the information available, that Germany is failing to meet its Århus Convention obligations. That being the case:

1. According to the Commission's understanding, what transparency and public participation obligations are the German authorities required to fulfil under the abovementioned directive when planning new service areas?

2. How will the Commission ensure that the federal authorities concerned comply with those obligations?

3. How will it ensure that citizens and environmental and conservation organisations can enjoy their proper right of access to all relevant information?

4. Does the Commission think it lawful for first- and second-pillar public participation arrangements under the Århus Convention to be overridden by contractual agreement? If so, why? If not, why not?

5. What will the Commission do to enforce EC law in this particular case?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(31 October 2013)

1. Directive 2003/35/EC introduces the requirements of the Aarhus Convention as regards public participation, information and access to justice into Directive 2011/92 ([1]) on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (EIA Directive).

Under the EIA Directive, an environmental impact assessment (EIA) must be carried out prior to the authorisation for projects falling under Annex I of the directive and for projects falling under Annex II of the EIA Directive which, further to an EIA screening, are presumed to have significant effects on the environment. The EIA Directive established obligations for a mandatory public participation and disclosure of information.

2. It is primarily for the national authorities to ensure that the requirements of the EIA Directive are fulfilled. Furthermore, pursuant to Article 11 of the EIA Directive the Member States have to provide access to a review procedure before a court to challenge the substantive or procedural legality of decisions acts or omissions subject to the public participation provisions of this directive. The implementation of EU legislation is in the first place a Member State competence.

3. Articles 5 and 6 of the EIA Directive ensure the information of the public and the possibility to comment on the project.

4. The requirements of the EIA Directive cannot be overridden by contractual agreements.

5. The Commission does not have information about the specific project to assess whether or not the requirements of the EIA Directive were respected in this case.

([1]) OJ L 26/1, 28.1.2012.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-009852/13
Komisijai
Vilija Blinkevičiūtė (S&D)
(2013 m. rugsėjo 3 d.)

Tema: Klausos negalią turinčių asmenų diskriminacija informacijos prieinamumo srityje

Nors Europos Sąjungoje (ES) Jungtinių Tautų neįgaliųjų teisių konvencija įsigaliojo nuo 2011 m. sausio 21 d., tačiau kai kuriose ES valstybėse narėse kurtieji vis dar yra nevisaverčiai šalies socialinio, politinio, ekonominio ir kultūrinio gyvenimo dalyviai. Prieigą prie informacijos kurtiesiems pirmiausia galėtų užtikrinti televizija – vizuali, operatyvi, pagal negalią labiausiai tinkanti, skirtingus informacijos poreikius tenkinanti žiniasklaidos priemonė. Kurčiųjų draugijos ir organizacijos ne kartą pabrėžė, kaip svarbu šalinti informacijos prieinamumo klausos negalią turintiems asmenims kliūtis, užtikrinant transliuojamų televizijos laidų titravimą arba vertimą į gestų kalbą. Be to, labai svarbu užtikrinti kokybišką vertimą į gestų kalbą ir aiškiai parašytus titrus. Kai kuriose valstybėse narėse gestų vertėjo veidas televizijos ekrane rodomas tokiame mažame kvadrate, kad kurtieji veido mimikos, tokios svarbios gestų kalbai, tiesiog negali įžiūrėti. Tad kasdienines žinias kurtieji gali suprasti tik iš dalies.

Deja, kai kuriose šalyse, taip pat Lietuvoje kurtiesiems ir neprigirdintiems vaikams bei jaunuoliams nė viena televizijos laida, net skirta bendraamžiams, nėra prieinama, kadangi jos nėra titruojamos ar verčiamos į gestų kalbą.

Ar Komisija nemano, jog skubiai reikėtų imtis priemonių, kad būtų pašalintos informacijos prieinamumo klausos negalią turintiems asmenims kliūtys, kovojama su kurčiųjų diskriminacija ir užtikrintos jų lygios galimybės informacijos prieinamumo srityje?

Europos Parlamentas dar 2011 m. spalio 25 dieną priimtame savo pranešime dėl žmonių su negalia judumo ir įtraukties ir 2010-2020 m. Europos strategijos dėl negalios (2010/2272(INI)) paragino Komisiją kartu su valstybėmis narėmis imtis veiksmų, kad gestų kalba būtų pripažinta oficialia valstybių narių kalba.

N. Kroes atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2013 m. spalio 14 d.)

Komisija pripažįsta, kad būtina panaikinti kliūtis, su kuriomis klausos sutrikimų turintys žmonės ir kurtieji susiduria norėdami gauti informacijos.

Todėl į Audiovizualinės žiniasklaidos paslaugų direktyvą (Audiovizualinės žiniasklaidos paslaugų direktyva 2010/13/ES) įrašytas 7 straipsnis. Jame valstybėms narėms nustatytas įpareigojimas skatinti jų jurisdikcijai priklausančius žiniasklaidos paslaugų teikėjus užtikrinti, kad jų paslaugos palaipsniui taptų prieinamos asmenims, turintiems regėjimo ar klausos sutrikimų. Dėl to straipsnio taikymo gerokai padaugėjo regėjimo ar klausos sutrikimų turintiems asmenims prieinamų transliavimo paslaugų. Kai kurios valstybės narės (visų pirma Jungtinė Karalystė, Prancūzija ir Nyderlandai), palyginti su kitomis ES valstybėmis, šioje srityje pasiekė išties puikių rezultatų: jų pagrindiniais kanalais transliuojamas turinys subtitruojamas beveik 100 %. Kitose valstybėse narėse šie skaičiai nėra tokie dideli, tačiau, kaip matyti iš Komisijos tarnybų atliekamos stebėsenos, susijusios su 2011 m. Audiovizualinės žiniasklaidos paslaugų direktyvos taikymo ataskaita ([1]), taip pat iš tyrimo, kurį atliko Europos klausos sutrikimų turinčių asmenų federacija ([2]), Audiovizualinės žiniasklaidos paslaugų direktyvos 7 straipsnis – veiksminga priemonė, galinti paskatinti tas valstybes nares šioje srityje imtis aktyvesnių veiksmų.

Komisijos tarnybos minėtos nuostatos veiksmingumą turėtų aptarti antrojoje direktyvos taikymo ataskaitoje, kuri turi būti parengta 2014 m. Iki to laiko valstybės narės turi būti pranešusios ne tik apie šios nuostatos perkėlimą į nacionalinę teisę, bet ir apie praktinį šios nuostatos įgyvendinimą nacionaliniu lygmeniu.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/avpolicy/docs/reg/tvwf/contact_comm/35_table_2.pdf
([2]) State of Subtitling access in the EU, 2011 m., EFHOH ataskaita.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009852/13
to the Commission
Vilija Blinkevičiūtė (S&D)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: Discrimination against the hard-of-hearing as regards access to information

Even though the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities entered into force in the European Union on 21 January 2011, in some Member States deaf people are still not able fully to participate in the economic, social, political and cultural life of their country. Television could be a particularly useful tool for enabling deaf people to access information, as it is a quick and effective visual medium, which is particularly suited to their disability and could meet their various needs in terms of information. Associations and organisations for deaf people have repeatedly stressed how important it is to remove the obstacles faced by deaf people in access to information, by providing subtitling or sign language interpretation on television programmes. Moreover, it is very important to ensure that sign language interpretation is of good quality and that subtitles are clearly legible. In some Member States, the face of the sign language interpreter appears in a window that is so small that it is simply impossible for deaf people to distinguish facial expressions, which are so important in sign language. Deaf people can therefore only partially understand the daily news.

Unfortunately, in some countries, such as Lithuania, children and young people who are hard-of-hearing or deaf have no access to TV programmes for children and young people of their own age, due to a lack of subtitling or interpretation into sign language.

Does the Commission not think that swift action should be taken to eliminate the obstacles encountered by the hard-of-hearing as regards access to information, to combat discrimination against deaf people and to provide them with equal opportunities in access to information?

In its report on mobility and inclusion of people with disabilities and the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 (2010/2272 (INI)), adopted on 25 October 2011, Parliament once again called on the Member States and the Commission to take steps to ensure that sign language was recognised as an official language in the Member States.

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(14 October 2013)

The Commission recognises the need to eliminate the obstacles encountered by hard-of-hearing and deaf people as regards their access to information.

With this aim Article 7 was inserted in the Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMS Directive 2010/13/EU). It obliges Member States to encourage media service providers under their jurisdiction to ensure that their services are gradually made accessible to people with a visual or a hearing impairment. It has contributed substantially to the increase in the number of accessible broadcasting services. Some Member States, in particular the UK, France and the Netherlands are exemplary in the EU, nearing 100% subtitling provision on their main channels. In other Member States, the numbers are not so high but as confirmed by the monitoring exercise run by the Commission services for the 2011 Application Report on AVMS Directive ([1]), as well as the survey done by the European Federation of Hard of Hearing People ([2]), Article 7 of the AVMSD is proving to be an incentive for these Member States to do more in this area.

The Commission services should be able to address the effectiveness of the said provision in the 2nd Application Report due in 2014. By that time Member States will have been able to report not just on transposition but also on practical implementation of this provision at national level.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/avpolicy/docs/reg/tvwf/contact_comm/35_table_2.pdf
([2]) State of Subtitling access in the EU, 2011 Report by EFHOH.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009853/13
a la Comisión
Dolores García-Hierro Caraballo (S&D) y Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(4 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Lanzamiento de bloques de hormigón en aguas de la bahía de Algeciras

Los pescadores del Campo de Gibraltar (Cádiz) cifran en más de 1,5 millones de euros las pérdidas acumuladas por las dificultades para seguir faenando en aguas próximas al Peñón, que afectan a 70 embarcaciones y 300 familias de la zona.

La situación se ha visto agravada el pasado 24 de julio a consecuencia del lanzamiento unilateral por parte de las autoridades de Gibraltar de 70 bloques de hormigón C40 de dos toneladas de peso cada uno en la bahía de Algeciras. Independientemente de las consideraciones relativas a la falta de reconocimiento de otra jurisdicción sobre estas aguas españolas, estos bloques están destruyendo caladeros tradicionales, afectan a las actividades pesqueras que se venían practicando y alteran sustancialmente las condiciones de un entorno sometido a protección ambiental.

A pesar del aluvión de quejas y denuncias y de la próxima vista de expertos de la UE, las autoridades del Peñón parecen dispuestas a proseguir en su política de hechos consumados y prevén la implantación, en una segunda fase, de al menos dos nuevos bloques de hormigón de 12 toneladas cada uno en el área del conflicto. Estas actuaciones imposibilitan que los pescadores de la zona prosigan con el desarrollo de su actividad, con grave detrimento de la situación económica y del empleo.

¿Puede aclarar la Comisión si las actuaciones realizadas por las autoridades de Gibraltar se ajustan a la normativa europea? ¿Va a adoptar alguna iniciativa urgente para evitar nuevas medidas unilaterales de lanzamiento de bloques? ¿Tiene prevista alguna medida para restablecer la situación y posibilitar la compensación de las consecuencias socioeconómicas padecidas por los pescadores de la zona y sus familias a consecuencia de estas medidas?

Respuesta de la Sra. Damanaki en nombre de la Comisión
(28 de octubre de 2013)

La Comisión recuerda a Sus Señorías que esta pregunta es la misma que la anterior pregunta escrita P-009625/2013 y, por tanto, les remite a la respuesta pertinente ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=ES

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009853/13
to the Commission
Dolores García-Hierro Caraballo (S&D) and Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Submersion of concrete blocks in the Bay of Algeciras

As a result of problems encountered in the waters off Gibraltar, fishing fleets from the Campo de Gibraltar (Cádiz) have incurred total losses exceeding EUR 1.5 million, affecting 70 vessels and 300 local families.

On 24 July, matters came to a head following a unilateral decision by the Gibraltarian authorities to drop 70 two-tonne C40 cement blocks into the Bay of Algeciras. Quite apart from the question of sovereignty regarding these Spanish waters, this action is causing the destruction of traditional fishing grounds and the livelihood of fishing fleets, as well as having a major impact on what is an environmental conservation area.

Notwithstanding the flood of protests and complaints and the forthcoming hearing of EU experts, the Gibraltarian authorities are clearly determined to proceed regardless with their chosen course of action, the next step being the planned submersion of at least two 12-tonne blocks in the disputed zone, effectively barring local fleets from access to these fishing grounds and seriously impacting on the economic situation and employment in the area.

Can the Commission say whether the actions of the Gibraltarian authorities are in compliance with EC law? Will it take urgent measures to prevent any further unilateral initiatives such as the submersion of additional cement blocks? Is it envisaging any measures to remedy the situation and compensate local fishermen and their families for the social and economic hardships suffered by them as a consequence of the above actions?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(28 October 2013)

The Commission would point out that this question is the same as previous Written Question P-009625/2013 and would therefore refer the Honourable Members to the corresponding answer ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=EN

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-009854/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(4 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Αποζημίωση από την ΕΕ για τη νοσηλεία λαθρομεταναστών στην Ελλάδα

Ο Έλληνας Υπουργός Υγείας ανέφερε σε πρωινή τηλεοπτική εκπομπή του σταθμού «ΣΚΑΪ» (στις 30.8.2013) ότι σχεδιάζεται η επιβολή «εισιτηρίου» 25 ευρώ για κάθε ασθενή που επιθυμεί να κάνει εισαγωγή και να νοσηλευθεί σε ελληνικά δημόσια νοσοκομεία, εκτός από κάποιες οικονομικά αδύναμες κατηγορίες πολιτών «και τους λαθρομετανάστες, οι οποίοι δεν θα πληρώνουν γιατί για αυτούς δεν υπάρχουν στοιχεία». Προσέθεσε δε ότι έχει ήδη συνεννοηθεί «με τις ευρωπαϊκές αρχές» ώστε να καλύπτουν αυτές το εξαιρετικά υψηλό κόστος περίθαλψης των λαθρομεταναστών στην Ελλάδα, οι οποίοι ξεπερνούν τα 2,5 εκ.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Ποια συμφωνία μεταξύ «ευρωπαϊκών αρχών» και Ελλάδας εννοεί ο Έλληνας Υπουργός Υγείας και ποιο το χρηματικό ποσό που έχει δεσμευθεί από την ΕΕ για την Ελλάδα αναφορικά με την κάλυψη εξόδων περίθαλψης των λαθρομεταναστών στα ελληνικά δημόσια νοσοκομεία;

Απάντηση του κ. Borg εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(11 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή στηρίζει ενέργειες μέσω του προγράμματος υγείας της ΕΕ για τη βελτίωση της πρόσβασης σε υπηρεσίες υγειονομικής περίθαλψης, την προώθηση της υγείας και την πρόληψη ώστε να καλύπτονται οι ανάγκες των μεταναστών στα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ. Σε αυτές περιλαμβάνονται, για παράδειγμα, οι πρωτοβουλίες για την πρόληψη και τον έλεγχο των μεταδοτικών νόσων και την πρόληψη μέσω εμβολιασμού.

Επιπλέον, οι δυνατότητες χρηματοδότησης ενεργειών με σκοπό την παροχή υγειονομικής περίθαλψης στο πλαίσιο των τεσσάρων ταμείων του γενικού προγράμματος «Αλληλεγγύη και διαχείριση των μεταναστευτικών ροών» την περίοδο 2007-2013 επισημαίνονται στην απάντηση της Επιτροπής στην κοινοβουλευτική ερώτηση E-10318/2010 ([1]).

Η Επιτροπή δεν γνωρίζει περί «συμφωνίας» στην οποία αναφέρεται ο κ. βουλευτής και δεν έχει δεσμευθεί ειδικό ποσό που προορίζεται για την εφαρμογή αυτών των ενεργειών, δεδομένου ότι τα κράτη μέλη είναι κατά κύριο λόγο υπεύθυνα τόσο για την εφαρμογή όσο και για την επιλογή των ενεργειών. Στο πλαίσιο του ετησίου προγράμματος 2012 του Ταμείου Επιστροφής, η Ελλάδα υλοποιεί μια αποκλειστικού στόχου ενέργεια με την παροχή ιατρικής βοήθειας σε κέντρα κράτησης που φιλοξενούν υπηκόους τρίτων χωρών. Η ενέργεια συγχρηματοδοτείται στο πλαίσιο του Ταμείου με ποσό 1 125 εκατ. ευρώ. Μια παρόμοια ενέργεια προτάθηκε από την Ελλάδα στο πλαίσιο του ετησίου προγράμματος 2013 του Ταμείου Επιστροφής η οποία εξακολουθεί να αποτελεί αντικείμενο συζήτησης με την Επιτροπή.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009854/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: EU compensation to cover the cost of medical care for illegal immigrants in Greece

The Greek Minister of Health stated in a *Sky* breakfast TV show on 30 August 2013 that plans were underway to issue a 'ticket' of EUR 25 for each patient wishing to be admitted and treated in Greek public hospitals; an exception would be made for some economically disadvantaged categories of citizen 'and illegal immigrants who do not pay because there is no data relating to them.' The minister went on to say that an agreement had already been reached 'with the EU authorities' so that they meet the extremely high cost of treating illegal immigrants in Greece, who number more than 2.5 million.

In view of the above, will the Commission state:

What agreement between the 'EU authorities' and Greece is the Greek Minister of Health referring to and what amount of funding has been committed by the EU to enable Greece to cover the healthcare costs of illegal immigrants in Greek public hospitals?

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

The Commission supports actions through the EU Health Programme to improve access to healthcare services, health promotion and prevention to meet the needs of migrants in the EU Member States. These include for instance initiatives on prevention and control of communicable diseases and prevention through vaccination.

In addition, the funding possibilities for actions aimed at providing healthcare under the four funds of the General Programme 'Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows' 2007-2013 are indicated in the Commission's reply to parliamentary Question E-10318/2010 ([1]).

The Commission is not aware of an 'agreement' as referred to by the Honourable Member and no specific amount is earmarked for the implementation of such actions, since Member States are primarily responsible both for the implementation and the selection of actions. Under the Return Fund 2012 annual programme, Greece implements a dedicated action providing medical aid in detention centres hosting third-country nationals. The action is co-financed under the Fund with EUR 1,125 million. A similar action was proposed by Greece under the 2013 Return Fund annual programme which is still discussed with the Commission.

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

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-009855/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(4 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Επιδότηση εξαγωγών προϊόντων υδατοκαλλιέργειας από την Τουρκία

Παρά τις συνεχείς ερωτήσεις των συναδέλφων Α. Ποδηματά και Κ. Αρσένη (αρ. ερώτησης E-001540/2010) και του υποφαινομένου (αριθμός E-005425/2013) προς την Επιτροπή, ο Επίτροπος κ. DE GUCHT αρνείται να ερευνήσει την καταγγελλόμενη νόθευση του ανταγωνισμού εκ μέρους της Τουρκίας στον κλάδο της υδατοκαλλιέργειας με τις παράνομες εξαγωγικές επιδοτήσεις τις οποίες χορηγεί. Ο Επίτροπος απάντησε στην παραπάνω ερώτησή μου δηλώνοντας ότι δεν έχει καταγγελία από τον κλάδο παραγωγής, όταν είναι γνωστό ότι η Επιτροπή μπορεί να κινήσει διαδικασία ελέγχου ανά πάσα στιγμή, κάτι που έχει ήδη κάνει για άλλα ζητήματα στην περίπτωση της Ελλάδας, της Πορτογαλίας, της Ισπανίας κ.λπ.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Γιατί υπάρχει αυτή η ανεξήγητη προσέγγιση αναφορικά με το παραπάνω ζήτημα και η συνακόλουθη άρνηση διερεύνησης του θέματος των παράνομων εξαγωγικών επιδοτήσεων για τουρκικά προϊόντα υδατοκαλλιέργειας, τα οποία εκτοπίζουν — μέσω πρακτικών που δεν συνάδουν με τον ελεύθερο ανταγωνισμό — τα αντίστοιχα κοινοτικά;

Απάντηση του κ. De Gucht εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(24 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή λαμβάνει πολύ σοβαρά υπόψη το πρόβλημα του αθέμιτου ανταγωνισμού και είναι πάντα ανοικτή στη συζήτηση του θέματος με τους κλάδους παραγωγής της Ένωσης. Πράγματι, ορισμένες συνεδριάσεις έγιναν ήδη μεταξύ του κλάδου της υδατοκαλλιέργειας και της Επιτροπής.

Είναι υψίστης σημασίας η Επιτροπή να σέβεται την ευρωπαϊκή νομοθεσία και τους διεθνείς κανόνες σ' αυτόν τον τομέα. Τα μέτρα εμπορικής άμυνας δεν πρέπει να εφαρμόζονται αβασάνιστα. Συνήθως η Επιτροπή κινεί την έρευνα κατά των επιδοτήσεων κατόπιν καταγγελίας από τον κλάδο παραγωγής της Ένωσης, η οποία περιέχει επαρκή αποδεικτικά στοιχεία σχετικά με την ύπαρξη επιδοτήσεων που προκαλούν σοβαρή ζημία. Η Επιτροπή δεν έχει λάβει καταγγελία η οποία να περιείχε επαρκή αποδεικτικά στοιχεία που να δικαιολογούν την έναρξη έρευνας.

Επιπλέον, ο Παγκόσμιος Οργανισμός Εμπορίου δεν επιτρέπει στην Ένωση να κινήσει έρευνα εμπορικής άμυνας εκτός αν υπάρχουν επαρκή στοιχεία που να αποδεικνύουν την ύπαρξη επιδοτήσεων που προκαλούν σοβαρή ζημία. Στην παρούσα κατάσταση, η Επιτροπή δεν είναι σε θέση να κινήσει διαδικασία για τα τουρκικά προϊόντα υδατοκαλλιέργειας. Η προσέγγιση αυτή δεν θίγει την απόφαση που θα ληφθεί σε περίπτωση που τεθούν επί τάπητος πιο τεκμηριωμένοι ισχυρισμοί.

Υπό αυτές τις συνθήκες, είναι σαφές ότι δεν μπορεί να κινηθεί έρευνα κατά των επιδοτήσεων.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009855/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Export subsidies for Turkish aquaculture products

Despite repeated questions to the Commission by MEPs Anni Podimata and Kriton Arsenis (Question E-001540/2010) and myself (E-005425/2013), Commissioner De Gucht refuses to investigate allegations that Turkey is distorting competition in the aquaculture sector by paying illegal export subsidies. He replied to my above question stating that he had not received any complaints from the production sector in question, even though it is common knowledge that the Commission may initiate a control procedure at any time, something that it has already been done in respect of other issues in the case of Greece, Portugal, Spain etc.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

Why is it adopting this inexplicable approach to the above question and consequently refusing to investigate the issue of illegal export subsidies for Turkish aquaculture products which are driving out the corresponding Community products through practices that are incompatible with free competition?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(24 October 2013)

The Commission takes the issue of unfair competition very seriously and is always open to discussing the issue with Union industries. In fact, a number of meetings have already taken place between the aquaculture industry and the Commission.

It is of paramount importance that the Commission respects European law and international rules in this area. Trade defence measures should not be used lightly. The Commission normally initiates an anti-subsidy investigation on the basis of a complaint made by the Union industry containing sufficient evidence of the existence of subsidies causing material injury. The Commission has not received at this stage a complaint containing sufficient evidence to warrant the initiation of an investigation.

Furthermore, the World Trade Organisation does not allow for the Union to initiate a trade defence investigation unless there is sufficient evidence available of the existence of subsidies that are causing material injury. In the current situation, the Commission is not in a position to initiate a proceeding on Turkish aquaculture products. This approach is without prejudice to the position which would be taken in case more substantiated allegations are put on the table.

In these circumstances, it is clear that no anti-subsidy investigation can be initiated.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009856/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Insicurezza alimentare in Egitto

L'11 luglio 2013 varie fonti di informazione hanno riportato che l'Egitto disponeva di scorte di grano importato per meno di due mesi. Stando al ministro uscente degli approvvigionamenti Bassem Ouda, il paese, che solitamente importa circa 10 milioni di tonnellate di grano all'anno, dispone attualmente di solo 500 000 tonnellate di grano importato. I disordini politici in Egitto hanno esaurito le riserve di valuta estera e il governo ha difficoltà a mantenere i necessari livelli di importazione di prodotti alimentari e di carburante.

Benché abbia bisogno immediato di enormi quantità di grano importato, l'Egitto ha interrotto le importazioni nel mese di febbraio. Stando all'agenzia Reuters, un addetto del Dipartimento dell'agricoltura statunitense (USDA) in Egitto, in una relazione, afferma che ai livelli attuali di consumo le scorte di grano nazionali dureranno solo fino a ottobre.

Può la Commissione far sapere:

1. Qual è la posizione dell'UE per quanto riguarda il problema dell'insicurezza alimentare in Egitto e quali passi è il Vice Presidente/Alto Rappresentante disposto a intraprendere per contribuire ad alleviarlo? L'UE è pronta a collaborare con gli altri donatori?

2. Qual è la valutazione dei funzionari dell'Unione europea al Cairo riguardo ai problemi sociali che potrebbero scatenarsi se non saranno effettuati sforzi per aumentare le scorte di grano in Egitto?

Risposta di Stefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(28 ottobre 2013)

L'Egitto è un importatore netto di prodotti alimentari, in particolare di grano, il cui fabbisogno viene soddisfatto per circa il 45-50 % dalle importazioni. Tale situazione rende il paese vulnerabile alle fluttuazioni dei prezzi mondiali e, come si è visto recentemente, all'esaurimento delle sue riserve in valuta estera ([1]).

Alla fine di agosto 2013 le riserve internazionali nette egiziane ammontavano a 18,9 milioni di dollari, in grado di coprire 3,7 mesi di importazioni. Rispetto al minimo storico di 12 milioni di USD registrato all'inizio dell'anno, si tratta di un valore in aumento. Il 29 settembre il ministro egiziano per l'Approvvigionamento e il commercio interno ha affermato che le riserve alimentari sono al sicuro e che «le scorte di grano sono sufficienti a soddisfare il fabbisogno del paese fino alla fine di febbraio». Secondo la FAO, le riserve strategiche di grano in Egitto dureranno fino alla fine del 2013 ([2]).

L'UE sostiene l'agricoltura egiziana attraverso l'ENPI, nell'ambito del quale sono stati finanziati nel 2009 un progetto di 10 milioni di EUR per migliorare la produttività dei terreni e generare reddito e occupazione nelle zone rurali, e nel 2011 una sovvenzione di 22 milioni di EUR destinata a creare posti di lavoro, sviluppare sistemi di sostegno al credito e offrire assistenza tecnica agli agricoltori. Nel 2013 l'UE ha impegnato 27 milioni di EUR per un ampio programma di sviluppo rurale nell'ambito dell'iniziativa ENPARD (programma europeo di vicinato per l'agricoltura e lo sviluppo rurale), che persegue tra i sui principali obiettivi quello di contribuire alla sicurezza alimentare, garantendo un approvvigionamento più sostenibile e a prezzi contenuti dei prodotti alimentari nei paesi della PEV.

Il 21 agosto 2013 il Consiglio «Affari esteri» ha affrontato la questione dell'assistenza all'Egitto esprimendo preoccupazione per la situazione economica e gli effetti negativi sulle fasce più vulnerabili della popolazione. Il Consiglio ha ribadito la propria volontà di proseguire l'assistenza dell'UE a sostegno dell'economia e della società civile del paese.

([1]) «Egyptian Food Observatory, Food and Monitoring and Evaluation System», bollettino trimestrale, aprile-giugno 2013 in allegato.
([2]) http://statistics.amis-outlook.org/data/index.html e http://www.fao.org/giews/countrybrief/country.jsp?code=EGY.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009856/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Food insecurity in Egypt

On 11 July 2013 various news sources reported that Egypt had less than two months' supply of imported wheat remaining in its stocks. According to the outgoing Minister of Supplies, Bassem Ouda, the country has only 500 000 tonnes of imported wheat left — it usually imports about 10 million tonnes of wheat per year. Political turmoil in Egypt has drained foreign currency reserves, making it difficult for the government to maintain the necessary levels of food and fuel imports.

Although Egypt has immediate need of huge amounts of foreign wheat, it halted grain purchases in February. According to Reuters, a report by a US Department of Agriculture (USDA) attaché in Egypt states that, at current levels of consumption, domestic wheat stocks will only last until October.

1. What is the position of the EU as regards the problem of food insecurity in Egypt, and what steps is the Vice-President/High Representative prepared to take to help alleviate it? Is the EU prepared to coordinate with other donors?

2. What is the assessment of EU officials in Cairo of the social problems that could be unleashed if substantial efforts are not made to increase wheat stocks in Egypt?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(28 October 2013)

Egypt is a net food importer, particularly of wheat. Around 45 to 50% of the country's wheat needs are imported, which makes the country vulnerable to fluctuations in its global price, and more recently to the depletion of its foreign currency reserves ([1]).

At the end of August 2013, Egypt's net international reserves stood at USD 18,900 million, equivalent to 3.7 months worth of imports. This represents an increase from the record low of USD 12,000 million earlier this year. On 29 September, the Egyptian Minister of Supply and Internal Trade asserted that the reserves of food commodities were safe, and that 'the wheat reserve meets the needs of the country until late February'. According to the FAO, the strategic wheat inventory in Egypt would suffice until the end of 2013 ([2]).

Through ENPI, the EU has been supporting the agriculture sector, with a EUR 10 million project in 2009 to improve land productivity, income and employment generation in rural areas, and a EUR 22 million grant in 2011 to create job opportunities, develop credit schemes and offer technical assistance to farmers. In 2013, the EU is committing EUR 27 million to support a comprehensive rural development programme under the European Neighbourhood Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development (ENPARD) Initiative — one of the main objectives of ENPARD is to contribute to food security by ensuring more sustainable provision of affordable food in the ENP countries.

On 21 August 2013, the Foreign Affairs Council discussed the issue of assistance to Egypt and expressed its concern at the economic situation and the negative impact on the most vulnerable groups in Egyptian society. The Council reiterated its commitment to continuing EU assistance in the socioeconomic sector and to civil society.

([1]) 'Egyptian Food Observatory, Food and Monitoring and Evaluation System', Quarterly Bulletin, April-June 2013, which the Honourable Member will find in annex.

([2]) http://statistics.amis-outlook.org/data/index.html and http://www.fao.org/giews/countrybrief/country.jsp?code=EGY

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009857/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Ragazza yemenita costretta a un matrimonio forzato

Alla metà del luglio 2013, varie fonti giornalistiche hanno dato conto di un video relativo ad una bambina yemenita di 11 anni, Nada al-Ahdal, che minacciava di uccidersi se fosse stata costretta a contrarre matrimonio. Nel video la bambina chiedeva «Cosa ne è dell'innocenza dell'infanzia?». Nada è stata salvata dallo zio contro la volontà dei genitori, che erano favorevoli a darla in sposa ad un cittadino yemenita residente in Arabia Saudita.

In Yemen non esiste una legge che vieti il matrimonio dei minori ed oltre il 50 % delle ragazze diventano spose nel momento in cui raggiungono l'età di 18 anni; i rapporti sessuali sono vietati fintantoché un minore non abbia raggiunto la pubertà. La popolazione dello Yemen aumenta di circa 700 000 unità all'anno, uno dei più alti tassi di crescita al mondo, e quasi la metà della popolazione ha meno di 15 anni. Le ragazze giovani sono quindi regolarmente date in matrimonio sotto la direzione dei loro consanguinei al fine di ridurre l'onere finanziario di una grande famiglia.

Secondo il quotidiano britannico «The Times», si è cercato di far adottare una legge che limiti l'età minima per il matrimonio a 17 anni; tuttavia, i membri conservatori del Parlamento yemenita l'hanno bloccata. Un certo numero di yemeniti giustifica lo status quo, osservando che il Profeta Maometto sposò Aisha quando aveva nove anni e sostenendo che è culturalmente accettabile che le ragazze si sposino in giovane età.

1. Quali misure intende adottare l'UE per contribuire a limitare il fenomeno del matrimonio dei minori in paesi come lo Yemen?

2. È la Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante disposta a discutere il caso di Nada al-Ahdal con le autorità yemenite, e, in particolare, con il presidente Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi?

3. Quali sforzi sta facendo l'Unione europea nello Yemen per sostenere i diritti delle donne, in particolare per quanto riguarda i tassi di alfabetizzazione e l'educazione sessuale?

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

Il 14 settembre 2013 l'AR/VP ha rilasciato una dichiarazione in cui si esprimeva con la massima fermezza in merito alla notizia del decesso di una bambina di otto anni dovuto alle lesioni riportate durante la prima notte di nozze. Oltre a commentare questo dramma personale, la dichiarazione ha permesso all'AR/VP di sollevare la questione dei matrimoni di minori nello Yemen e di ricordare a questo paese i suoi obblighi in quanto firmatario della convenzione ONU sulla tutela dei diritti dei minori.

La dichiarazione dell'AR/VP e gli intensi contatti della delegazione di Sana'a con tutte le parti interessate hanno contribuito a rilanciare il dibattito sul ripristino di un'età minima per il matrimonio. A quanto pare, il gruppo di lavoro della conferenza del dialogo nazionale sui diritti e sulle libertà nello Yemen sarebbe largamente orientato a fissare l'età minima per il matrimonio a 18 anni. L'UE si augura che l'istituzione di un'età minima per il matrimonio sia uno dei risultati del dialogo nazionale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009857/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Yemeni girl forced into marriage

In mid-July 2013, various news sources reported on a video that had emerged of an 11-year-old Yemeni girl, Nada al-Ahdal, who threatened to kill herself if she were forced to marry. In the video she asks 'What about the innocence of childhood?' Nada was rescued by her uncle against the wishes of her parents who were keen to marry her to a Yemeni expatriate living in Saudi Arabia.

In Yemen there is no law preventing the marriage of minors and over 50% of girls become brides by the time they reach the age of 18; sexual intercourse is prohibited until a child has reached puberty. Yemen's population is growing by approximately 700 000 per year, which is one of the highest growth rates in the world, and nearly half of the population is under the age of 15. Young girls are therefore regularly married off under the direction of their families in order to reduce the financial burden of a large family.

According to the UK newspaper *The Times*, attempts have been made to pass a law limiting the minimum age of marriage to 17; however, conservative members of the Yemeni Parliament have blocked the legislation. A number of Yemenis justify the status quo by noting that the Prophet Muhammad married Aisha when she was nine years old, arguing that it is culturally acceptable for girls to marry at a young age.

1. What steps is the EU taking to help curtail the phenomenon of child marriage in states such as Yemen?

2. Is the Vice-President/High Representative prepared to discuss the case of Nada al-Ahdal with the Yemeni authorities, and in particular, with President Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi?

3. What efforts is the EU making in Yemen to support women's rights, especially in the areas of literacy rates and sex education?

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

On 14 September 2013, the HR/VP issued a very firm statement in reaction to the reports of the death of an eight year old girl from injuries sustained on her wedding night. In addition to comments on this cruel individual case, the statement was the occasion to address the general issue of child marriage in Yemen and to remind of the obligations that Yemen has as a signatory to the UN Convention on the protection of the rights of the child.

The HR/VP's statement and the intensive engagement of the EU Delegation in Saana with all stakeholders have contributed to reviving the debate on reinstating a minimum age at marriage. There seems to be general agreement within the Yemen National Dialogue Conference's Working Group for Rights and Freedom to set the minimum age at marriage at 18. The EU is hopeful that the setting of a minimum age at marriage will be one of the outcomes of the National Dialogue.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009858/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Situazione nello Zimbabwe

Prima delle elezioni generali svoltesi il 31 luglio 2013 nello Zimbabwe, il quotidiano zimbabwano *Herald* ha affermato che, se le elezioni fossero giudicate libere ed eque, l'Unione europea sarebbe stata disponibile a revocare le sanzioni. Questa valutazione è stata attribuita a commenti rilasciati dal capo della delegazione dell'UE in Sud Africa, Roeland van de Geer.

L'Unione europea ha imposto sanzioni allo Zimbabwe nel 2002, ma nel marzo 2013 le sanzioni nei confronti di alcuni membri della cerchia più ristretta di collaboratori del Presidente Robert Mugabe sono state revocate in seguito a un referendum costituzionale, che è stato considerato dall'UE «pacifico, credibile e coronato da successo». Cionondimeno, il quotidiano Christian Science Monitor ha rilevato che non vi è stata praticamente alcuna riforma politica dal 2008 e che il partito ZANU-PF al governo ha espresso l'intenzione di modificare la costituzione.

Dopo le elezioni sono state lanciate varie accuse, sia dall'interno del paese che da parte della comunità internazionale, riguardo a brogli, intimidazioni e corruzione. Ciò ha nuovamente sollevato la questione delle sanzioni dell'UE contro lo Zimbabwe.

1. Qual è la posizione del Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante riguardo alle critiche nei confronti del processo elettorale nello Zimbabwe? Qual è la linea dell'UE per quanto concerne la revoca delle attuali sanzioni?

2. Quali passi sta intraprendendo l'UE attualmente, al fine di migliorare la buona governance e il rispetto della democrazia in Zimbabwe? Quali programmi sono stati istituiti per affrontare le questioni sopra indicate?

Risposta dell'Alto Rappresentante/Vice Presidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(22 ottobre 2013)

Come espresso il mese scorso in diverse dichiarazioni ufficiali, l'UE continua a nutrire preoccupazione per le carenze individuate nel processo elettorale e per la mancanza di trasparenza, come evidenziato dalle valutazioni iniziali della Comunità per lo sviluppo dell'Africa australe, dell'Unione africana e dai rapporti delle missioni di osservazione interna. In attesa di conoscere i rapporti completi, sottolineiamo quanto sia importante continuare a rafforzare le riforme per garantire che le future elezioni siano pienamente trasparenti e credibili, oltre che pacifiche. Attualmente la UE sta rivedendo le sue relazioni con lo Zimbabwe. Il nostro obiettivo è quello di sostenere il popolo dello Zimbabwe nella costruzione di un paese più prospero e democratico. L'UE è pronta a rafforzare il proprio programma di sostegno, già di per sé significativo, per promuovere le riforme politiche, i diritti umani e lo stato di diritto nello Zimbabwe.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009858/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Situation in Zimbabwe

Prior to Zimbabwe's general elections on 31 July 2013, Zimbabwe's *Herald* newspaper reported that if the elections were deemed to have been free and fair, the European Union would be prepared to lift sanctions. This view has been attributed to comments made by the head of the EU delegation to South Africa, Roeland van de Geer.

The EU imposed sanctions on Zimbabwe in 2002 but in March 2013, sanctions against some members of President Robert Mugabe's inner circle were lifted after a constitutional referendum, which was considered by the EU to be 'peaceful, successful and credible'. Despite this, however, the Christian Science Monitor has noted that there have been virtually no political reforms since 2008 and that the ruling ZANU-PF party has made public its intention to change the constitution.

Since the elections, there have been various accusations of vote-rigging, intimidation and corruption, both from within Zimbabwe and the international community. This has once again raised the issue of EU sanctions against Zimbabwe.

1. What is the position of the Vice-President/High Representative regarding the criticism over the election process in Zimbabwe? What the EU's position regarding the removal of existing sanctions?

2. What efforts are currently being undertaken by the EU in order to improve good governance and respect for democracy in Zimbabwe? What programmes have been established to address these issues?

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

As expressed in several official statements the past month, the EU remains concerned about the identified weaknesses in the electoral process and the lack of transparency, as highlighted in the initial assessments of the Southern African Development Community, the African Union and domestic observation mission reports. We look forward to the full reports and underline the importance of continuing to strengthen reforms to ensure that future elections are fully transparent and credible, as well as peaceful. The EU is currently reviewing its relations with Zimbabwe. Our goal is to support the Zimbabwean people in achieving a more prosperous and democratic Zimbabwe. The EU stands ready to strengthen its already significant support programme to promote political reforms, Human Rights and the rule of law in Zimbabwe.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009859/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Studente marocchino imprigionato per aver insultato il Re

Il 16 luglio 2013, l'organizzazione Human Rights Watch (HRW) ha riferito la notizia che uno studente di 24 anni, Abdessamad Haydour, è tenuto in detenzione in Marocco dopo essere stato condannato per aver offeso la dignità del re. Tutto ciò, nonostante il fatto che il Marocco, oltre 2 anni fa, abbia adottato una Costituzione che sancisce la libertà di espressione.

Il 13 febbraio 2012, un tribunale della città di Tazaon ha giudicato il signor Haydour colpevole di aver violato l'articolo 179 del codice penale del paese e l'articolo 41 del codice della stampa, che vietano discorsi ritenuti lesivi della dignità del Re. Il signor Haydour ha già scontato la metà di una condanna a tre anni per aver denunciato il Re Mohammed VI in un video pubblicato online. HRW rileva che il giovane sconta una pena più lunga di qualsiasi altro cittadino marocchino detenuto negli ultimi anni per questo particolare reato.

Nel 2011, agli albori della primavera araba, il Marocco ha elaborato una nuova costituzione, successivamente adottata a seguito di un referendum. Essa garantisce la «libertà di pensiero, di opinione e di espressione in tutte le sue forme». La costituzione del 2011 si discosta inoltre dalle costituzioni precedenti non definendo più la «persona del re» come «sacra», sebbene dichiari il re «inviolabile» e «degno di rispetto». Tuttavia, i tribunali marocchini continuano a imprigionare persone per reati non violenti di parola contro il re, le istituzioni statali e i privati.

1. È la Vice Presidente/Alto Rappresentante pronta a chiedere, alla luce della nuova costituzione del Marocco, che le autorità marocchine adottino misure urgenti per affrontare il caso di Abdessamad Haydour?

2. Quali misure sono in fase di adozione da parte dell'UE per monitorare i progressi del Marocco quanto al rispetto della sua nuova costituzione?

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

L'UE sta sollevando singoli casi, come quello menzionato dagli onorevoli parlamentari, nel quadro del dialogo politico con le autorità marocchine e, in particolare, nell'ambito del sottocomitato per i diritti umani, la democrazia e la governance.

I servizi dell'UE, sia a Bruxelles che in Marocco, stanno seguendo da vicino l'avanzamento delle riforme, comprese quelle relative all'attuazione della nuova costituzione, in quanto rappresentano elementi fondamentali del partenariato UE-Marocco. A questo proposito si svolgono regolari riunioni tra l'UE e il Marocco a vari livelli, comprese quelle tra alti funzionari, e in particolare in sede di sottocomitato per i diritti umani, la democrazia e la governance dove le questioni inerenti i diritti umani vengono regolarmente discusse.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009859/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Moroccan student imprisoned for insulting the king

On 16 July 2013 Human Rights Watch (HRW) reported that a 24-year-old student, Abdessamad Haydour, remains in prison in Morocco after having been convicted of offending the dignity of the king. This is despite the fact that Morocco adopted a constitution that enshrines freedom of expression over 2 years ago.

On 13 February 2012 a court in the city of Tazaon found Mr Haydour guilty of violating Article 179 of the country's Penal Code and Article 41 of its Press Code, which prohibit speech deemed to offend the dignity of the king. Mr Haydour is now halfway through a three-year sentence for denouncing King Mohammed VI in a video posted online. HRW notes that he has been imprisoned for longer than any other Moroccan in recent years for this particular offence.

In 2011, in the wake of the Arab Spring, Morocco drafted a new constitution, which was subsequently adopted following a referendum. It guarantees 'freedom of thought, opinion, and expression in all its forms'. The 2011 constitution also departs from previous constitutions by no longer defining the 'person of the king' as 'sacred', although it does declare the king to be 'inviolable' and 'owed respect.' Nevertheless, Moroccan courts continue to imprison people for non-violent offences of speech against the king, state institutions, and private individuals.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative prepared to ask, in the light of Morocco's new constitution, that the Moroccan authorities take urgent steps to address the case of Abdessamad Haydour?

2. What steps is the EU taking to monitor Morocco's progress in abiding by its new constitution?

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

The EU is raising individual cases, such as the one mentioned by the Honorable Members, in the framework of the political dialogue with the Moroccon authorities and, more in particular, in the context of the sub-committee on human rights, democracy and governance.

The EU services both in Brussels and in Morocco are following closely the progress of reforms, including those related to implementation of the new constitution, as they represent fundamental elements of the EU-Morocco partnership. In this respect, regular EU-Morocco meetings take place on various levels, including the senior officials meetings, and in particular the sub-committee on human rights, democracy and governance, where human rights issues are regurarly discussed.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009860/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(4 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Al-Nusra controlla attività strategiche in Siria

In Siria orientale il gruppo al-Nusra, affiliato ad al-Qaeda, è riuscito a prendere il controllo di varie attività strategiche, fra cui fabbriche e raffinerie di petrolio e di gas. Il gruppo ha utilizzato queste risorse nella città di Shadadi, catturata a febbraio, e fornisce pane, energia elettrica e acqua ai suoi abitanti. Il gruppo ha anche imposto la sharia.

Il quotidiano *The Guardian* ha recentemente riportato che un emiro del gas ha preso il comando di una raffineria di gas nella regione. Egli ha affermato che il segreto del successo di al-Nusra è stata la sua capacità organizzativa. Tutti i beni sono stati inviati a un comitato centrale chiamato il «Tesoro musulmano». Il gruppo al-Nusra si è separato dall'esercito siriano libero a causa della questione della corruzione e sostiene di voler allontanarsi dal sistema di governo attuale del paese. Il giornale afferma che il successo del gruppo nella «mobilitazione delle sue risorse» ha permesso di conquistare i cuori e le menti della città.

Può la Commissione far sapere:

1. Quali misure intende adottare l'UE per monitorare le esportazioni di petrolio provenienti dalla Siria nordorientale e/o dalle zone sotto il controllo del Fronte al-Nusra?

2. Quali misure intende il Vice Presidente/Alto Rappresentante adottare per esaminare il problema della corruzione legata all'esercito siriano libero, che ha sostenuto l'ascesa di gruppi come al-Nusra?

3. Qual è la valutazione dei funzionari dell'Unione europea in Medio Oriente per quanto riguarda il ruolo di al-Nusra in Siria? Reputano che il gruppo rappresenti una minaccia per gli interessi occidentali?

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

L'UE accoglie con favore la dichiarazione rilasciata il 20 aprile 2013 dalla coalizione nazionale delle forze siriane della rivoluzione e dell'opposizione (SOC), con cui è in stretto contatto, la quale respinge l'estremismo e stabilisce i principi di una Siria democratica, pluralistica, inclusiva e rispettosa dei diritti umani, compresi i diritti delle minoranze religiose ed etniche, e dello stato di diritto.

L'UE esprime grave preoccupazione per l'aumento delle violenze di carattere etnico o religioso e per il coinvolgimento di attori non statali estremisti e stranieri nel conflitto siriano, fattore che alimenta ulteriormente il conflitto e costituisce una minaccia per la stabilità regionale. L'UE deplora inoltre i gravi abusi, compresi i crimini di guerra, compiuti dai gruppi armati antigovernativi documentati nella relazione della commissione d'inchiesta, per quanto tali abusi non raggiungano l'intensità e la portata di quelli commessi dalle forze del regime e dalle milizie affiliate.

Per quanto riguarda le esportazioni di petrolio dalla Siria, nelle misure restrittive dell'UE è stata introdotta una deroga all'embargo petrolifero al fine di aiutare la popolazione civile siriana, consentendo agli Stati membri di autorizzare l'acquisto, l'importazione o il trasporto di petrolio greggio o di prodotti petroliferi dalla Siria. Prima di rilasciare qualsiasi autorizzazione, gli Stati membri devono accertare il rispetto di una serie di condizioni rigorose e consultare la coalizione nazionale delle forze siriane della rivoluzione e dell'opposizione. Inoltre, il fronte Al-Nusra è un'entità che figura nell'elenco allegato al regolamento (CE) n. 881/2002 del Consiglio che impone specifiche misure restrittive nei confronti di determinate persone ed entità associate alla rete di Al-Qaeda. Pertanto, nessun fondo o risorsa economica può essere messa a disposizione di tale gruppo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009860/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — al-Nusra's control of Syria's strategic assets

In eastern Syria, the al-Qaeda-affiliated group al-Nusra has managed to take control of various strategic assets, including factories and oil and gas refineries. The group has used these resources in the eastern town of Shadadi, which was captured in February, and supplies bread, free electricity and water to its residents. The group has also imposed Sharia law.

The Guardian newspaper recently reported that an appointed gas emir has taken command of a gas refinery in the region. He said that the secret to al-Nusra's success has been its organisational skills. All captured assets have been sent to a central committee called the 'Muslim Treasury'. Al-Nusra broke away from the Free Syrian Army over the issue of corruption, and the group contends that it wants to break with the current governing system in the country. The newspaper says that the group's success in 'marshalling its resources' has allowed it to win hearts and minds in the town.

1. What steps is the EU taking in order to monitor gas and oil exports coming from north-eastern Syria and/or the areas under the control of the al-Nusra Front?

2. What steps is the Vice-President/High Representative taking to investigate the problem of corruption associated with the Free Syrian Army, which has bolstered the rise of groups such as al-Nusra?

3. What is the assessment of EU officials in the Levant regarding the role of al-Nusra in Syria?

4. Do they believe the group poses a threat to western interests?

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

The EU remains in close contact with the National Coalition of Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces (SOC) and welcomes its the declaration of 20 April 2013 setting out the principles of a democratic, pluralistic and inclusive Syria respectful, *inter alia*, of the rights of religious and ethnic minorities, the rule of law, and rejecting extremism.

The EU is deeply concerned with the rise of religiously or ethnically motivated violence. Likewise, the EU is seriously concerned with the involvement of extremist and foreign non-state actors in the fighting in Syria, which is further fuelling the conflict and posing a threat to regional stability.The EU deplores serious abuses, including war crimes that are being committed by anti- Government armed groups documented in the report of the Commission of Inquiry, although such abuses do not reach the intensity and scale of those committed by the regime forces and affiliated militias.

As regards oil exports from Syria, a derogation to the oil embargo has been introduced in the EU's restrictive measures with a view to helping the Syrian civilian population, allowing Member States to authorise purchases, imports or transports of crude oil or petroleum products from Syria. Before any authorisation can be given, Member States must ensure that a number of strict conditions are met and must consult the Syrian National Coalition for Opposition and Revolutionary Forces. Furthermore, Al-Nusra Front is a listed entity under Council Regulation (EC) 881/2002 imposing restrictive measures against persons and entities associated with the Al Qaida network, and in any case no funds or economic resources may be made available to it.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009861/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Alleanza tra gruppi jihadisti sahariani

Alla fine di agosto 2013 varie agenzie di stampa hanno riportato la notizia secondo cui due gruppi islamisti militanti, che in precedenza erano legati ad al-Qaeda nel Maghreb islamico, avrebbero costituito un'alleanza. I combattenti guidati dal militante Mokhtar Belmokhtar, responsabile di aver dato inizio all'attacco terroristico a In Amenas (Algeria) nel gennaio 2013, e i membri del Movimento per l'unità e la jihad in Africa occidentale (MUJAO) si sono uniti e hanno minacciato di attaccare gli interessi stranieri. Il MUJAO, un gruppo islamista capeggiato dal maliano Oumar Ould Hamaha, ha condotto attacchi sia in Mali che nel sud dell'Algeria. Entrambi i gruppi hanno rivendicato la responsabilità degli attacchi nel Niger settentrionale contro una base militare ad Agadez e una miniera di uranio gestita dai francesi, in cui sono rimaste uccise almeno 20 persone.

Il nuovo gruppo jihadista militante che si è così costituito è stato denominato al-Mourabitoun. Secondo Reuters, Belmokhtar avrebbe affermato che lo scopo del gruppo è di creare uno Stato islamico e che i recenti avvenimenti in Egitto hanno dimostrato che le forze «sioniste e crociate» intendono distruggere l'Islam. Belmokhtar ha indicato che il gruppo si concentrerà sull'attacco agli interessi francesi e ha avvertito la Francia e i suoi alleati nella regione che i mujahidin si sono incontrati e hanno deciso di sconfiggere i loro eserciti e di distruggere i loro piani e progetti.

1. Quali misure intende adottare l'UE per monitorare la nuova minaccia rappresentata dall'alleanza tra le forze di Mokhtar Belmokhtar e il MUJAO?

2. È l'Unione europea pronta a mettere a punto strategie per sostenere i paesi della regione del Sahel, che sono vulnerabili agli attacchi dei militanti e, in particolare, ai tentativi di accedere all'uranio del Niger che potrebbe essere utilizzato per la fabbricazione di una bomba sporca?

3. In riferimento al 10° FES per Mauritania, Niger e Mali, può l'UE spiegare in che modo sono ripartiti i finanziamenti unionali per migliorare la sicurezza e contrastare il radicalismo e l'estremismo violento?

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

Il rischio di attacchi terroristici nella regione sahelo-sahariana rimane molto elevato. I recenti attentati in Niger, seguiti dalla nascita di un nuovo gruppo terroristico denominato al-Mourabitoun, sono segno della costante minaccia terroristica alla stabilità della regione. In generale, se non si combattono il sottosviluppo e il terrorismo in tutta la regione, sarà vano qualunque tentativo di assicurare la stabilità del Mali.

In questo contesto, l'Unione europea è determinata a intensificare il suo impegno a sostegno delle autorità nazionali, della difesa e dei servizi di sicurezza i) in Mali, dove è in corso una missione militare UE con ruolo di formazione e consulenza (EUTM Mali); ii) in Niger, dove l'EUCAP SAHEL sostiene le forze di sicurezza nazionale, favorisce il consolidamento dello Stato di diritto e il coordinamento e promuove un progetto di controterrorismo nel quadro dello strumento di stabilità e iii) in Libia, dove è stata istituita la missione civile EUBAM per sostenere la sicurezza delle frontiere. La maggiore interoperabilità delle missioni di politica di sicurezza e di difesa comune nella regione costituisce una grande sfida. Inoltre, l'Unione europea ha sostenuto la missione internazionale di sostegno al Mali sotto guida africana (AFISMA) per riportare la sicurezza nel paese e porta avanti programmi di cooperazione che riguardano anche il settore della sicurezza e la riforma della governance.

Riconoscendo che non può esserci sicurezza duratura senza sviluppo, la relazione 2012/2013 sull'attuazione della strategia UE per il Sahel ([1]) spiega dettagliatamente come i fondi dell'Unione sostengano lo sviluppo socioeconomico dei paesi del Sahel e aiutino a migliorare la sicurezza e a combattere la radicalizzazione. A tal fine, l'Unione sta mobilitando tutti gli strumenti politici di cui dispone.

([1]) Documento di lavoro dei servizi della Commissione SWD(2013)317.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009861/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Saharan Jihadist groups form an alliance

In late August 2013 it was reported by various news agencies that two militant Islamist groups previously attached to al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb have formed an alliance. Fighters led by the militant Mokhtar Belmokhtar, responsible for initiating the In Amenas terrorist attack in Algeria in January 2013, and members of the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJWA) have merged, and have threatened to attack foreign interests. MUJWA, an Islamist group led by the Malian-born Islamist Oumar Ould Hamaha, has carried out attacks in both Mali and southern Algeria. Both groups have claimed responsibility for attacks in northern Niger against a military base in Agadez and a French-operated uranium mine, killing at least 20 persons.

The new militant jihadi group that has formed is called al-Mourabitoun. According to *Reuters*, Belmokhtar has said that the group aimed to create an Islamic state and that recent events in Egypt had shown how the 'Zionist and Crusader' forces wanted to destroy Islam. Belmokhtar has stated that the group would concentrate on attacking French interests. 'We say to France and its allies in the region … the Mujahideen have met and agreed to defeat your armies and destroy your plans and projects', he said.

1. What steps is the EU taking to monitor the new threat that has emerged through the alliance formed between Mokhtar Belmokhtar's forces and MUJWA?

2. Is the EU prepared to outline strategies to support countries in the Sahel region, which are vulnerable to militant attacks, and, in particular, efforts to gain access in Niger to uranium which could potentially be used in the production of a dirty bomb?

3. In reference to the 10th EDF for Mauritania, Niger and Mali, how is EU funding being allocated to improve security and combat radicalisation and violent extremism?

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

The risk of terrorist attacks in the Sahel-Sahara region remains very high. Recent attacks in Niger followed by the creation of a new terrorist group — Al-Mourabitoun — illustrate the continued terrorist threat to regional stability. More generally, efforts to bring stability in Mali will be jeopardised if underdevelopment and terrorism are not addressed in the broader Sahel-Sahara region.

In this context, the EU is determined to continue to enhance the level of its engagement in support of national authorities and relevant defence and security services: (i) in Mali where a EU military training and advisory mission (EUTM Mali) is ongoing; (ii) in Niger where EUCAP SAHEL supports the internal security forces and helps strengthen the rule of law and coordination, alongside a counter-terrorism project under the Instrument for Stability and (iii) in Libya where the civilian mission EUBAM was established to support border security. Increased interoperability of Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions in the region constitutes an important challenge. In addition, the EU has supported the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA) to restore security throughout the country, and implements cooperation programmes, also covering the security sector and governance reforms.

Recognising that there cannot be long-term security without development, the 2012/2013 implementation report of the EU Sahel Strategy ([1]) provides details on how EU funding is supporting the socioeconomic development of Sahel countries and helping to improve security and combat radicalisation. To this end, the EU is mobilising all the instruments at its disposal.

([1]) SWD(2013) 317.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009862/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Aumento dei finanziamenti sauditi al governo egiziano

Ad agosto 2013 il ministro degli esteri dell'Arabia Saudita, Principe Saud al-Faisal, ha annunciato che il suo paese è pronto a soddisfare le esigenze finanziarie dell'Egitto nel caso in cui i paesi occidentali sospendano i pagamenti degli aiuti a causa della repressione militare egiziana contro i sostenitori dei Fratelli Musulmani. Il Principe Saud al-Faisal ha affermato che, criticando il comportamento dei militari, i paesi occidentali incoraggiano tacitamente la violenza dei Fratelli Musulmani. Il governo di Riyadh ha sostenuto che gli egiziani stanno combattendo il terrorismo e la sedizione. Il Principe Saud al-Faisal, ha dichiarato che «coloro che hanno annunciato la fine del loro aiuto all'Egitto o hanno minacciato di farlo, devono capire che la nazione araba e islamica, con le risorse di cui dispone, non esiterà a dare il suo aiuto all'Egitto».

I leader occidentali, come il Presidente americano Barack Obama, hanno affermato che le esercitazioni militari annuali con l'Egitto saranno annullate in segno di protesta e gli Stati Uniti hanno ritirato la prevista consegna al paese di quattro jet F-16 da combattimento. Tre membri molto importanti del Consiglio di cooperazione del golfo (GCC), Arabia Saudita, Emirati Arabi Uniti e Kuwait, hanno recentemente annunciato il proprio impegno a dare 12 miliardi di dollari in aiuti all'Egitto.

Può la Commissione far sapere:

1. Qual è la posizione del Vice-Presidente/Alto Rappresentante di fronte all'insistenza dell'Arabia Saudita a offrire ulteriore sostegno finanziario al governo egiziano?

2. Se il VP/HR è disposto a incontrare i rappresentanti del GCC per discutere la posizione dell'UE nei confronti della crisi in Egitto?

3. Se l'UE intende seguire l'esempio del governo degli Stati Uniti e continuare a offrire finanziamenti alle ONG egiziane e ad altre organizzazioni umanitarie dedite alla promozione della democrazia e del buon governo?

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

L'UE è consapevole delle difficoltà economiche e finanziarie dell'Egitto e, a tale riguardo, tiene a sottolineare che il paese deve impegnarsi ad attuare riforme socioeconomiche al fine di affrontare la crisi economica a lungo termine.

Il Consiglio straordinario Affari esteri del 21 agosto ha deciso di riesaminare la questione dell'assistenza dell'UE a favore dell'Egitto nel quadro della politica europea di vicinato (PEV) e sulla base dell'impegno dell'Egitto ad aderire ai principi in essa sanciti. Per alleviare le difficoltà dei gruppi più vulnerabili della popolazione, il Consiglio ha deciso di portare avanti l'assistenza al settore socioeconomico e alla società civile. Il sostegno dell'UE all'Egitto è costantemente in corso di revisione, in linea con la nuova politica europea di vicinato.

L'UE gestisce attualmente un portafoglio di circa 50 azioni volte a sostenere la società civile, per un importo superiore a 17,3 milioni di euro finanziati tramite lo strumento europeo per la democrazia e i diritti umani (EIDHR), la cooperazione culturale dell'ENPI, il programma tematico sulla migrazione, lo strumento di cooperazione allo sviluppo (DCI) e il nuovo strumento per la società civile istituito nel 2011 in risposta alla primavera araba.

Durante gli eventi in Egitto, l'AR/VP ha intrattenuto un dialogo intenso con i suoi omologhi dei paesi del Consiglio di cooperazione del Golfo (CCG). Oltre a discussioni formali nel corso della riunione ministeriale UE-CCG del 30 giugno 2013 a Manama (Bahrein), si sono tenute consultazioni costanti con i partner del Golfo a tutti i livelli, come dimostrato dallo stretto coordinamento tra gli sforzi di sensibilizzazione compiuti del rappresentante speciale dell'Unione europea León e gli inviati del Qatar e degli Emirati.

L'Unione europea accoglie con favore l'assistenza finanziaria annunciata dai paesi del CCG per sostenere le autorità egiziane, ritiene tuttavia che le riforme strutturali siano l'unico modo sostenibile per ripristinare la fiducia e la crescita economica dell'Egitto a medio termine.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009862/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Increased Saudi funding to the Egyptian Government

In August 2013 Saudi Arabia's Foreign Minister, Prince Saud al-Faisal, announced that his country was prepared to meet Egypt's financial needs, should Western countries discontinue aid payments following the Egyptian military crackdown against supporters of the Muslim Brotherhood. Prince Saud has said that Western countries are tacitly encouraging Muslim Brotherhood violence by criticising the military's conduct. The Saudi Government in Riyadh has said that the Egyptians are tackling terrorism and sedition. Prince Saud has announced that 'to those who have declared they are stopping aid to Egypt or are waving such a threat, the Arab and Muslim nations are wealthier with their people and resources and will not shy away from offering a helping hand to Egypt'.

Western leaders, such as US President Barack Obama, have said that annual military exercises with Egypt will be cancelled in protest, with the US having withdrawn the planned delivery of four F-16 fighter jets to the country. Three key Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) members — Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait — recently announced a pledge to give USD 12 billion in aid to Egypt.

1. What is the Vice-President/High Representative's position regarding Saudi Arabia's insistence that it will offer additional financial support to the Egyptian Government?

2. Is the VP/HR prepared to meet with representatives from the GCC in order to discuss the EU's position regarding the crisis in Egypt?

3. Does the EU intend to follow the example of the US Government by continuing to offer funding to Egyptian NGOs and other humanitarian organisations that are devoted to promoting democracy and good governance?

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

The EU is aware of the financial and economic needs of Egypt. In this regard, it is important to underline that Egypt needs to engage on socioeconomic reforms in order to tackle the economic crisis in the long term.

The extraordinary Foreign Affairs Council on August 21 decided to review the issue of EU assistance to Egypt under the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and on the basis of Egypt's commitment to the principles that underpin it. In order to alleviate the impact on the most vulnerable groups, the Council decided that the assistance to the socioeconomic sector and to civil society would continue. The EU support to Egypt is constantly under revision in line with the reviewed ENP.

The EC is currently managing a portfolio of 50 actions in support of civil society worth more than EURO 17.3 million funded by the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), ENPI Cultural Cooperation, the Migration thematic programme, the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) and the new Civil Society Facility, created in 2011 as a response to the Arab Spring.

The HR/VP has been engaging her counterparts in GCC countries throughout the events in Egypt. Beyond formal discussions during the 30 June 2013 EU-GCC Ministerial meeting in Manama, Bahrain, consultations with Gulf partners have been continuous at all levels, as demonstrated by the close coordination between the outreach efforts of EUSR Leon and qatari and emirati envoys.

The EU welcomes financial assistance announced by GCC countries to support Egyptian authorities. However the EU believes that structural reforms are the only sustainable way to restore economic confidence and growth in Egypt over the medium term.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009863/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Zimbabwe: presunti progetti per esportare uranio in Iran

Di recente, il quotidiano britannico *The Times* ha riportato la notizia della firma di un memorandum d'intesa tra lo Zimbabwe e l'Iran per l'esportazione di uranio.

Il governo statunitense ha annunciato che gli eventuali tentativi dello Zimbabwe di rifornire di uranio l'Iran costituirebbero una violazione del diritto internazione e darebbero luogo a severe sanzioni. Il Dipartimento di Stato americano ha altresì affermato che lo Zimbabwe è tenuto a onorare l'impegno assunto nei confronti delle risoluzioni del Consiglio di sicurezza dell'ONU, in particolare la risoluzione 1737, che proibisce la vendita o il trasferimento di uranio all'Iran ad eccezione della varietà a basso arricchimento. Il paese è inoltre legato agli impegni assunti nell'ambito del Trattato di non proliferazione delle armi nucleari.

Secondo quanto affermato dagli Stati Uniti, le sanzioni che potrebbero essere comminate allo Zimbabwe includerebbero un divieto sulle operazioni di cambio e bancarie statunitensi e la possibilità che i funzionari e gli imprenditori zimbabwani siano inseriti in un «elenco di cittadini espressamente identificati».

Lo Zimbabwe ha negato l'esistenza del memorandum d'intesa, anche se Gift Chimanikire, vice ministro zimbabwano per le risorse minerarie, ha affermato di aver visto un memorandum d'intesa per esportare uranio in Iran. Anche il Presidente dello Zimbabwe, Robert Mugabe, nega di essere a conoscenza di informazioni riguardanti le esportazioni di uranio, sebbene abbia manifestato il proprio sostegno nei confronti dell'Iran. Nel 2010 l'allora Presidente iraniano Mahmud Ahmadinejad si era recato in visita nel paese africano ed era stato rassicurato da Mugabe del sostegno continuo dello Zimbabwe alla corretta linea d'azione iraniana sulla questione nucleare.

1. Quali misure è disposto a intraprendere il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante per indagare sulle segnalazioni di un memorandum d'intesa tra l'Iran e lo Zimbabwe relativo alla vendita di uranio a sostegno del programma nucleare iraniano?

2. È pronto a discutere la questione con il governo statunitense al fine di coordinare una risposta?

3. Quali sanzioni aggiuntive nei confronti dello Zimbabwe è disposta a proporre l'Unione europea qualora emerga che il paese africano si sta impegnando attivamente nell'esportazione di uranio?

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

Dalle nostre fonti non risulta attualmente che lo Zimbabwe stia esportando attivamente uranio verso l'Iran. La notizia di un presunto memorandum di intesa tra lo Zimbabwe e l'Iran per la vendita di uranio non è a questo stadio confermata. Diversi attori stanno monitorando la situazione e sarebbe congetturale in questo stadio discutere quali misure concrete potrebbero essere prese nel caso in cui la notizia trovasse conferma.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009863/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Zimbabwe — alleged plans to export uranium to Iran

The UK newspaper *The Times* recently reported that Zimbabwe has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Iran to export uranium.

The US Government has announced that any attempt by Zimbabwe to sell uranium to Iran would be a violation of international law and could lead to severe penalties. The US State Department said that Zimbabwe was obliged to honour its commitment to the resolutions of the UN Security Council, and in particular to Resolution 1737, which prohibits the sale or transfer of uranium to Iran except for the low-enriched variety. Harare is also bound by its commitments to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

The US Government has said that penalties which could be imposed on Zimbabwe may include a ban on US foreign exchange and banking transactions and that Zimbabwean officials and business people may be placed on a 'specially designated nationals list'.

Zimbabwe has denied the existence of the MoU, but the country's Deputy Mining Minister, Gift Chimanikire, has said: 'I have seen [a memorandum of understanding] to export uranium to the Iranians'. The Zimbabwean President, Robert Mugabe, also denies having seen any information regarding uranium exports; however, he has demonstrated his support for Iran. In 2010, Iran's then President, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, visited Zimbabwe and Mr Mugabe announced that his guest should be assured of 'Zimbabwe's continuous support of Iran's just course on the nuclear issue'.

1. What steps is the Vice-President / High Representative prepared to take to investigate reports of a MoU between Iran and Zimbabwe regarding the sale of uranium to support Iran's nuclear programme?

2. Is she prepared to discuss this issue with the US Government in order to coordinate a response?

3. What additional penalties is the EU prepared to propose against Zimbabwe if it is found to be actively working to export uranium?

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

It is our understanding that there is currently no active exploration of uranium being undertaken in Zimbabwe. Allegations that a memorandum of understanding between Zimbabwe and Iran would include provisions relating to sale of uranium are not confirmed at this stage. While the situation is being monitored by several stakeholders, it would be speculative to discuss which concrete measures would be undertaken were such information to be confirmed.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009864/13
al Consiglio
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Presunti progetti di al-Qaida di attaccare le reti ferroviarie europee

Il 19 agosto 2013 il quotidiano tedesco Bild ha riferito che al-Qaida starebbe progettando attacchi contro le reti ferroviarie europee ad alta velocità. Gli attacchi potrebbero essere realizzati mediante esplosivi installati sui treni e nelle gallerie, oppure al-Qaida potrebbe sabotare le linee ferroviarie o i relativi cavi elettrici. Stando al quotidiano, le informazioni proverrebbero dall'Agenzia per la sicurezza nazionale statunitense. L'Agenzia ha riferito che sono state effettuate diverse conferenze telefoniche tra vari esponenti di al-Qaida e che al centro delle loro conversazioni vi era il tema degli attentati sulla rete ferroviaria europea.

Le autorità tedesche hanno reagito inviando agenti di polizia in borghese nelle stazioni e aumentando la sorveglianza. In precedenza gli esperti di intelligence avevano intercettato messaggi tra il leader di al-Qaida, Ayman al-Zawahiri, e il suo vice, capo delle cellule yemenite, Naser al-Wahishi, che discutevano della possibilità di effettuare attacchi contro le ambasciate occidentali in Medio Oriente. Questo ha portato alla chiusura di diverse ambasciate statunitensi e di altri paesi occidentali nelle regioni arabe e musulmane.

1. Alla luce delle allarmanti rivelazioni secondo cui al-Qaida starebbe progettando attacchi alle reti ferroviarie europee, quali azioni sta intraprendendo il Consiglio per condividere le informazioni di intelligence al fine di individuare i potenziali obiettivi chiave di al-Qaida?

2. Quali misure sta adottando il Consiglio per assicurare che le informazioni di intelligence relative ad al-Qaida siano diffuse tra gli Stati membri?

3. È il Consiglio intenzionato a formulare raccomandazioni, e se sì quali, al fine di aumentare la sicurezza dei passeggeri sulle reti ferroviarie?

Risposta
(5 novembre 2013)

Ai sensi dell'articolo 4, paragrafo 2 del TUE, la sicurezza nazionale resta di esclusiva competenza degli Stati membri. Ne consegue che qualsiasi decisione di condividere o scambiare informazioni di intelligence spetti a ogni singolo Stato membro.

La questione della cooperazione tra Stati membri e dello scambio di migliori prassi al fine di sviluppare una politica in materia di sicurezza dei trasporti terrestri, comprese le reti ferroviarie europee, è attualmente affrontata in seno al gruppo di esperti per la sicurezza dei trasporti terrestri, istituito dalla Commissione nel maggio 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009864/13
to the Council
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Alleged Al-Qaeda plots against Europe's rail networks

On 19 August 2013, the German newspaper *Bild* reported that al-Qaeda may attempt to launch attacks on European high speed rail networks. This could include explosives planted on trains and in tunnels, or al-Qaeda may carry out acts of sabotage against rail tracks or electrical cabling. According to the newspaper, the information came from the US National Security Agency. The NSA reported that there have been several conference calls between various al-Qaeda members who have made attacks on Europe's rail network a 'central topic' of their conversations.

The German authorities have responded by deploying plain-clothes police officers to stations and increasing surveillance. Prior to this latest news, intelligence experts intercepted messages between al-Qaeda's chief, Ayman al-Zawahiri, and his deputy in Yemen, Nasser al-Wahishi, who discussed targeting western embassies in the Middle East. This led to the closure of a number of US and other western embassies across the Arab and Muslim world.

1. In the light of alarming reports that al-Qaeda may attempt to launch attacks against European rail networks, what steps is the Council taking to pool intelligence in order to identify al-Qaeda's potential key targets?

2. What steps is the Council taking to help ensure that intelligence on al-Qaeda is being distributed among Member States?

3. What recommendations, if any, is the Council prepared to make in order to increase passenger security on rail networks?

Reply
(5 November 2013)

Under Article 4.2 TEU, national security remains the sole responsibility of Member States. It follows that any decision to pool or share intelligence is a matter for each individual Member State.

Cooperation between Member States and the exchange of best practices with a view to developing policy on the security of land transport, including European rail networks, is being addressed in the Land Transport Security Expert Group set up by the Commission in May 2012.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009865/13
al Consiglio
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Presunti commando omicida sostenuti dall'Iran e operanti negli Emirati arabi uniti

Il 21 luglio 2013, il *Sunday Times* ha riportato la notizia relativa alla scomparsa di un cittadino britannico di origini iraniane, Abbas Yazdanpanah Yazdi, dal suo ufficio a Dubai. Il sig. Yazdi è il direttore generale della società Echelon con sede a Dubai e si ritiene che sia stato sequestrato da agenti dei servizi segreti iraniani. Aveva deposto dinanzi a un tribunale arbitrale all'Aia in una controversia tra la National Iranian Oil Company e Crescent Petroleum, che ha sede negli Emirati arabi uniti. Si presume che in precedenza, negli anni '90, egli sia stato detenuto e torturato dai servizi segreti iraniani e sia poi fuggito nel Regno Unito.

Il sig. Yazdi avrebbe dovuto concludere la sua deposizione il giorno successivo al suo rapimento. La polizia di Dubai ritiene che sia ancora vivo, ma non conosce di preciso il luogo in cui è tenuto prigioniero. La moglie e gli amici sostengono che agenti iraniani lo inseguivano da mesi e credono che sia ora detenuto in Iran.

1. Quali indagini è disposto il Consiglio ad avviare presso le autorità iraniane in merito al luogo in cui si trova Abbas Yazdanpanah Yazdi?

2. In che modo valuta il Consiglio le attività degli agenti iraniani che operano al di fuori dell'Iran, i quali rappresentano una reale minaccia per i membri della comunità iraniana in esilio?

3. Quali misure sta adottando il Consiglio per proteggere gli esuli iraniani che sono potenzialmente a rischio di essere sequestrati da agenti iraniani?

Risposta
(21 ottobre 2013)

Il Consiglio non ha discusso la questione sollevata nell'interrogazione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009865/13
to the Council
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Alleged Iranian-backed hit squads operating in the UAE

On 21 July 2013 the *Sunday Times* reported the disappearance of an Iranian-born British citizen, Abbas Yazdanpanah Yazdi, from his office in Dubai. Mr Yazdi is the CEO of the Dubai-based firm Echelon, and it is believed that he was abducted by Iranian intelligence agents. He had been giving evidence to an arbitration tribunal in The Hague, involving a dispute between the National Iranian Oil Company and Crescent Petroleum, which is based in the UAE. It is alleged that he had been detained and tortured by Iranian intelligence agents in the 1990s and had later fled to the United Kingdom.

Mr Yazdi had been due to finish his testimony the day after he was kidnapped. Police in Dubai believe that he is still alive but are uncertain as to where he is being kept. According to his wife and friends, Iranian agents had been pursuing him for months and they now believe that he is being held in Iran.

1. What enquiries is the Council prepared to make with the Iranian authorities as to the whereabouts of Abbas Yazdanpanah Yazdi?

2. What assessment does the Council make regarding the activities of Iranian agents operating outside of Iran, who pose a real threat to members of the country's exiled community?

3. What steps is the Council taking to protect Iranian exiles who are potentially at risk of being abducted by Iranian intelligence agents?

Reply
(21 October 2013)

The Council has not discussed the issue.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-009866/13
til Kommissionen
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE), Gaston Franco (PPE), Jo Leinen (S&D) og Margrete Auken (Verts/ALE)
(4. september 2013)

Om: Skovrydning og tab af biodiversitet

Ifølge en uafhængig rapport udarbejdet for Kommissionen er EU førende i den industrialiserede verden, hvad angår tiltagende skovrydning i verden ([1]). Det europæiske forbrug af varer har ført til tab af mindst ni millioner hektar skov mellem 1990 og 2008. Skovene i Latinamerika, Sydøstasien og Afrika er hårdest ramt. De store industrialiserede økonomier, herunder Kina, er ansvarlige for omtrent en tredjedel af den samlede skovrydning, der er sket på globalt plan i samme periode. Europas stadigt voksende efterspørgsel efter kød, mejeriprodukter, biomasse og biobrændstoffer til energi og andre produkter, der kræver store landområder, har lagt yderligere pres på skovenes økosystemer verden over.

I 2008 lovede EU's miljøministre at arbejde hen imod målet med at sætte en stopper for det globale skovtab inden 2030 og i hvert fald at halvere den tropiske skovrydning inden 2020, sammenlignet med niveauet i 2008 ([2]). Efter en formel overenskomst vil EU's 7. miljøhandlingsprogram opfordre EU til at overveje omfattende planer til imødegåelse af skovrydningen og forringelsen af skovene på globalt plan.

Hvad er Kommissionens planer for at udbrede resultaterne af rapporten om EU-forbrugets indflydelse på skovrydningen i de kommende måneder?

Vil Kommissionen overveje at udvikle en ambitiøs EU-handlingsplan vedrørende skovrydning og skovforringelse, og hvis ja, hvornår forventer den, at en sådan plan vil være færdigudviklet? Har Kommissionen opstillet en tidsplan, mål, aktiviteter og ressourcer til dette, og hvis ja, kan den oplyse Parlamentet om detaljerne?

Er Kommissionen enig i, at der, for at en hvilken som helst plan skal kunne lykkes, skal gennemføres politikker, der udelukker varer og produkter, der er knyttet til skovrydning og skovforringelse, fra EU-markedet, idet man også hjælper udviklingslande med at imødegå skovrydning og skovforringelse i deres egne områder?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Janez Potočnik
(30. oktober 2013)

Den pågældende rapport blev bestilt som opfølgning på meddelelsen fra 2008 om »en indsats for at imødegå udfordringerne ved skovrydning og skovødelæggelse med henblik på at bekæmpe klimaændringer og tab af biodiversitet« ([3]).

Resultaterne af denne rapport er blevet offentliggjort og er tilgængelige på Kommissionens websted. Kommissionen har fremlagt de vigtigste resultater på en række ekspertmøder.

Som en del af den politiske aftale, der blev indgået i juni 2013 vedrørende den 7. miljøhandlingsplan, er Europa-Parlamentet og medlemsstaterne blevet enige om at vurdere de miljømæssige virkninger af Unionens forbrug af fødevarer og andre varer i en global sammenhæng og om nødvendigt udarbejde politikforslag til håndtering af resultaterne af disse vurderinger og at overveje udviklingen af en EU-handlingsplan vedrørende skovrydning og skovforringelse.

I næste måned vil Kommissionen gøre status over de eksisterende politikker og foranstaltninger, identificere mangler, fortsætte med at indsamle idéer og lære fra EU-initiativer og andre initiativer, der direkte eller indirekte tager fat på de underliggende årsager til skovrydning og skovforringelse.

Kommissionen er enig i, at en kombination af foranstaltninger på udbuds- og efterspørgselssiden sandsynligvis vil være den mest effektive måde at takle problemet på, ligesom under FLEGT-handlingsplanen. Ved eventuelle initiativer på dette område skal der også tages hensyn til udviklingen i UNFCCC-klimaændringsforhandlingerne vedrørende REDD+.

([1]) »The impact of EU consumption on deforestation« http://ec.europa.eu/environment/forests/impact_deforestation.htm
([2]) Commission Communication and Council Conclusions (2008), http://ec.europa.eu/environment/forests/pdf/com_2008_645.pdf; http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/104508.pdf
([3]) KOM(2008) 645.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009866/13
an die Kommission
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE), Gaston Franco (PPE), Jo Leinen (S&D) und Margrete Auken (Verts/ALE)
(4. September 2013)

Betrifft: Entwaldung und Rückgang der biologischen Vielfalt

Einem von der Kommission in Auftrag gegebenen unabhängigen Bericht zufolge belegt die EU als Mitverursacher der weltweiten Entwaldung bei den Industrieländern die Führungsposition ([1]). Der Güterkonsum Europas ging zwischen 1990 und 2008 zulasten einer Fläche von 9 Millionen Hektar Wald. Am schlimmsten sind davon Wälder in Lateinamerika, Südostasien und Afrika betroffen. Große industrialisierte Volkswirtschaften wie China zeichnen im Vergleichszeitraum für etwa ein Drittel der weltweiten Entwaldung verantwortlich. Durch die immer weiter steigende Nachfrage Europas nach Fleisch, Milchprodukten, Biomasse und Biokraftstoffen für die Energieerzeugung sowie anderen Erzeugnissen, für deren Herstellung oder Gewinnung große Nutzflächen ausgebeutet werden, geraten die Waldökosysteme der Welt zunehmend unter Druck.

2008 haben die EU-Umweltminister zugesichert, sich dafür einzusetzen, den fortschreitenden Verlust an Waldflächen bis 2030 zum Stillstand zu bringen und dafür zu sorgen, dass die Abholzung tropischer Wälder bis 2020 im Vergleich zum Stand von 2008 auf die Hälfte reduziert wird ([2]). Es wurde förmlich vereinbart, die EU im Rahmen des 7. Umweltaktionsprogramms aufzufordern, sich mit umfassenden Plänen zu befassen, die im weltweiten Maßstab der Lösung des Problems der Entwaldung und der Schädigung von Wäldern dienen.

Wie beabsichtigt die Kommission, die Ergebnisse des Berichts über die Folgen des EU-Konsums unter dem Gesichtspunkt der Entwaldung in den nächsten Monaten verfügbar zu machen?

Plant die Kommission, einen ehrgeizigen EU-Maßnahmenplan in Bezug auf Entwaldung und Waldschädigung auszuarbeiten? Wenn ja, wann wird die Arbeit an diesem Maßnahmenplan abgeschlossen sein? Wurden dafür bereits Fristen, Ziele und Maßnahmen festgelegt sowie Ressourcen vorgesehen? Könnte die Kommission das Parlament ggf. über die Einzelheiten unterrichten?

Teilt die Kommission die Ansicht, dass ein erfolgversprechender Plan die Umsetzung von Maßnahmen vorsehen muss, die zum einen darauf hinauslaufen, dass die Güter und Erzeugnisse, die im Zusammenhang mit dem Problem der Entwaldung und der Schädigung von Wäldern stehen, in der EU vom Markt genommen werden und zum anderen die Entwicklungsländer dabei unterstützen, diesem Problem in ihrem Hoheitsgebiet zu begegnen?

Antwort von Herrn Potočnik im Namen der Kommission
(30. Oktober 2013)

Der genannte Bericht wurde als Folgemaßnahme der 2008 angenommenen Mitteilung „Bekämpfung der Entwaldung und der Waldschädigung zur Eindämmung des Klimawandels und des Verlustes der biologischen Vielfalt“ ([3]) in Auftrag gegeben.

Die Ergebnisse dieses Berichts wurden veröffentlicht und sind auf der Website der Kommission abrufbar. Die Kommission hat die wichtigsten Ergebnisse in mehreren Sachverständigensitzungen vorgestellt.

Im Rahmen der politischen Einigung, die im Juni 2013 zum siebten Umweltaktionsplan erzielt wurde, haben das Europäische Parlament und die Mitgliedstaaten vereinbart, die weltweiten Umweltauswirkungen des Verbrauchs an Lebensmitteln und Non-Food-Erzeugnissen in der EU zu bewerten, gegebenenfalls politische Maßnahmen auszuarbeiten, die aufgrund der Ergebnisse dieser Bewertungen getroffen werden müssen, und die Ausarbeitung eines EU-Maßnahmenplans in Bezug auf Entwaldung und Waldschädigung zu prüfen.

In den kommenden Monaten will die Kommission eine Bestandsaufnahme der vorhandenen Strategien und Maßnahmen vornehmen, etwaige Lücken ermitteln sowie weiterhin Ideen sammeln und Erfahrungen aus Initiativen der EU und anderer Stellen auswerten, die mittelbar oder unmittelbar die Ursachen der Entwaldung und Waldschädigung zum Gegenstand haben.

([1]) Quelle: „The impact of EU consumption on deforestation“ im Internet unter: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/forests/impact_deforestation.htm
([2]) Mitteilung der Kommission (KOM(2008)0645/3) und Schlussfolgerungen des Rates (Brüssel, 4. Dezember 2008), im Internet unter: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/envir/104508.pdf
([3]) KOM(2008)645.

Die Kommission teilt die Auffassung, dass diesem Problem mit einer Kombination aus Maßnahmen der Nachfrage- und der Angebotsseite, wie sie etwa im FLEGT-Aktionsplan vorgesehen sind, am ehesten beizukommen ist. Bei etwaigen Initiativen in diesem Bereich müssten auch die Entwicklungen bei den Verhandlungen zur VN-Klimarahmenkonvention in Bezug auf das REDD+-Programm berücksichtigt werden.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009866/13
à la Commission
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE), Gaston Franco (PPE), Jo Leinen (S&D) et Margrete Auken (Verts/ALE)
(4 septembre 2013)

Objet: Déforestation et perte de biodiversité

D'après un rapport indépendant préparé pour la Commission, l'Union européenne est, parmi les régions industrialisées, celle qui est à l'origine de la plus grande partie de la déforestation mondiale ([1]). Entre 1990 et 2008, la consommation de biens en Europe a conduit à une perte de couverture forestière d'au moins 9 millions d'hectares, affectant principalement les forêts d'Amérique latine, d'Asie du Sud-Est et d'Afrique. Dans la même période, les grandes économies développées, dont la Chine, ont causé environ un tiers de la déforestation ayant eu lieu à l'échelle mondiale. En Europe, la demande en constante augmentation de viande, de produits laitiers, de biomasse et de biocarburants sources d'énergie, ainsi que d'autres produits dont la production requiert l'épuisement de vastes terrains, exerce une pression croissante sur les écosystèmes forestiers du monde entier.

En 2008, les ministres de l'environnement de l'Union se sont engagés à œuvrer pour stopper la diminution de la couverture forestière à l'échelle mondiale avant 2030 et pour réduire au moins de moitié la déforestation tropicale avant 2020, par rapport aux niveaux de 2008 ([2]). Après accord officiel, le septième programme d'action pour l'environnement invitera l'Union à réfléchir à l'élaboration de plans détaillés de lutte contre la déforestation et la dégradation des forêts à l'échelle mondiale.

Que prévoit la Commission pour mettre à disposition dans les prochains mois les conclusions du rapport relatif à l'impact de la consommation de l'Union européenne sur la déforestation?

La Commission envisage-t-elle d'élaborer un plan d'action ambitieux relatif à la déforestation et à la dégradation des forêts? Dans l'affirmative, dans quel délai le processus d'élaboration pourrait-il être achevé? La Commission a-t-elle prévu un calendrier, des objectifs, des activités ou des ressources à cette fin? Dans l'affirmative, peut-elle fournir ces informations au Parlement?

La Commission convient-elle que, pour atteindre les résultats souhaités, un plan d'action doit prévoir la mise en œuvre de politiques excluant du marché commun toutes les matières premières et tous les produits à l'origine de la déforestation et de la dégradation des forêts, tout en incitant en parallèle les pays en développement à lutter contre la déforestation et la dégradation des forêts sur leur propre territoire?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(30 octobre 2013)

Le rapport concerné a été commandité dans le cadre du suivi de la communication de 2008 intitulée «Combattre la déforestation et la dégradation des forêts pour lutter contre le changement climatique et la diminution de la biodiversité ([3])».

Les conclusions de ce rapport ont été publiées et sont disponibles sur le site web de la Commission. La Commission en a présenté les principales lors de plusieurs réunions d'experts.

Dans le cadre de l'accord politique conclu en juin 2013 sur le septième plan d'action pour l'environnement, le Parlement européen et les États membres sont convenus d'étudier l'incidence sur l'environnement, dans un contexte mondial, de la consommation dans l'Union de denrées alimentaires et de produits non alimentaires et, le cas échéant, d'élaborer des propositions stratégiques en vue de tenir compte des conclusions de ces évaluations, et d'envisager l'établissement d'un plan d'action de l'Union européenne sur la déforestation et la dégradation des forêts.

Le mois prochain, la Commission entend faire le point sur les politiques et mesures existantes, identifier les lacunes, continuer à recueillir des idées et à tirer des enseignements des initiatives de l'UE, notamment, qui s'attaquent directement ou indirectement aux causes sous-jacentes de la déforestation et de la dégradation des forêts.

([1]) Voir The impact of EU consumption on deforestation à l'adresse: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/forests/impact_deforestation.htm
([2]) Voir la communication de la Commission (COM(2008)0645/3) et les conclusions du Conseil (Bruxelles, 4 décembre 2008), à l'adresse: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/envir/104508.pdf
([3]) COM(2008) 645 final.

La Commission reconnaît qu'une combinaison de mesures concernant tant la demande que l'offre est susceptible d'être la plus efficace pour traiter cette question, comme dans le cadre du plan d'action FLEGT. Les éventuelles initiatives dans ce domaine devront également tenir compte de l'évolution des négociations sur le changement climatique dans le cadre de la CCNUCC en ce qui concerne REDD+.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-009866/13
aan de Commissie
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE), Gaston Franco (PPE), Jo Leinen (S&D) en Margrete Auken (Verts/ALE)
(4 september 2013)

Betreft: Ontbossing en biodiversiteitsverlies

Volgens een onafhankelijk rapport, opgesteld in opdracht van de Europese Commissie, is de EU koploper van de geïndustrialiseerde wereld in het aanjagen van de wereldwijde ontbossing ([1]). De Europese consumptie van goederen heeft geleid tot ten minste negen miljoen hectare bosvernietiging tussen 1990 en 2008. Bossen in Latijns-Amerika, Zuidoost-Azië en Afrika worden het zwaarst getroffen. Belangrijke geïndustrialiseerde economieën, waaronder China, waren verantwoordelijk voor circa een derde van alle ontbossing wereldwijd in dezelfde periode. Door de almaar toenemende vraag in Europa naar vlees, zuivelproducten, biomassa en -brandstoffen voor energie en andere producten waarvoor grote stukken grond nodig zijn, komen bosecosystemen over de hele wereld steeds meer onder druk te staan.

In 2008 hebben de EU-ministers van milieu hun steun betuigd aan het nastreven van het doel dat er in 2030 op wereldschaal geen bosareaal meer verloren mag gaan en dat vóór 2020 de ontbossing in de tropen ten minste met 50 % moet verminderen ten opzichte van de niveaus van 2008 ([2]). Naar aanleiding van een formele overeenkomst zal de EU in het zevende EU-milieuactieprogramma worden verzocht omvattende plannen ter bestrijding van ontbossing en bosdegradatie op wereldschaal te overwegen.

Wat heeft de Commissie voor de komende maanden gepland om de resultaten van het rapport betreffende de impact van de EU-consumptie op ontbossing bekend te maken?

Overweegt de Commissie een ambitieus EU-actieplan inzake ontbossing en bosdegradatie te ontwikkelen? Heeft de Commissie hiertoe een tijdschema, doelstellingen, activiteiten en hulpmiddelen vastgesteld en zo ja, kan de Commissie het Parlement hierover nader informeren?

Is de Commissie het ermee eens dat de uitvoering van beleid om grondstoffen en producten die verband houden met ontbossing en bosdegradatie van de EU-markt te bannen, in combinatie met ondersteuning van ontwikkelingslanden bij het tegengaan van ontbossing en bosdegradatie op hun eigen grondgebied, onontbeerlijk is voor elk succesvol plan?

Antwoord van de heer Potočnik namens de Commissie
(30 oktober 2013)

De opdracht voor het desbetreffende rapport werd gegeven bij wijze van follow-up van de mededeling uit 2008 „De uitdagingen van ontbossing en aantasting van bossen aangaan om de klimaatverandering en het verlies aan biodiversiteit aan te pakken ([3])".

De bevindingen van dit rapport werden gepubliceerd en zijn beschikbaar op de website van de Commissie. De Commissie heeft de belangrijkste bevindingen op verschillende vergaderingen met deskundigen gepresenteerd.

Als onderdeel van de politieke overeenkomst die in juni 2013 over het zevende milieuactieplan werd bereikt, hebben het Europees Parlement en de lidstaten besloten de wereldwijde gevolgen voor het milieu van de consumptie in de Unie van voedings- en niet-voedingsgrondstoffen te evalueren en eventueel beleidsvoorstellen te doen om de vastgestelde problemen te verhelpen, alsook de opstelling van een EU-actieplan inzake ontbossing en aantasting van bossen te overwegen.

De Commissie is van plan volgende maand de inventaris op te maken van de bestaande beleidsinitiatieven en -maatregelen, lacunes op te sporen, ideeën te blijven verzamelen en te leren van EU- en andere initiatieven die de onderliggende oorzaken van ontbossing en aantasting van bossen direct of indirect aanpakken.

([1]) „The impact of EU consumption on deforestation" http://ec.europa.eu/environment/forests/impact_deforestation.htm
([2]) Mededeling van de Commissie en conclusies van de Raad (2008), http://ec.europa.eu/environment/forests/pdf/com_2008_645.pdf; http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/envir/104508.pdf
([3]) COM(2008) 645.

De Commissie is het ermee eens dat een combinatie van maatregelen aan de vraag- en de aanbodzijde (zoals bij het Flegt-actieplan) waarschijnlijk het doeltreffendst is om het probleem aan te pakken. Bij eventuele initiatieven op dit gebied zal eveneens rekening moeten worden houden met ontwikkelingen in de onderhandelingen over de klimaatverandering in het kader van de UNFCCC wat REDD+ betreft.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009866/13
to the Commission
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE), Gaston Franco (PPE), Jo Leinen (S&D) and Margrete Auken (Verts/ALE)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Deforestation and loss of biodiversity

According to an independent report prepared for the Commission, the EU leads the industrialised world in driving global deforestation ([1]). European consumption of goods led to a loss of forest land of at least 9 million hectares between 1990 and 2008. Forests in Latin America, South-East Asia and Africa are suffering the greatest impact. Major industrialised economies, including China, were responsible for about one third of all deforestation that occurred globally in the same period. Europe's ever-increasing demand for meat, dairy products, biomass and biofuels for energy, as well as other products that require the exhaustion of large areas of land, has put growing pressure on forest ecosystems around the world.

In 2008, EU environment ministers pledged to pursue the goal of halting global forest loss by 2030 and at least halving tropical deforestation by 2020, compared with 2008 levels ([2]). Upon formal agreement, the 7th Environment Action Programme will call on the EU to consider comprehensive plans to tackle deforestation and forest degradation on a global scale.

What are the Commission's plans to make available the findings of the report on the EU's consumption impact on deforestation in the coming months?

Will the Commission consider the development of an ambitious EU action plan on deforestation and forest degradation? If so, by when does it expect this development to be completed? Has it established a timeframe, objectives, activities and resources to this end? If so, can it inform Parliament of the details?

Does the Commission agree that any successful plan needs to provide for the implementation of policies that eliminate commodities and products linked to deforestation and forest degradation from the EU market, while at the same time supporting developing countries to tackle deforestation and forest degradation in their own territories?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(30 October 2013)

The report in question was commissioned as a follow-up of the 2008 Communication on 'addressing the challenges of deforestation and forest degradation to tackle climate change and biodiversity loss ([3])'.

The findings of this report have been published and are available on the Commission's website. The Commission has presented the main findings at several expert meetings.

As part of the political agreement reached in June 2013 on the seventh Environment Action Plan, the European Parliament and Member States have agreed to assess the environmental impact, in a global context, of Union consumption of food and non-food commodities and, if appropriate, develop policy proposals to address the findings of such assessments, and consider the development of an EU action plan on deforestation and forest degradation.

In the coming month, the Commission plans to take stock of existing policies and measures, identify gaps, continue to gather ideas and learn from EU and other initiatives that directly or indirectly address the underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation.

The Commission agrees that a combination of demand and supply side measures is likely to be the most effective in addressing the issue, as under the FLEGT Action Plan. Possible initiatives in this field will also need to take into account developments in the UNFCCC climate change negotiations related to REDD+.

([1]) See 'The impact of EU consumption on deforestation' available at http://ec.europa.eu/environment/forests/impact_deforestation.htm
([2]) Commission Communication (COM(2008)0645/3) and Council conclusions (Brussels, 4 December 2008), available at http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/envir/104508.pdf
([3]) COM(2008) 645.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-009867/13
komissiolle
Hannu Takkula (ALDE)
(4. syyskuuta 2013)

Aihe: Hizbollahin sotilaallisen siiven merkitseminen mustalle listalle

Hizbollahin sotilaallinen siipi lisättiin heinäkuussa 2013 Euroopan unionin viralliseen terroristiluetteloon. EU:n määrittely on kuitenkin riittämätön koko organisaation merkitsemiseksi mustalle listalle, mikä mahdollistaa sen muiden toimintojen jatkumisen esimerkiksi Euroopassa ”poliittisen siiven” alaisena, jota ei virallisesti ole edes olemassa.

Hizbollahin sisäiset lähteet ovat jopa itse antaneet ymmärtää, että Hizbollah on yksittäinen organisaatio, jossa ei ole toisistaan erillisiä ”siipiä”.

Miksi komissio on päättänyt lisätä vain Hizbollahin oletetun sotilaallisen ”siiven” terroristijärjestöjen luetteloon?

Milloin komissio lisää koko organisaation EU:n terroristiluetteloon?

Korkean edustajan, varapuheenjohtaja Catherine Ashtonin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(25. lokakuuta 2013)

Neuvosto hyväksyi 25. heinäkuuta 2013 päätöksen 2013/395/YUTP ([1]), jolla Hizbollahin sotilaallinen siipi sisällytettiin niiden henkilöiden, ryhmien ja yhteisöjen joukkoon, joita yhteisen kannan 2001/931/YUTP ([2]) 2, 3 ja 4 artikla koskevat. Neuvoston päätös lisätä Hizbollahin sotilaallinen siipi luetteloon oli yksimielinen, ja neuvosto otti sitä tehdessään huomioon tiedon tai aineiston päätöksestä, jonka toimivaltainen viranomainen oli tämän yhteisön suhteen tehnyt.

On huomattava, että päätöksen 2013/395/YUTP liite ja sitä vastaava neuvoston täytäntöönpanoasetus (EU) N:o 714/2013 ([3]) sisältävät tiettyjä selvennyksiä liittyen Hizbollahin sotilaallisen siiven salanimiin ja tarkentaen, että Hizbollahin sotilaallinen siipi kattaa myös kaikki sille raportoivat yksiköt. Yhteisen kannan 2001/931/YUTP nojalla toteutetut toimet ovat osa terrorismin ja ennen kaikkea terrorismin rahoittamisen vastaisia EU:n strategioita.

Koko Hizbollah-järjestön mahdollinen lisääminen luetteloon vaatisi neuvostolta uuden päätöksen.

([1]) 2013/395/YUTP: Neuvoston päätös 2013/395/YUTP, annettu 25 päivänä heinäkuuta 2013, niitä henkilöitä, ryhmiä ja yhteisöjä, joihin sovelletaan erityistoimenpiteiden toteuttamisesta terrorismin torjumiseksi hyväksytyn yhteisen kannan 2001/931/YUTP 2, 3 ja 4 artiklaa, koskevan luettelon ajan tasalle saattamisesta ja muuttamisesta sekä päätöksen 2012/765/YUTP kumoamisesta (EUVL L 201, 26.7.2013).

([2]) Neuvoston yhteinen kanta 27 päivältä joulukuuta 2001 erityistoimenpiteiden toteuttamisesta terrorismin torjumiseksi, EYVL L 344, 28.12.2001.

([3]) Neuvoston täytäntöönpanoasetus (EU) N:o 714/2013, annettu 25 päivänä heinäkuuta 2013, tiettyihin henkilöihin ja yhteisöihin kohdistuvista erityisistä rajoittavista toimenpiteistä terrorismin torjumiseksi annetun asetuksen (EY) N:o 2580/2001 2 artiklan 3 kohdan täytäntöönpanosta sekä täytäntöönpanoasetuksen (EU) N:o 1169/2012 kumoamisesta (EUVL L 201, 26.7.2013).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009867/13
to the Commission
Hannu Takkula (ALDE)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Blacklisting the military wing of Hezbollah

In July 2013, the military wing of Hezbollah was included in the official terrorist list of the European Union. However, the EU's designation falls short of blacklisting the entire organisation, allowing its other operations in Europe, for example, to go on under the cover of the 'political wing', which officially does not even exist.

Sources within Hezbollah itself have even suggested that Hezbollah is a single organisation with no 'wings' that are separate from one another.

Why has the Commission decided to include only Hezbollah's presumed military 'wing' in the list of terrorist organisations?

When will the Commission include the entire organisation in the EU's terrorist list?

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

On 25 July 2013 the Council adopted Council Decision 2013/395/CFSP ([1]) including the Hizballah Military Wing in the list of persons, groups and entities to which Articles 2, 3 and 4 of Common Position 2001/931/CFSP ([2]) apply. The decision to add the Hezbollah military wing in the list has been taken by the Council by unanimity, and taking into account the information or material in the file in relation to a decision by a competent authority in respect of this entity.

It is noted that the annex to Decision 2013/395/CFSP and the corresponding Council Implementing Regulation (EU) No 714/2013 ([3]) include certain clarifications as to a.k.a.'s (aliases) of the Hizballah Military Wing and clarifying that it includes all units reporting to it. The measures taken in the framework of Common Position 2001/931/CFSP are part of the EU's strategies to combat terrorism and in particular the fight against the financing of terrorism.

Regarding a possible inclusion of the entire Hizballah organisation on the list, this would require a new decision by the Council.

([1]) 2013/395/CFSP: Council Decision 2013/395/CFSP of 25 July 2013 updating and amending the list of persons, groups and entities subject to Articles 2, 3 and 4 of Common Position 2001/931/CFSP on the application of specific measures to combat terrorism, and repealing Decision 2012/765/CFSP, OJ L 201, 26.7.2013.

([2]) Council Common Position of 27 December 2001 on the application of specific measures to combat terrorism, OJ L 344, 28.12.2001.

([3]) Council Implementing Regulation (EU) No 714/2013 of 25 July 2013 implementing Article 2(3) of Regulation (EC) No 2580/2001 on specific restrictive measures directed against certain persons and entities with a view to combating terrorism, and repealing Implementing Regulation (EU) No 1169/2012, OJ L 201, 26.7.2013.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-009868/13
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(4 september 2013)

Betreft: Vervolg op schriftelijke vraag E-006902/2013 over de richtlijn herstel en afwikkeling: hoe een golf faillissementen kan worden veroorzaakt

Aangezien de Commissie in haar antwoord op schriftelijke vraag E-006902/2013 slechts de grote lijnen schetst van haar wetgevingsvoorstel over het herstel en de afwikkeling van banken, zou ik haar willen vragen een uitgebreid en gemotiveerd antwoord op de volgende vragen te geven:

1. Is de Commissie van mening dat het verdwijnen van niet-financiële ondernemingen van de markt minder ernstig is dan het verdwijnen van financiële ondernemingen?

2. Is zij van mening dat financiële instellingen een grotere bijdrage leveren aan de echte economie dan niet-financiële ondernemingen? Zo niet, waarom wordt het dan nuttiger geacht om kredietinstellingen en beleggingsondernemingen te behoeden voor een wanbetaling dan andere ondernemingen?

3. Is zij van mening dat de voorgestelde bail-in-regeling verenigbaar is met het EU-beleid en de EU-maatregelen voor ondernemingen?

Antwoord van de heer Barnier namens de Commissie
(22 oktober 2013)

De Commissie is van mening dat er in beginsel geen verschil mag zijn tussen het faillissement van niet-financiële en financiële ondernemingen. In geval van een faillissement moeten in beginsel beide volgens een normale insolventieprocedure worden geliquideerd. Het liquideren van een kredietinstelling volgens de normale insolventieprocedure zou echter bijvoorbeeld het ongewenste gevolg kunnen hebben dat een aanzienlijk deel van de bevolking en bedrijven gedurende bepaalde tijd geen toegang tot hun lopende rekeningen en spaarrekeningen, betalingsdiensten of kredietlijnen zouden hebben.

Dit betekent niet dat een kredietinstelling een hogere toegevoegde waarde voor de economie heeft dan een niet-financiële onderneming. Wegens haar intermediërende rol bij sparen, kredietverlening, betalen en ontvangen van geld kan het faillissement van een kredietinstelling een andere aanpak vereisen dan het faillissement van een niet-financiële onderneming. Het voorstel van de Commissie van 2012 voor een richtlijn inzake bankherstel en bankafwikkeling (BRRD) heeft onder meer tot doel de continuïteit van kritieke functies van kredietinstellingen voor de reële economie te verzekeren en de aandeelhouders en crediteuren te dwingen de verliezen van kredietinstellingen te dragen zoals bij een normale insolventieprocedure het geval zou zijn geweest.

Het ondernemingenbeleid van de Europese Unie beoogt het vergemakkelijken van het opstarten en ontwikkelen van ondernemingen, met name kleine en middelgrote ondernemingen (kmo's), in heel de Unie. De Raad heeft het bail-ininstrument in het kader van de BRRD aangevuld met een preferentie voor deposito's van kmo's, zodat deze in dat scenario minder waarschijnlijk verliezen zullen moeten absorberen. De Commissie is voorstander van die preferentie om bij een bankencrisis ondernemingen nader te beschermen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009868/13
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Follow-up to Written Question E-006902/2013 on the Recovery and Resolution Directive: how to cause a flood of bankruptcies

Since the answer given by the Commission to Written Question E-006902/2013 only sets out the lines of its legislative proposal on the recovery and resolution of banks, I would like to ask it to provide detailed and circumstantiated answers to the following questions:

1. Does the Commission think that the exit of non-financial businesses from the market is less serious than the exit of financial ones?

2. Does it think that financial institutions contribute to the real economy more than non-financial businesses? If not, why should it be considered more worthwhile to protect credit institutions and investment firms than other businesses from default?

3. Does it think that the proposed regime of bail-ins is compatible with EU enterprise policies and actions?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(22 October 2013)

The Commission is of opinion that in principle there should not be a difference between the failure of non-financial and financial companies. In case of a failure both should in principle be wound down under normal insolvency proceedings. However, winding down a credit institution under normal insolvency proceedings could, for example, have the undesired effect that a significant part of the population and businesses would not have access for a certain time to their current and savings accounts, payment services or credit lines.

This does not imply that a credit institution has a higher added value to the economy than a non-financial company. However, because of its intermediating role regarding saving, lending, paying and receiving money, the failure of a credit institution can require a different approach than the failure of a non-financial company. The 2012 Commission proposal for a Bank Recovery and Resolution Directive (BRRD) has as one of its objectives the protection of the continuity of critical functions of credit institutions for the real economy, while forcing their shareholders and creditors to bear the losses as they would have had to bear in case of normal insolvency proceedings.

The enterprise policies of the European Union are intended to facilitate the initiative and development of undertakings throughout the Union, particularly that of small and medium-sized undertakings (SME). The Council has complemented the bail-in tool in the BRRD with a preference for deposits of SMEs, so that the latter are less likely to have to absorb losses in that scenario. The Commission favours such preference as a means to further protect businesses in bank crisis.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009869/13
à la Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(4 septembre 2013)

Objet: Dialogue Union européenne-États-Unis sur les risques chimiques, biologiques, radiologiques et nucléaires (CBRN)

En tant que rapporteur pour avis de la commission de l'industrie, de la recherche et de l'énergie du Parlement européen sur le renforcement de la sécurité CBRN dans l'Union européenne, j'avais encouragé, dans le cadre d'axes de collaboration stratégique bien définis, les coopérations avec les pays de l'OTAN (États-Unis et Canada) et certains États tiers pionniers via des échanges de bonnes pratiques, des dialogues structurés entre experts et le développement de capacités communes.

Je me félicite donc du lancement, le 12 juin dernier, du dialogue sur l'atténuation des risques CBRN entre l'Union européenne et les États-Unis, qui, selon la Commission, «constitue un effort renouvelé pour coordonner les activités d'assistance européennes et américaines pour atténuer les risques chimiques, biologiques, radiologiques et nucléaires de toutes sortes et les menaces de prolifération internationale».

1. Quelles activités l'Union européenne et les États-Unis vont-elles coordonner concrètement en matière de risques CBRN?

2. Une coopération industrielle et technologique l'Union européenne/États-Unis est-elle également envisagée dans ce domaine? Ce point sera-t-il discuté dans le cadre des négociations sur un nouveau partenariat avec les États-Unis (partenariat transatlantique de commerce et d'investissement, «PTCI»)?

3. L'Union européenne compte-t-elle ouvrir de nouveaux dialogues bilatéraux sur les risques CBRN avec d'autres pays?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante, au nom de la Commission
(26 novembre 2013)

1. La coordination entre l'Union européenne et les États-Unis en matière d'assistance aux pays tiers dans les domaines chimique, biologique, radiologique et nucléaire (CBRN) porte notamment sur le contrôle des exportations, la sécurité biologique/biosécurité, la reconversion des scientifiques, la contrebande et le trafic illicite de matières nucléaires. Elle vise en particulier à soutenir dans ces domaines les pays partenaires du monde entier. La coordination intervient également dans le cadre du programme de partenariat mondial du G8. L'UE et les États-Unis ont récemment engagé un dialogue stratégique afin d'étudier les efforts communs qui pourraient être réalisés pour atténuer les risques et les menaces de prolifération. L'un des outils utilisés est l'initiative du centre d'excellence CBRN, situé à Amman, où l'UE et les États-Unis mettent en commun leurs informations sur la situation au Moyen-Orient en matière de CBRN et où ils ont entamé une coopération avec la Jordanie, le Liban et l'Irak dans le domaine de la chimie. Contrôler les matières premières, les technologies et les installations et en assurer la sécurité constituent également des priorités communes.

2. Pour le moment, aucune coopération industrielle et technique n'est envisagée. L'intention est, à l'heure actuelle, d'échanger des vues afin de déployer des efforts communs, d'éviter les doubles emplois et de faire avancer les activités du programme.

L'aspect réglementaire est essentiel, tant sous l'angle des avantages économiques que, plus largement, sous celui de la pertinence des politiques menées dans le cadre du partenariat transatlantique sur le commerce et l'investissement. Il s'agit également de la partie la plus complexe des négociations puisque son ambition dépasse les résultats obtenus jusqu'à présent par l'UE ou par les États-Unis dans les négociations commerciales.

3. L'UE traite la question des risques CBRN avec d'autres partenaires stratégiques, comme le Japon, à travers des dialogues politiques, avec, par exemple, les pays d'Asie centrale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009869/13
to the Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: EU-US dialogue on chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) risks

As rapporteur for Parliament's Committee on Industry, Research and Energy on improving CBRN security in the European Union, I encouraged cooperation, in specific strategic areas, with NATO countries (US and Canada) and a select group of third countries through the sharing of best practices, the organisation of expert-level dialogues and the development of common capabilities.

I therefore welcomed the launch, on 12 June 2013, of the EU-US CBRN risk mitigation dialogue, which, in the Commission's words, 'represents a renewed effort to coordinate CBRN assistance activities to mitigate CBRN risks of all kinds and international proliferation threats'.

1. What joint initiatives will the EU and US engage in with the specific aim of addressing CBRN risks?

2. Is industrial and technological cooperation between the EU and US also being considered in this area? Will this matter be discussed in the talks on a new EU-US partnership (Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership — TTIP)?

3. Does the EU intend to open bilateral dialogues on CBRN risks with other countries?

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

1. EU-US coordination on chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) assistance to third countries includes export control, biosafety/biosecurity, redirection of scientists, nuclear smuggling and illicit trafficking. It focuses on supporting partner countries worldwide in these areas. Coordination also takes place in the framework of the G8 Global Partnership programme. The EU and US have recently engaged in a strategic dialogue to explore possible joint efforts to mitigate proliferation risks and threats. One of the tools employed is the CBRN Center of Excellence (CoE) initiative, located in Amman, where the EU and US share information on the CBRN situation in the Middle East and have begun cooperation in Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq in the chemical field. Safeguarding and securing materials, technologies and facilities is also a common priority.

2. For the moment industrial and technical cooperation is not considered. The intent now is to exchange views to develop joint efforts and to avoid duplication and scale-up in programme activities.

The regulatory aspect is critical, both in terms of economic benefits and broader policy relevance of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership. It is also the most complex part of negotiations since ambition goes beyond what the EU or the US have achieved so far in trade negotiations.

3. The EU is addressing CBRN risks with other strategic partners, such as Japan through political dialogues, for example with the countries of Central Asia.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009870/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(4 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Decreto «svuota carceri»: legittimità e misure alternative

Attualmente, in Italia sono reclusi nei 206 istituti di pena detentiva oltre 66 000 detenuti a fronte di una capienza massima di circa 45 000.

Per far fronte alla condanna definitiva della Corte europea dei diritti dell'uomo inflitta al nostro Stato per le condizioni del suo sistema carcerario, l'attuale governo ha approvato il decreto legge «svuota carceri» quale misura per risolvere il sovraffollamento degli istituti penitenziari.

Considerando che:

— dei detenuti attualmente presenti nelle carceri italiane oltre 23 000 sono stranieri, dei quali il 19 % proviene dal Marocco, il 12,6 % dalla Tunisia, il 15 % dalla Romania, l'11,9 % dall'Albania;

— il costo del loro mantenimento ammonta a circa 1 miliardo e mezzo l'anno con un esborso medio per detenuto di 200 euro al giorno;

— i detenuti comunitari condannati in uno Stato Membro diverso dal proprio possono scontare la pena nel loro paese di origine solo se essi stessi esprimono il consenso, come previsto dalla decisione quadro 2008/909/GAI del Consiglio, del 27 novembre 2008, relativa all'applicazione del principio del reciproco riconoscimento alle sentenze penali che irrogano pene detentive o misure privative della libertà personale, ai fini della loro esecuzione nell'Unione europea.

La Commissione:

intende modificare la normativa vigente ex decisione quadro 2008/909/GAI al fine di permettere il trasferimento di un detenuto in istituti penitenziari nello Stato membro di origine in maniera automatica e senza il consenso del condannato?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(24 ottobre 2013)

La Commissione rinvia l'onorevole deputato alla risposta all'interrogazione scritta E-006200/2013 dell'onorevole Geoffrey Van Orden.

La decisione quadro 2008/909/GAI ([1]) istituisce un sistema per il riconoscimento delle sentenze e l'esecuzione delle pene detentive nello Stato membro di cui i condannati sono cittadini o in cui risiedono abitualmente (o in uno Stato membro con il quale hanno stretti legami), al fine di favorirne il reinserimento sociale.

Il consenso della persona condannata al trasferimento nel paese di origine non è richiesto se l'interessato: i) è cittadino dello Stato di esecuzione e vive in tale Stato, ii) sarà espulso verso lo Stato di esecuzione una volta dispensato dall'esecuzione della pena o iii) è fuggito nello Stato di esecuzione ([2]).

La Commissione adotterà in tempi brevi una relazione sull'applicazione della presente decisione quadro negli Stati membri.

([1]) Decisione quadro 2008/909/GAI, del 27 novembre 2008, relativa all'applicazione del principio del reciproco riconoscimento alle sentenze penali che irrogano pene detentive o misure privative della libertà personale, ai fini della loro esecuzione nell'Unione europea (GU L 327 del 5.12.2008, pag. 27).

([2]) Cfr. art. 6 della decisione quadro.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009870/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: 'Empty prisons' decree — legitimacy and alternative measures

In Italy there are currently over 66 000 inmates in 206 prisons, which are supposed to have a maximum capacity of about 45 000.

To comply with the final judgment of the European Court of Human Rights inflicted on Italy for the conditions of its prison system, the current government has adopted a decree-law to relieve the pressure on prisons (the 'empty prisons' decree-law) as a way of solving the problem of prison overcrowding.

Given that:

— of all the inmates currently held in Italian prisons, over 23 000 are foreigners, 19% of whom from Morocco, 12.6% from Tunisia, 15% from Romania and 11.9% from Albania;

— the cost of their upkeep amounts to some EUR 1.5 billion per year at an average cost per prisoner per day of EUR 200;

— EU prisoners convicted in a Member State other than their own may serve their sentences in their country of origin only if they themselves agree, as stipulated in 'Framework Decision 2008/909/JHA of 27 November 2008 on the application of the principle of mutual recognition to judgments in criminal matters imposing custodial sentences or measures involving deprivation of liberty for the purpose of their enforcement in the European Union';

Does the Commission intend to amend existing legislation under Framework Decision 2008/909/JHA in order to permit the transfer of prisoners to prisons in their Member State of origin automatically, without the consent of the offender?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(24 October 2013)

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to the answer to the Written Question E-006200/2013 by Mr Van Orden.

Framework Decision 2008/909/JHA ([1]) establishes a system for recognising and enforcing custodial sentences in the Member State of nationality or habitual residence of the sentenced person (or to another Member State with which he has close ties) with a view to facilitating the social rehabilitation of this person.

No consent of the sentenced person to the transfer to his home country is required when the sentenced person: (i) is a national of the executing State who lives in the executing State; (ii) will be deported to the executing State once he is released and (iii) has fled to the executing State ([2]).

The Commission will adopt a Report on the application of this framework Decision in the Member States shortly.

([1]) Framework Decision 2008/909/JHA of 27 November 2008 on the application of the principle of mutual recognition to judgments in criminal matters imposing custodial sentences or measures involving deprivation of liberty for the purpose of their enforcement in the European Union, OJ 5.12.2008, L 327/27.

([2]) See Article 6 of the framework Decision.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009873/13
alla Commissione
Marco Scurria (PPE)
(4 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Adeguamento della direttiva sulle acque destinate al consumo umano

L'acqua destinata al consumo umano nel territorio dell'A.T.O. (Ambito territoriale ottimale) 1 Lazio Nord/Viterbo, risulta ad alta concentrazione di arsenico. La questione è diventata un argomento di grande rilevanza ambientale in seguito all'introduzione della direttiva europea 98/83/CE in base alla quale il precedente valore di parametro per l'arsenico, pari a 50 µg/l, è stato modificato nel valore di 10 µgl.

Nell'ottobre 2010, ricevuto dalla CE il diniego di concessione di ulteriori proroghe al Decreto legislativo 31/2001 che avrebbero consentito di continuare ad erogare acqua destinata al consumo umano con concentrazione di arsenico e fluoro superiori ai parametri normativi, lo Stato italiano ha istituito il Commissario Delegato per il superamento dell'emergenza arsenico e fluoro. Per il poco tempo a disposizione, la soluzione individuata dal Commissario ricadeva sulla realizzazione di singoli impianti di trattamento dislocati sull'intero territorio dell'A.T.O. 1 Lazio Nord/Viterbo.

Tale soluzione non può però essere definitiva per il servizio idrico integrato, considerato l'enorme costo economico gestionale e la precarietà del sistema, occorre invece prevedere opere strutturali e strategiche che consentano il prelevamento d'acqua presso fonti prive di arsenico e fluoro nei territori limitrofi ai confini dell'A.T.O.1 e la relativa adduzione presso i serbatoi di accumulo con varie condotte di interconnessione. Da uno studio di fattibilità redatto dal Dipartimento di Idraulica dell'Università «La Sapienza» di Roma, l'investimento previsto è di oltre 200 000 000 EUR.

Ciò premesso, non ritiene la Commissione che l'emanazione di una direttiva con costi di adeguamento così elevati debba essere affiancata da un intervento europeo dedicato?

Come si può evitare che i Comuni cerchino la copertura di tutti i costi della realizzazione delle infrastrutture idrauliche necessarie a superare il problema con i proventi della fatturazione (bollette degli utenti) gravando i cittadini degli oneri economici della realizzazione delle dette opere strutturali?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(5 novembre 2013)

L'obiettivo della direttiva sull'acqua potabile ([1]) (di seguito, la direttiva) è proteggere la salute umana dagli effetti negativi derivanti dalla contaminazione delle acque destinate al consumo umano e, al fine di conseguire tale obiettivo, la direttiva fissa requisiti minimi.

Gli obblighi stabiliti dalla direttiva in relazione all'arsenico sono entrati in vigore nel 2003. Da allora, l'Italia si è avvalsa delle possibilità di deroga ai sensi dell'articolo 9 della direttiva. Nel 2010 la Commissione ha concesso la terza deroga ([2]) e, a norma della direttiva, non è possibile concedere altre deroghe. I periodi di deroga sono stati concepiti anche per poter realizzare gli investimenti necessari a fronteggiare questi problemi (come è avvenuto in molti altri Stati membri e in altre zone di approvvigionamento idrico in Italia) imponendo così minori oneri finanziari ai cittadini coinvolti.

In relazione alla bolletta dell'acqua a carico dei consumatori, l'articolo 9, paragrafo 1, della direttiva quadro sulle acque (direttiva quadro 2000/60/CE) ([3]) impone il recupero dei costi dei servizi idrici, tenendo conto delle ripercussioni sociali, ambientali ed economiche del recupero, nonché delle condizioni geografiche e climatiche della regione o delle regioni interessate.

Gli investimenti finalizzati a soddisfare i requisiti previsti dalla direttiva possono essere finanziati, in linea di principio, tramite i programmi di finanziamento dell'UE (ad esempio, il Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale — FESR). Tuttavia, poiché il Lazio è una regione sviluppata, con un PIL regionale superiore al 90 % della media dell'UE, non è ammissibile il finanziamento di infrastrutture ambientali (in questo caso per l'acqua potabile) tramite il FESR.

([1]) GU L 330 del 5.12.1998.
([2]) https://circabc.europa.eu/faces/jsp/extension/wai/navigation/container.jsp
([3]) GU L 327 del 22.12.2000.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009873/13
to the Commission
Marco Scurria (PPE)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Adjustment of directive on water for human consumption

The water intended for human consumption in ATO 1 (local water board) of Northern Lazio/Viterbo has a high concentration of arsenic. The issue has become a matter of great environmental significance following the introduction of the European Directive 98/83/EC, under which the previous parameter value for arsenic — of 50 µg/l — was changed to 10 µgl.

In October 2010, after the EU had refused to grant further extensions to Legislative Decree 31/2001 that would have permitted a continued supply of water for human consumption with concentrations of arsenic and fluoride higher than the regulatory parameters, the Italian Government appointed a Deputy Commissioner in order to resolve the arsenic and fluoride emergency. Due to a lack of time, the Commissioner found a solution whereby individual treatment plants throughout the ATO 1 Northern Lazio/Viterbo would be built.

This solution, however, cannot be a definitive one for the integrated water service, given the huge cost of managing the system, not to mention its precariousness. Structural and strategic work needs to be done, to enable water to be taken from sources that are free of arsenic and fluoride in areas surrounding the ATO 1's borders and to be transported to storage tanks through interconnecting pipelines. According to a feasibility study carried out by the Department of Hydraulics, La Sapienza University of Rome, the necessary investment is estimated to cost more than EUR 200 million.

Does the Commission not therefore think that the adoption of a directive with such high compliance costs should be backed up by dedicated EU action?

How can we prevent municipalities from trying to cover the entire cost of the construction of the water infrastructure necessary to solve the problem with the proceeds of consumers' bills, thereby placing on citizens the financial burden of carrying out these structural works?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(5 November 2013)

The objective of the Drinking Water Directive ([1]) (Directive) is to protect human health from the adverse effects of any contamination of the water intended for human consumption. In order to achieve this objective, the directive sets out minimum requirements.

The obligations set by the directive in relation to arsenic entered into effect in 2003. Since then, Italy has made use of the possibility for derogations under Article 9 of the directive. A third derogation was granted by the Commission in 2010 ([2]). According to the directive, no further derogations are possible. Derogation periods are designed in part to allow investments to take place to address these problems (as was the case in many other Member States and other water supply zones in Italy) thus imposing a more limited financial burden on the concerned citizens.

In relation to consumer's water bills, Art 9.1 of Water Framework Directive (WFD, 2000/60/EC) ([3]) requires the recovery of costs of water services, having regard to the social, environmental and economic effects of the recovery as well as the geographic and climatic conditions of the region or regions affected.

Investments related to meeting the requirements of the directive can in principle be financed from the EU funding programmes (e.g. European Regional Development Fund — ERDF). However, as Lazio is a developed region (its regional GDP is more than 90% of the EU average), funding for environmental infrastructure (in this case for drinking water) from the ERDF is not eligible.

([1]) OJ L 330, 5.12.1998.
([2]) https://circabc.europa.eu/w/browse/d4c661f0-dea6-40d6-b98e-91448c6a44f9
([3]) OJ L 327, 22.12.2000.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-009874/13
a Bizottság számára
Szegedi Csanád (NI)
(2013. szeptember 4.)

Tárgy: Roma integráció

Az elmúlt években egyre fontosabbá vált az Európai Unió számára az Unió tagállamaiban élő, jelentős számú, illetve növekvő populációjú roma kisebbség integrációjának elősegítése. A számos hatékonyan kidolgozott program (köztük a magyar elnökség által fémjelzett cselekvési tervek) ellenére a roma kisebbség mind a mai napig továbbra is igen nehéz helyzetben van más populációkkal szemben Európában. Az európai átlaggal ellentétben a roma népesség termékenységi rátája igen magas értéket képvisel, ami arányuk növekedését jelenti az európai populációban. Véleményem szerint jelentősen hozzájárulhat a probléma megoldásához a roma populáció kiemelt oktatási és munkaerő-piaci támogatása.

A kérdésem a következő: a Bizottságnak a közeljövőre vonatkoztatva milyen további cselekvési terve van a roma népesség integrációjával kapcsolatban?

Viviane Reding válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2013. október 17.)

A Bizottság az idén javaslatot fogadott el a romák integrációját célzó hatékony tagállami intézkedésekről szóló tanácsi ajánlásra ([1]), amelynek célja, hogy megerősítse „A nemzeti romaintegrációs stratégiák uniós keretrendszere 2020-ig" című közleménnyel megkezdett folyamatot, valamint elősegítse a nemzeti romaintegrációs stratégiák végrehajtását. A javaslat jelenleg megvitatás alatt áll a Tanácsban.

A Bizottság a jövőben is figyelemmel kíséri a nemzeti stratégiák végrehajtásának eredményeit, valamint az Európai Parlamentnek és a Tanácsnak, illetve az Európa 2020 stratégia keretében benyújtott beszámolókat.

A 2014 tavaszán elfogadandó következő értékelő jelentés négy kulcsfontosságú területen elemzi majd az elért eredményeket: az oktatás, a foglalkoztatás, az egészségügy és a lakhatás területén.

A Bizottság emellett kétoldalú és többoldalú megbeszéléseket folytat majd a romaintegrációs nemzeti roma kapcsolattartó pontokkal, a romákra vonatkozó szakpolitikai intézkedések végrehajtásában részt vevő egyéb nemzeti hatóságokkal, valamint a roma civil társadalmi szervezetekkel, a nemzetközi szervezetekkel és a romaintegráció folyamatában részt vevő egyéb érdekeltekkel.

Mozgósításra kerültek továbbá az európai strukturális és beruházási alapok forrásai, amelyek célja a 2014 és 2020 közötti új pénzügyi időszak nemzeti erőfeszítéseinek megerősítése. A Bizottság az ESZA-források legalább 20%-át a társadalmi befogadásra fordítja, ami magában foglalja a roma integrációt is. Az Európai Szociális Alap beruházásainak egyik kiemelt célkitűzése kifejezetten a társadalom peremére szorult közösségek – így a romák – beilleszkedése.

([1]) COM(2013) 460.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009874/13
to the Commission
Csanád Szegedi (NI)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Integration of Roma

In recent years, it has become increasingly important to the European Union to promote integration of the Roma minorities in the EU Member States, which are of a significant size or even growing. Despite the numerous effectively planned programmes (including the action plans associated with the Hungarian Presidency), the Roma minority still remains in a very difficult position in relation to other populations in Europe. Unlike the European average, the Roma population's fertility rate is high, so that Roma constitute a growing proportion of the European population. I believe that special support for education and employment of the Roma population could contribute significantly towards a solution to the problem.

My question is this: what further action plan does the Commission have for the near future to promote integration of the Roma population?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(17 October 2013)

This year, the Commission adopted a proposal for a Council recommendation on effective Roma integration measures in the Member States ([1]), in order to reinforce the process started with the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020 and to strengthen the implementation of the National Roma Integration Strategies. The proposal is currently discussed in the Council.

The Commission will continue to monitor the progress in the implementation of the national strategies and reporting to the European Parliament and the Council, as well as under the Europe 2020 strategy.

The next assessment report, to be adopted in spring 2014, will focus on progress made in the 4 key areas — education, employment, health and housing.

The Commission will also pursue bilateral and multilateral exchanges with the National Roma Contact Points for Roma integration, other national authorities involved in the implementation of Roma related policy measures as well as with Roma civil society organisations, international organisations and other stakeholders involved in the process of Roma inclusion.

In addition, the European Structural and Investment Funds have been mobilised to boost national efforts for the new financial period 2014-2020. The Commission proposes to use at least 20% of ESF resources for social inclusion which also includes Roma integration. A European Social Fund investment priority envisages, specifically, the integration of marginalised communities such as the Roma.

([1]) COM(2013) 460.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-009875/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(4 de setembro de 2013)

Assunto: Direito humano à água e ao saneamento

Tendo em conta a persistência de inúmeras situações de exclusão no acesso à água e ao saneamento em vários países da UE e tendo em conta que em vários países, e em especial naqueles que são alvo de programas de intervenção da UE e do FMI, se regista mesmo uma evolução negativa neste domínio, com o aumento das situações de exclusão, solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre que medidas — legislativas ou outras — prevê adotar com vista a assegurar o efetivo direito humano à água e ao saneamento na UE a todos os cidadãos, sem exclusões, conforme preconizado na resolução aprovada na Assembleia-Geral das Nações Unidas sobre este assunto, acabando assim com esta grave violação dos Direitos Humanos na União Europeia.

Resposta dada por Janez Potočnik em nome da Comissão
(30 de outubro de 2013)

A Comissão remete o Senhor Deputado para a resposta dada à pergunta escrita E-003620/2013. Na sua resposta à pergunta escrita E-003505/2013 a Comissão respondeu a questões semelhantes em relação a uma iniciativa de cidadania europeia sobre estas matérias.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009875/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Human right to water and sanitation

Many people are still without access to water and sanitation in a number of EU states, and in some countries the situation is getting worse rather than better. This is particularly true of countries subject to EU and IMF intervention programmes, where such cases of exclusion have been increasing. What legislative or other measures will the Commission take to ensure that all citizens can exercise the human right to water and sanitation in the EU, without anyone being excluded, as recommended in the resolution on this subject adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, thus putting a stop to this serious violation of human rights in the European Union?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(30 October 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-003620/2013. The Commission has responded to similar questions in relation to a European Citizen's initiative on the issues in its answer to Written Question E-003505/2013.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-009876/13
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(4 de setembro de 2013)

Assunto: Aumento do consumo de drogas em Portugal

Notícias recentes na imprensa portuguesa dão conta de dados que demonstram o aumento do consumo de drogas nos últimos 3 anos, em Portugal. Fonte do Serviço de Intervenção nos Comportamentos Aditivos e nas Dependências (SICAD) informou que triplicaram as readmissões de consumidores de heroína nos serviços (1 008 em 2010, 1 843 em 2011, 2 881 em 2012). Responsáveis e técnicos do SICAD consideram que muitos dos casos de readmissões de consumidores de drogas têm causas sociais, como o aumento do desemprego ou a diminuição dos apoios sociais. É também referido que, tanto em Portugal, como nos países europeus com situações económicas semelhantes, está a diminuir o consumo de substâncias mais associadas ao ambiente recreativo e a aumentar o consumo de heroína e de bebidas alcoólicas, que são normalmente mais procuradas para o alívio do sofrimento. Por outro lado, um pouco por todo o país, estão a ser efetuados cortes nos serviços de proximidade (serviços de consultas descentralizadas, transportes para doentes, etc.), o que piora consideravelmente a situação destes doentes.

Solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Tem conhecimento destes dados? Como os comenta?

2. Considera que as medidas aprovadas entre a «troika», de que a Comissão faz parte, e o governo português estão a contribuir para o combate à toxicodependência na UE?

3. Tem dados sobre o aumento do consumo de drogas — nomeadamente de heroína — nos Estados-Membros nos últimos 3 anos? Em que países é que o consumo aumentou mais?

Resposta dada por Viviane Reding em nome da Comissão
(5 de novembro de 2013)

A Comissão está ciente de que a recessão económica provocou cortes nas medidas de redução à procura de droga em vários Estados-Membros da UE. De acordo com o Observatório Europeu da Droga e da Toxicodependência (OEDT), alguns países da UE comunicaram cortes nos programas e serviços relacionados com a luta contra a droga ([1]). Contudo, estes cortes orçamentais e o seu impacto parecem diferir consideravelmente entre os Estados-Membros da UE.

De acordo com o OEDT, a situação em matéria de drogas tem-se mantido relativamente estável nos últimos anos na UE ([2]). Embora o consumo de droga continue a ser elevado de acordo com os padrões históricos e novas substâncias psicoativas apareçam e se propaguem rapidamente na UE, registaram-se alterações positivas relativamente a substâncias controladas como a heroína, cocaína e cannabis.

Em resultado de um aumento global da disponibilização de tratamento para os consumidores de heroína registado no conjunto da UE, tem havido uma tendência descendente na utilização deste estupefaciente nos últimos anos. O número de consumidores de heroína que inicia o tratamento pela primeira vez estabilizou, tendo até decrescido ([3]) e o número de mortes relacionadas com os opiáceos diminuiu.

([1]) Relatório Europeu sobre drogas de 2013. Tendências e evoluções, OEDT. http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/attachements.cfm/att_213154_PT_TDAT13001ENN1.pdf
([2]) Relatório Europeu sobre drogas de 2013. Tendências e evoluções. Os dados disponíveis mais recentes referem-se a 2011 ou a anos anteriores.
([3]) Entre 2005 e 2011, apenas a Espanha, a França, os Países Baixos e a Irlanda comunicaram um aumento pouco significativo da média anual de aumento do consumo de heroína (0-10 %). http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/topics/pods/trends-in-heroin-use

O consumo de cannabis entre a população escolar diminuiu em quatro países da UE ([4]) e aumentou significativamente em nove ([5]), no período de 2007-2011. O consumo entre jovens adultos diminuiu ou permaneceu estável, com exceção da Polónia e da Finlândia. O consumo de cocaína diminuiu ou estabilizou nos países de prevalência mais elevada ([6]), mas a França e a Polónia comunicaram um ligeiro aumento no consumo em 2010 ([7]). O consumo de anfetaminas e de ecstasy entre os jovens adultos manteve-se estável ou diminuiu em 2010, em toda a UE, exceto na Polónia ([8]).

([4]) Dinamarca, Malta, República Eslovaca e Reino Unido.
([5]) Chipre, Finlândia, França, Grécia, Hungria, Letónia, Polónia, Portugal e Roménia.
([6]) Espanha, Reino Unido, Dinamarca e Irlanda.
([7]) Em todos os países, com exceção dos que apresentam elevada prevalência, os níveis do consumo de cocaína permaneceram relativamente baixos — cerca de 2 % ou menos.
([8]) Aumento em 2010 para 3,9 % quanto às anfetaminas e para 3 % quanto a ecstasy.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009876/13
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Increased drug use in Portugal

The Portuguese press has recently reported figures showing that drug use has increased in Portugal over the past three years. Information provided by the Serviço de Intervenção nos Comportamentos Aditivos e nas Dependências (Addictive Behaviour and Dependency Intervention Service — SICAD) shows that the number of heroin users readmitted to treatment services has tripled (1008 in 2010, 1843 in 2011 and 2881 in 2012). The SICAD service's directors and experts believe that many of these cases are the result of social factors such as increased unemployment and the reduction in social support. It is also pointed out that, both in Portugal and in other European countries facing similar economic conditions, there has been a decline in the consumption of substances that are more often linked to recreational use, and a rise in the consumption of heroin and alcohol, which are more commonly used by people seeking relief from problems. At the same time, virtually the whole country has seen cutbacks to local services (decentralised consultation services, transport services for patients, etc), and this has considerably worsened the situation for the people affected.

1. Is the Commission aware of these figures? What comments would it make?

2. Does it believe that the measures agreed between the troika, which includes the Commission, and the Portuguese Government are helping to combat drug dependency in the EU?

3. Does it have any figures on the increase in drug use — particularly heroin — in the Member States over the past three years? Which countries saw the largest increase in drug use?

Answer given by Ms Reding on behalf of the Commission
(5 November 2013)

The Commission is aware that the economic downturn has led to cuts in expenses for drug-demand reduction measures in several EU Member States. According to the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), a number of EU countries have reported cuts in drug-related programmes and services ([1]). However, the extent of these budget cuts and their impact appear to differ considerably between EU Member States.

According to the EMCDDA, the drugs situation has remained relatively stable in recent years in the EU ([2]). Although drug use remains high by historic standards and new psychoactive substances emerge and spread rapidly in the EU, positive changes have been recorded regarding controlled drugs such as heroin, cocaine and cannabis.

As a result of an overall increase in treatment availability for heroin users across the EU, there has been a downward trend in the use of this drug in recent years. The number of heroin users entering treatment for the first time has stabilised and has even fallen ([3]) and the number of opioid-related deaths has decreased.

Cannabis use among school children decreased in four ([4]) and rose significantly in nine EU countries ([5]) in 2007-2011. Use among young adults has decreased or remained stable, with the exception of Poland and Finland. Cocaine use has declined or stabilised in the highest prevalence countries ([6]), but France and Poland reported a slight increase in use in 2010 ([7]). Amphetamines and ecstasy use among young adults was stable or decreased in 2010 across the EU, except in Poland ([8]).

([1]) The European Drug Report 2013. Trends and Developments, EMCDDA. http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/attachements.cfm/att_213154_EN_TDAT13001ENN1.pdf
([2]) The European Drug Report 2013. Trends and Developments. The most recent available data relate to 2011 or earlier.
([3]) Between 2005 and 2011 only Spain, France, the Netherlands and Ireland reported limited increase an average annual percentage increase in heroin use (0-10 %). http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/topics/pods/trends-in-heroin-use
([4]) Denmark, Malta, Slovak Rep. and United Kingdom.
([5]) Cyprus, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Poland, Portugal and Romania.
([6]) Spain, UK, Denmark and Ireland.
([7]) In all countries but those with high prevalence, levels of cocaine use have remained relatively low — around 2 % or less.
([8]) Increase in 2010 to 3.9% for amphetamine and to 3% in ecstasy.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-009877/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(4 de setembro de 2013)

Assunto: Vaga de incêndios em Portugal

Este verão está a ser dramático para as populações de diversos concelhos e distritos de Portugal, as corporações de bombeiros e os elementos da proteção civil, por causa do número de incêndios que têm assolado o país. Segundo informações recentes, nos primeiros 25 dias de agosto ocorreram 5 115 incêndios, mais 2 315 do que em todo o ano de 2012. A média de fogos por dia ronda as 600 ocorrências, o que implica a mobilização diária de milhares de operacionais. Só neste mês de agosto, já arderam mais de 40 mil hectares de floresta, ou seja, ardeu mais floresta em agosto de 2013 do que em todo o ano de 2007 ou de 2008. Mas este ano tem também sido particularmente dramático ao nível de perda de vidas humanas — até hoje e durante o mês de agosto, já faleceram 5 bombeiros —, para além de dezenas de feridos entre bombeiros e população quando combatiam o fogo. As populações destes lugares perderam produções agrícolas e florestais, gado, rações para animais, máquinas agrícolas e foram muitos os que assistiram à destruição das suas casas.

É hoje certo que a mais importante medida preventiva dos fogos florestais — o reordenamento florestal — mostra-se insuficiente ou, em muitos casos, não existe. As corporações de bombeiros, por outro lado, carecem de recursos para o combate aos incêndios, o que passa muitas vezes por um equipamento completo de proteção individual.

Com base no exposto, perguntamos o seguinte à Comissão:

1. Tem dados sobre o impacto dos cortes na despesa pública portuguesa, negociados entre o Governo Português e a «troika» no âmbito do chamado memorando de entendimento, com especial incidência nos meios preventivos e de combate aos incêndios? Tem consciência de que estes cortes estão a ter consequências inaceitáveis, nomeadamente a perda de vidas humanas?

2. A partir de 2009, quais os níveis de financiamento da UE alocados para despesas relacionadas com a prevenção e o combate a incêndios em Portugal (limpeza e ordenamento da floresta, apoio a organizações de bombeiros, …)?

3. Que os apoios da UE podem ser mobilizados para o apoio às populações afetadas?

Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão
(30 de outubro de 2013)

1. No quadro do programa de assistência financeira a Portugal, a Comissão não solicitou cortes na despesa pública no que se refere aos recursos de prevenção e de luta contra os incêndios. A Comissão não dispõe de informações sobre a forma como as despesas em matéria de prevenção e luta contra os incêndios foram afetadas pelo Governo português, para que as suas finanças públicas retomem uma trajetória sustentável.

2. O Fundo de Coesão atribui uma elevada prioridade ao financiamento de prevenção de riscos naturais em Portugal no período corrente. Um total de 158 milhões de euros do Fundo de Coesão foi atribuído às despesas relacionadas com a prevenção de riscos naturais (proteção civil) em Portugal desde 2008. Deste montante, 111 milhões de euros foram afetados especificamente ao financiamento da prevenção e luta contra os incêndios, que inclui infraestruturas, equipamentos e sistemas de prevenção, nomeadamente quartéis, veículos, equipamento de combate ao fogo, equipamento de telecomunicações e mesmo um aeródromo da proteção civil em Castelo Branco.

No respeitante ao Feader ([1]), o apoio da UE está disponível para medidas destinadas a restabelecer o potencial agrícola e florestal e de prevenção. O programa de desenvolvimento rural do Continente atribuiu 78 milhões de euros a essas medidas.

3. O financiamento ao abrigo dos programas atualmente em vigor pode continuar a ser utilizado para prevenir os riscos e minimizar os efeitos das catástrofes naturais até ao final de 2015. A Comissão está atualmente a negociar com as autoridades portuguesas o quadro de apoio dos fundos estruturais e de investimento europeus para 2014-2020, período em que a Comissão continuará a apoiar ações estruturais de prevenção de riscos naturais e de catástrofes, incluindo incêndios florestais.

([1]) Fundo Europeu Agrícola de Desenvolvimento Rural.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009877/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Spate of fires in Portugal

This has been a dramatic summer for people living in a number of municipalities and districts in Portugal, as well as firefighters and civil protection workers, owing to the large number of fires that have hit the country. According to recent reports, there were 5 115 fires in the first 25 days of August, which is 2 315 more than in the whole of 2012. There have been an average of around 600 fires every day, and thousands of people have been involved in combating them on a daily basis. Fires have affected more than 40 000 hectares of forest this August alone, which means that more woodland has burnt in August 2013 than in the whole of 2007 or 2008. This year has also claimed a heavy toll in terms of human life — five firefighters have already died since the beginning of August — and dozens of firefighters and members of the public have been injured while tackling fires. People living in these areas have lost crops, woodland, livestock, animal feed and farm machinery, and many have seen their homes destroyed.

It is now clear that the main preventive measure against forest fires — better forest management — has proved insufficient and in many cases non-existent. Fire brigades lack the necessary resources to combat fires, which often means that no proper individual protection equipment is available.

1. Does the Commission have any information regarding the impact of the cuts in Portuguese public spending that were negotiated between the Portuguese Government and the troika in the context of the so-called memorandum of understanding, in particular as regards resources to prevent and combat fires? Is it aware that these cutbacks are having unacceptable consequences, especially in terms of human lives lost?

2. How much European funding has been allocated to expenditure linked to preventing and combating fires in Portugal since 2009 (forest management and clearing of undergrowth, support for firefighting organisations, etc.)?

3. What EU support can be mobilised to assist those affected?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(30 October 2013)

1. In the framework of the financial assistance programme for Portugal, the Commission has not requested cuts in public spending as regards resources to prevent and combat fires. The Commission does not have information on how the spending on preventing and combating fires has been affected by the Portuguese Government in order to bring its public finances back on a sustainable path.

2. The Cohesion Fund has given high priority to the financing of natural risk prevention in Portugal in the current period. A total of EUR 158 million from the Cohesion Fund has been allocated to expenditure linked to natural risks prevention (civil protection) in Portugal since 2008. Of this, EUR 111 million has been allocated specifically to the financing of preventing and combatting fires, which includes infrastructure, equipment and prevention systems, namely fire-fighter headquarters, fire combat vehicles, fire-fighter equipment, telecommunication equipment and even one aerodrome for civil protection in Castelo Branco.

Concerning the EAFRD ([1]), EU support is available for restoring agricultural and forestry potential and prevention actions. The rural development programme of Mainland Portugal has allocated EUR 78 million to these measures.

3. Funding under current programmes can continue to be used to prevent risks and minimise the effects of natural disasters until the end of 2015. The Commission is currently negotiating with the Portuguese authorities the support framework from the European Structural and Investment Funds for the 2014-2020 period in which the Commission continues to support structural actions to prevent natural risks and disasters, including forest fires.

([1]) European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-009878/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(4 de setembro de 2013)

Assunto: Despedimentos no setor bancário em Portugal, alegadamente, por imposição da Comissão Europeia

Notícias na imprensa portuguesa dão conta de que a Comissão Europeia terá imposto a instituições bancárias portuguesas recapitalizadas com financiamentos públicos a obrigatoriedade de redução de pessoal. Ou seja, a Comissão Europeia, a pretexto das ajudas públicas concedidas à banca privada, estará agora alegadamente a impor despedimentos de trabalhadores nos bancos visados.

É sabido que, noutros casos semelhantes, a Comissão Europeia considerou que os apoios públicos, por configurarem uma distorção das «regras da livre concorrência», deveriam dar lugar à redução da atividade dos bancos em questão, o que podia incluir a supressão de balcões. Todavia, daqui não decorre obrigatoriamente a redução de pessoal.

Solicitamos à Comissão que nos informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Confirma a imposição da redução de pessoal de instituições bancárias portuguesas?

2. Em caso afirmativo, quais as instituições em causa e quais as imposições, em concreto, feitas pela Comissão a cada uma delas?

3. Com que direito corta a Comissão impor reduções de pessoal/despedimentos em bancos portugueses? Como justifica estas decisões?

Resposta dada por Joaquín Almunia em nome da Comissão
(5 de novembro de 2013)

Em primeiro lugar, as medidas estruturais, incluindo os cortes de pessoal, as reduções na rede de balcões ou as alienações de ativos, fazem normalmente parte dos planos de reestruturação e dos compromissos assumidos por beneficiários de ajudas financeiras públicas ao setor bancário. Medidas deste tipo são, de um modo geral, necessárias para repor a viabilidade destas instituições e assegurar que a instituição em causa retoma o seu percurso até à viabilidade. A reposição da viabilidade é essencial para que a medida de auxílio estatal seja compatível com o mercado interno.

Em segundo lugar, o conteúdo dos planos de reestruturação e algumas das medidas que deles constam são confidenciais, na medida em que incluem informação sensíveis sobre o mercado. Quando essa informação é desbloqueada pelas autoridades nacionais relevantes, é publicada uma versão não confidencial de cada decisão de reestruturação aprovada pela Comissão Europeia no sítio Web (http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/register).

Por último, as medidas de reestruturação propostas pelos Estados-Membros no que respeita às entidades beneficiárias dos auxílios estatais encontram a sua base jurídica direta no Tratado sobre o Funcionamento da União Europeia (artigos 107.° a 109.°) e nas disposições daí derivadas. De entre estas disposições, as mais significativas para efeitos da avaliação da compatibilidade do auxílio estatal a instituições bancárias são as várias comunicações que a Comissão aprovou desde o início da crise, em 2008, com base no artigo 107.°, n.° 3, alínea b), do TFUE. A mais recente delas é a Comunicação sobre a aplicação, a partir de 1 de agosto de 2013, das regras em matéria de auxílios estatais às medidas de apoio aos bancos no contexto da crise financeira ([1]).

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2013:216:0001:0015:EN:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009878/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Dismissals in the Portuguese banking sector, allegedly imposed by the Commission

The Portuguese press has reported that the Commission has imposed staffing cuts on Portuguese banks that have been recapitalised using public funding. According to these reports, the Commission is obliging the banks concerned to dismiss staff on the pretext of the public support provided for private banks.

The Commission is known to have taken the view in similar cases that, since public support represents a distortion of the 'rules of free competition', such support should entail a reduction in activity on the part of the banks in question, which might include branch closures. Nevertheless, this need not necessarily involve job losses.

1. Can the Commission confirm that staffing cuts have been imposed on Portuguese banks?

2. If so, which banks are concerned and what specific measures has the Commission imposed in each individual case?

3. On what legal basis can the Commission impose staffing cuts/dismissals on Portuguese banks? How does it justify these decisions?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(5 November 2013)

Firstly, structural measures, including staff cuts, reductions in the branch network or asset disposals, normally form part of the restructuring plans and commitments put forward by recipients of public financial support in the banking sector. Such measures are typically needed to restore the viability of those institutions and to ensure that the institution concerned recovers its path to viability. Such a restoration of viability is critical for the state aid measure to be found compatible with the internal market.

Secondly, the content of the restructuring plans and some of the specific measures contained in them are confidential to the extent that they contain market-sensitive information. Once such information has been cleared with the relevant national authorities, a non-confidential version of each Restructuring Decision approved by the European Commission is published on the website: http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/register

Finally, the legal basis for the restructuring measures proposed by Member States in respect of the entities in receipt of state aid is to be found in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union directly (Articles 107-109) and in the rules derived therefrom. The most significant of those rules for the purposes of evaluating the compatibility of state aid to banks are the various Communications which have been approved by the European Commission since the beginning of the crisis in 2008 on the basis of the article 107(3)(b) TFEU. The most recent of them is the communication from the Commission on the application, from 1 August 2013, of state aid rules to support measures in favour of banks in the context of the financial crisis ([1]).

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2013:216:0001:0015:EN:PDF

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-009879/13
komissiolle
Sari Essayah (PPE)
(4. syyskuuta 2013)

Aihe: Defibrillaattorien sisällyttäminen lentokoneiden pakolliseen ensihoitokalustoon

Automaattinen ulkoinen defibrillaattori on pieni laite, jolla annetaan äkillisen sydänpysähdyksen saaneen potilaan sydämelle sähköimpulssi, jotta sydän saataisiin toimimaan jälleen normaalissa rytmissä. Äkilliseen sydänpysähdykseen kuolee Euroopassa vuosittain yli 300 000 henkeä. Äkillisen sydänpysähdyksen saaneista henkiin jää vain keskimäärin 5 prosenttia ja näistä yli puolet kärsivät pysyvistä seurauksista elvytysviiveen vuoksi. Eri tutkimusten mukaan mahdollisuus selvitä äkillisestä sydänpysähdyksestä moninkertaistuu, mikäli automaattinen ulkoinen defibrillaattori on välittömästi käytettävissä. Lentokoneissa tapahtuneissa kuolemaan johtaneissa sairauskohtauksissa kuolinsyynä on yleisimmin sydänpysähdys.

Lentoliikenne on yhä yleistyvä matkustusmuoto EU:ssa ja luonnollinen osa monen eurooppalaisen arkea. Tarkkojen turvallisuusstandardien ansiosta lentäminen on myös turvallinen matkustusmuoto. On tärkeää, että matkustajia suojellaan myös matkustajan äkillisen sairauskohtauksen tapahtuessa. Ensiapupakkaus kuuluu kaikkien lentokoneiden varustukseen, mutta laajempi hätälääkintäpakkaus on pakollinen ainoastaan, mikäli lentokoneen suurin käytettävä matkustajapaikkaluku on yli 30 ja jos suunnitellun lentoreitin jokin kohta sijaitsee kauempana sellaiselta lentopaikalta, jolla pätevää lääkinnällistä apua voidaan olettaa olevan saatavilla, kuin etäisyydellä, joka vastaa 60 minuutin lentoaikaa normaalilla matkalentonopeudella. Lisäksi, toisin kuin esimerkiksi Yhdysvalloissa, automaattinen ulkoinen defibrillaattori ei kuulu lentokoneiden pakolliseen ensihoitokalustoon.

1. Aikooko komissio ryhtyä toimiin, jotta kaikissa matkustajalentokoneissa olisi hätälääkintäpakkaus?

2. Onko komissio valmis toteuttamaan toimia, jotta jokaisessa matkustajalentokoneessa olisi automaattinen ulkoinen defibrillaattori?

Siim Kallasin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(16. lokakuuta 2013)

Kaikilla EU:n lentoyhtiöillä on lakisääteinen velvollisuus ([1]) huolehtia matkustamohenkilökunnan ensiapukoulutuksesta ja pitää lentokoneissa mukana ensiapupakkauksia. Lentokoneissa on todellakin hätälääkintäpakkaukset vain, jos tietyt edellytykset täyttyvät, ja toiminnanharjoittajan olisi määriteltävä automaattisen ulkoisen defibrillaattorin (AED) tarve lentokoneissa riskinarvioinnin perusteella, jossa otetaan huomioon erityistarpeet (kuten matka kohteeseen, lennon kestoaika, matkustajien lukumäärä ja ikärakenne). Esimerkiksi Atlantin ylittävillä tai muilla pitkillä reiteillä lentokoneissa on mukana automaattinen ulkoinen defibrillaattori.

Komissio ei ole tähän mennessä saanut mitään sellaista ratkaisevaa näyttöä, jonka vuoksi olisi perusteltua tehdä automaattinen ulkoinen defibrillaattori pakolliseksi kaikessa lentotoiminnassa ja kaikissa olosuhteissa. Hätälääkintäpakkauksen sisältöä koskevia vaatimuksia tarkastellaan säännöllisesti, ja niitä päivitetään tarvittaessa.

([1]) Komission asetus (EY) N:o 965/2012 (EUVL L 296, 25.10.2012).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009879/13
to the Commission
Sari Essayah (PPE)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Inclusion of defibrillators in the compulsory first aid equipment carried on aircraft

The automatic external defibrillator is a small device which administers an electric shock to the heart of a patient who has suffered a cardiac arrest, in order to restore a normal pulse. Cardiac arrests kill more than 300 000 people a year in Europe. On average, only 5% of people who have suffered a cardiac arrest survive, and more than half of those who do survive suffer lasting effects because of delays in reanimating them. According to various studies, the likelihood of surviving cardiac arrest is many times greater if an automatic external defibrillator is immediately available. The most common cause of death through illness on board aircraft is cardiac arrest.

Air travel is an increasingly common mode of travel in the EU, and a natural part of the everyday lives of many people in Europe. Because of stringent safety standards, flying is also a safe mode of transport. It is important that passengers should also be protected in the event of their suddenly falling ill. First aid equipment is carried on all aircraft, but a wider range of emergency medical equipment is mandatory only if the maximum passenger capacity of the aircraft exceeds 30 and if any point on the planned flight path is situated further from an airport where expert medical assistance may be assumed to be available than the distance equivalent to 60 minutes' flying time at the normal flying speed of an airliner. Moreover, unlike for example in the USA, automatic external defibrillators are not part of the compulsory first aid equipment carried on board aircraft.

1. Will the Commission take measures to induce all airliners to carry emergency medical equipment?

2. Will the Commission take measures to induce all airliners to carry an automatic external defibrillator?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(16 October 2013)

All EU airlines are legally required ([1]) to train their cabin crew in first aid and to carry first aid kits on their aircraft. Indeed, emergency medical kits are only carried on board if certain conditions are present and the carriage of an automated external defibrillator (AED) should be determined by the operator on the basis of a risk assessment, taking into account the particular needs of the operation (such as scope, flight duration, number and demographics of passengers). For example, on Transatlantic or other long haul routes AEDs are carried on board.

The Commission has not received any conclusive evidence so far, to consider that it would be justified to make it compulsory for all types of aircraft operation, and in all circumstances, to carry AED. The requirements with regard to the content of the emergency medical kit will be regularly reviewed, and updated if necessary.

([1]) Commission Regulation (EU) No 965/2012 (OJ L 296, 25.10.2012).

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009880/13
a la Comisión
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE) y Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(4 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Competencia en la liga de fútbol profesional en España

Los clubes que disputan la liga profesional de fútbol en España se dividen, en función de la fórmula que eligen sus propietarios para gestionarlos, en dos grandes categorías. La mayor parte de ellos son sociedades anónimas deportivas. Cuatro, entre los que figuran Fútbol Club Barcelona, Real Madrid, Athletic de Bilbao y Club Atlético Osasuna, son jurídicamente clubes deportivos en los que los socios mantienen la propiedad.

En las últimas semanas, diversas informaciones periodísticas se han referido a la existencia de una incipiente investigación de la Comisión Europea en torno a los posibles problemas de competencia entre entidades a que pudiese dar lugar esa diferencia en la estructura de propiedad. Según los datos disponibles, la Comisión estudia ahora un informe del Defensor del Pueblo Europeo que se abrió ante el retraso en resolver una denuncia sobre este asunto interpuesta ante la propia Comisión Europea en el año 2009.

A la vista de estas informaciones:

1. ¿En qué estado se encuentra esta investigación?

2. ¿En qué plazo podría resolverse?

3. ¿Indican los datos existentes que puede producirse algún problema de competencia derivado de estas circunstancias?

4. ¿Existen otras investigaciones en materia de competencia que afecten a la liga de fútbol profesional en España?

5. ¿Afectan estas investigaciones al reparto de los derechos de emisión televisiva que gestiona la liga de fútbol profesional en España?

6. ¿Y a las condiciones en que algunos equipos acceden a la financiación de sus fichajes?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(9 de octubre de 2013)

La Comisión está investigando el distinto trato a los clubes de fútbol profesional en España, en función de su forma jurídica. La Comisión no puede indicar cuando concluirá esta investigación. Puesto que la investigación está en curso, la Comisión todavía no está en condiciones de hacer comentarios sobre su posible resultado.

Como ya se ha mencionado en las respuestas a las preguntas escritas E-6424/2013, E-2747/2013 y E-3405/2013, la Comisión también está investigando la posible ayuda al Real Madrid, mediante una transferencia inmobiliaria, y a tres de los clubes de fútbol de la Comunidad Valenciana.

Estas investigaciones no se refieren al reparto de derechos de emisión televisiva que gestiona la liga de fútbol profesional. Ni tampoco abordan, al menos no directamente, la cuestión de cómo organizan los clubes de fútbol el traspaso de jugadores.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009880/13
to the Commission
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE) and Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Competition in the Spanish Professional Football League

The clubs competing in the Spanish Professional Football League fall into two broad categories according to the form of legal ownership they have opted for. While most are public limited sports companies, four are technically sports clubs that are owned by their members: FC Barcelona, Real Madrid, Athletic Bilbao and CA Osasuna.

Press reports in recent weeks have referred to the fact that the Commission has opened an investigation into the competition issues that may arise from this difference in legal ownership. According to the information available, the Commission is currently examining a report by the European Ombudsman drawn up in response to the delay in resolving a complaint on this matter which was lodged with the Commission in 2009.

1. What stage has been reached in the Commission's investigation?

2. When does it expect the matter to be resolved?

3. Do its current findings suggest that the situation could give rise to competition issues?

4. Is the Spanish Professional Football League affected by any other ongoing investigations involving competition?

5. If so, do those investigations affect the distribution of television rights that are managed by the league?

6. Do they affect the way in which some clubs raise money for signing new players?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(9 October 2013)

The Commission is investigating the different treatment of professional football clubs in Spain, based on their legal form. It is not able to indicate when this investigation will be closed. As the investigation is still ongoing, the Commission is not yet in a position to comment on its possible outcome.

As already mentioned in the answers to written questions E-6424/2013, E-2747/2013 and E-3405/2013, the Commission is also investigating possible aid to Real Madrid, by way of a real property transfer, and to three football clubs in Comunidad Valenciana.

These investigations do not concern the distribution of television rights managed by the Spanish Professional Football League. They do not, at least not directly, address the question of how clubs arrange for football players transfers.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009881/13
a la Comisión
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(4 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Problemas con la organización de la capitalidad cultural 2016

La ciudad de Donostia-San Sebastián, nominada «Capital Europea de la Cultura 2016», recibió el pasado 17 de junio la visita del presidente del jurado internacional que realizó la nominación. A raíz de la misma, la Comisión de Control y Asesoramiento de Capitales Europeas de la Cultura está elaborando un informe sobre el modo en que la ciudad se prepara para acoger este evento. De acuerdo con algunas informaciones aparecidas en los medios, los evaluadores han expresado su inquietud por los efectos que las restricciones y recortes en los presupuestos públicos pueden tener en la preparación del proyecto. Además, se muestran críticos por la falta de liderazgo de la alcaldía de la ciudad, denuncian retrasos en el desarrollo del proyecto y deficiencias en la estructura técnica que está poniendo en marcha esta iniciativa, etc. Al parecer, estas advertencias se han comunicado por escrito a la alcaldía de Donostia-San Sebastián.

1. ¿Ha remitido la Comisión de Control y Asesoramiento de Capitales Europeas de la Cultura un informe crítico al ayuntamiento de San Sebastián sobre las tareas desarrolladas para preparar este evento?

2. De ser así, ¿puede considerarse un documento interno de trabajo dirigido exclusivamente a la alcaldía de la ciudad? ¿Cuáles son las principales deficiencias observadas hasta la fecha en la puesta en marcha de este proyecto?

3. ¿Qué medidas urgentes deberían ponerse en marcha para garantizar el éxito en la organización y desarrollo de este evento?

4. ¿Existen las «injerencias políticas» a que se refieren los medios de comunicación en sus informaciones? De ser así, ¿de qué tipo y cómo se han hecho patentes?

5. ¿Puede ser que la polémica surgida tras la nominación de la ciudad tenga alguna relación con la actitud reticente —que al parecer denuncia el informe— con la que el Ministerio español de Cultura está participando en este evento?

Respuesta de la Sra. Vassiliou en nombre de la Comisión
(15 de octubre de 2013)

De conformidad con la Decisión n° 1622/2006/CE, la Comisión convocará dos reuniones formales de seguimiento entre un «Comité de seguimiento y asesoría» y las ciudades designadas como Capitales Europeas de la Cultura. La primera reunión se celebrará dos años antes de la manifestación; la segunda ocho meses antes de esta. Tras cada reunión, el Comité elaborará un informe sobre el estado de los preparativos de la manifestación en el que expondrá su evaluación y recomendaciones. Dichos informes se publicarán en el sitio web de la Comisión. Por lo que respecta a Donostia-San Sebastián, las reuniones de seguimiento tendrán lugar en el otoño del 2013 y la primavera del 2015.

Por otra parte, la Comisión ha adoptado nuevas medidas para ayudar a las ciudades a preparar su año como Capital Europea de la Cultura, como por ejemplo las visitas sobre el terreno que realizará Comité. Estas visitas suplementarias pretenden orientar un poco más a las ciudades de manera puramente informal, razón por la cual no se publicarán las actas de las mismas. En junio se llevó a cabo una visita de este tipo a Donostia-San Sebastián.

La Comisión no hace comentarios sobre especulaciones aparecidas en la prensa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009881/13
to the Commission
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Organisational problems concerning the Capital of Culture in 2016

In connection with a visit to Donostia-San Sebastián on 17 June by the Chair of the international selection panel which recommended it for the title of European Capital of Culture in 2016, media reports indicate that the monitoring and assessment committee, which is currently drawing up an assessment of preparations by the city, has written to the municipal authority expressing concern at the impact of austerity measures and public spending cuts, criticising the authority itself for lack of initiative and pointing to delays and technical problems.

1. Has the committee in fact submitted an assessment report to the San Sebastián municipal authority expressing concern regarding preparations for the event?

2. If so, can this be regarded as a purely internal document for the eyes of the mayor and municipal councillors alone? What have been the main problems observed to date?

3. What urgent measures must be taken to ensure the successful preparation and organisation of the event?

4. Are media reports of 'political interference' accurate? If so what form has this taken?

5. Could the controversy surrounding the choice of Donostia-San Sebastián be in any way related to what press reports describe as lukewarm support for the project on the part of the Spanish Ministry for Culture?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(15 October 2013)

According to Decision n° 1622/2006/EC, the Commission convenes two formal monitoring meetings between a 'monitoring and advisory panel' and the cities designated as European Capitals of Culture. The first meeting takes place two years, the second eight months before the title-year. After each meeting, the panel issues a report on the state of preparations for the event containing the panel's assessment and recommendations. These reports are published on the Commission's website. As regards Donostia-San Sebastián, the two monitoring meetings will take place in autumn 2013 and spring 2015.

In addition, the Commission has introduced further steps to help cities prepare their title-year, such as on-the-spot visits by the panel. These additional visits aim to provide cities with more guidance in a purely informal way and the proceedings of such meetings are therefore not made public. A visit of this nature was made to Donostia-San Sebastián in June.

The Commission does not comment on speculative comments made in the press.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009882/13
an die Kommission
Elisabeth Köstinger (PPE) und Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(4. September 2013)

Betrifft: Mitreisende bei Delegationsreisen der Kommissionsmitglieder

Bezug nehmend auf Ihre schriftliche Antwort vom 25.6.2013 auf die Frage, wie viele Dritte (andere als Kommissionsbedienstete) bei den Delegationsreisen der Kommissionsmitglieder vertreten sind und ob die Kommission die Kosten dafür trägt (E-005341/2013), haben Sie geantwortet, dass generell keine Kosten für Dritte übernommen werden, außer in begründeten Ausnahmefällen.

1. Was sind diese Ausnahmefälle? Wann sind sie eingetreten? Welcher Kommissar führte sie durch?

2. Welche Ausnahmefälle gab es bei den jeweiligen Delegationsreisen in den Jahren von 2009 bis 2012? Warum?

3. Wer war bei diesen Reisen neben dem Kommissar vertreten? Was war der Zweck der Reise?

4. Welche Kosten sind bei den einzelnen Reisen entstanden?

5. Wie viele Delegationsreisen von Kommissaren fanden 2012 statt?

Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(17. Oktober 2013)

Die Kommission verweist die Frauen Abgeordneten auf ihre Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-005341/2013.

Es werden grundsätzlich keine Kosten für Dritte, die ein Kommissionsmitglied auf einer Dienstreise begleiten, übernommen. Nur bei Reisen, die offiziellen oder diplomatischen Zwecken dienen, werden in ordnungsgemäß begründeten Ausnahmefällen Kosten für Dritte übernommen. Als Beispiel für einen solchen Ausnahmefall lässt sich die Einladung der Gewinner eines Wettbewerbs anführen, den die EU-Organe in Zusammenarbeit mit dem Jugendforum veranstaltet hatten. Die Gewinner des Wettbewerbs „Frieden, Europa, Zukunft“ waren eingeladen, gemeinsam mit einer Delegation der EU-Organe der Verleihung des Friedensnobelpreises beizuwohnen. Ihre Reise- und Übernachtungskosten wurden von der Kommission, dem Parlament und dem Rat gemeinsam übernommen.

Die IT-Systeme, die derzeit in Gebrauch sind, erlauben es nicht, Daten zu extrahieren, anhand deren sich die Zusammensetzung von Delegationen von Bediensteten der Organe oder Dritten, die ein Kommissionsmitglied auf einer Dienstreise begleiten, erkennen lässt.

Im Jahr 2012 haben die Mitglieder der Kommission 1 431 Dienstreisen unternommen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009882/13
to the Commission
Elisabeth Köstinger (PPE) and Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Third parties accompanying Members of the Commission on mission

With reference to the Commission's reply of 25 June 2013 to the question as to how many third parties (other than Commission staff) travel on mission with Members of the Commission and whether the Commission pays their expenses (E-005341/2013), the Commission replied that as a general rule, the Commission does not cover the cost of third parties and that only under exceptional and duly justified circumstances are such expenses reimbursed.

1. What are these exceptional circumstances? When have they arisen? Which Commissioner was involved?

2. What exceptional circumstances arose during such missions between 2009 and 2012? Why?

3. Who travelled on these missions apart from the Commissioner? What was the purpose of travel?

4. What expenses were incurred on the individual journeys?

5. How many missions did Commissioners undertake in 2012?

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

We refer the Honourable Member to the reply given to the previous question (E-005341/2013).

As a general rule, the Commission does not cover the cost of third parties accompanying a Commissioner. Only under exceptional and duly justified circumstances are such expenses reimbursed for official or diplomatic purpose. An example of such an exception was the invitation of the winners of a competition organised by the EU institutions in partnership with the European Youth Forum. The winners of the 'Peace, Europe, Future' competition, were invited to attend the Nobel Peace prize ceremony with the delegation of the EU institutions. Their travel and accommodation costs were covered jointly by the Commission, the Parliament and the Council.

The current IT systems in operation do not permit the extraction of data allowing for the identification of the composition of delegations of staff members or third parties travelling on a mission with a Commissioner.

The number of missions undertaken by Commissioners in 2012 was 1 431.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-009883/13
a Bizottság számára
Szegedi Csanád (NI)
(2013. szeptember 4.)

Tárgy: A fertőző betegségek elterjedése az EU-ban

Az Unióban 1999-től működő Fertőző Betegségek Megfigyelési és Ellenőrzési Hálózatának jelentése szerint az EU-ban a fertőző betegségek előfordulási gyakorisága folyamatos emelkedést mutat. Az elmúlt időszakban olyan fertőzések incidenciája is növekedést jelez, amelyek nem voltak jellemzőek a tagállamokra, mint a tuberkulózis, az AIDS, vagy egyéb ritkább trópusi megbetegedések. Az Unióban évtizedek óta megfigyelhető fokozódó migráció jelentősen elősegítette a jelenség előfordulását. Véleményem szerint egy átfogó és a tagállamokkal közösen kidolgozott programot szükséges megvalósítani a fertőzések megállításának érdekében.

Milyen intézkedési és népegészségügyi programot tervez a Bizottság a fertőző betegségek visszaszorítása érdekében? A stockholmi székhelyű, 2004 óta működő Európai Betegségmegelőzési és Járványvédelmi Központnak milyen megfigyelései és cselekvési tervei vannak az ügy tekintetében?

Tonio Borg válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2013. október 21.)

A fertőző betegségek előfordulásait 1998 óta uniós szinten is szorosan nyomon követjük, amióta a 2119/98/EK európai parlamenti és tanácsi rendelet létrehozta a fertőző betegségek európai uniós járványügyi felügyeleti és ellenőrzési hálózatát.

A tagállamok jelenleg 49 fertőző betegséget, illetve fertőző betegségekhez kapcsolódó közegészségügyi problémát – antimikrobiális rezisztenciát, egészségügyi ellátással összefüggő fertőzést – kötelesek jelenteni az EU korai figyelmeztető és gyorsreagáló rendszerén keresztül; és ugyanígy értesítést kell küldeniük arról is, hogy milyen intézkedéseket fogadtak el a veszélyek enyhítése érdekében. Uniós szintű esetmeghatározások is kidolgozásra kerültek az egyes fertőző betegségek egyértelmű leírására és megkülönböztetésére, hogy az egész EU-ban egységes koncepció érvényesüljön e téren ([1]).

A szóban forgó fertőző betegségek felügyeletét a tagállamokban folytatott adatgyűjtések alapján az Európai Betegségmegelőzési és Járványvédelmi Központ (ECDC) koordinálja. A járványügyi felügyelettel kapcsolatos legfrissebb uniós adatok nem támasztják alá, hogy nőtt volna a fertőző betegségek előfordulásának gyakorisága Európában.

A bejelentett tuberkulózisos esetek összesített aránya az 1995-ben 100 000 főre eső 23 esethez képest 2011-re 14 eset/100 000 főre csökkent. Az AIDS-fertőzések értesítési aránya stabil maradt, 2004 óta 6 eset jut 100 000 főre. A fertőző betegségek Unióban való előfordulásairól részletesebben tájékozódhat az ECDC által megjelentetett éves felügyeleti jelentésből ([2]).

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:31998D2119:HU:HTML
([2]) http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/20121130-Annual-HIV-Surveillance-Report.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009883/13
to the Commission
Csanád Szegedi (NI)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Spread of infectious diseases in the EU

According to a report by the Communicable Disease Surveillance and Control Network, which has been operating in the EU since 1999, the prevalence of infectious diseases has been constantly increasing in the EU. In the recent period, there has also been a rise in the incidence of infection with diseases which used not typically to occur in the Member States, such as TB, AIDS or other, rarer, tropical diseases. The growth of migration within the EU which has been going on for decades bears much of the responsibility for this rise. In my view, there is a need for a comprehensive programme devised jointly by the Member States to combat infections.

What institutional and public health programmes is the Commission planning to combat infectious diseases? What surveillance and action plans does the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, based in Stockholm, which has been operating since 2004, have in this regard?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(21 October 2013)

Infectious diseases are thoroughly monitored at EU level since 1998, when Decision 2119/98/EC of the European Parliament and the Council established a European Union network for the epidemiological surveillance and control of communicable diseases.

Currently 49 communicable diseases and public health issues related to communicable diseases, i.e. antimicrobial resistance and healthcare associated infections, need to be notified by Member States through an early warning and response system at EU level; measures taken to mitigate these threats have to be reported as well. Case definitions at EU level are available to clearly describe and distinguish each communicable disease and ensure a consistent approach throughout the EU ([1]).

The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) coordinates, through data collection from the Member States, the surveillance of those communicable diseases. The latest EU figures on surveillance do not support a general rise in communicable diseases in Europe.

As regards tuberculosis, the overall notification rate has decreased from 23 per 100 000 people in 1995 to 14 per 100 000 in 2011. The notification rate for HIV infections has been stable at around 6 per 100 000 people since 2004. More detailed information on communicable diseases in the Union is available in the yearly surveillance report published by ECDC ([2]).

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:31998D2119:EN:HTML
([2]) http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/20121130-Annual-HIV-Surveillance-Report.pdf

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-009884/13
a Bizottság számára
Szegedi Csanád (NI)
(2013. szeptember 4.)

Tárgy: Kerékpárutak bővítése az Unióban

Az európai uniós fejlesztéseknek köszönhetően a tagállamokban már évek óta prioritást élvez a kerékpárutak hálózatának kiépítése és bővítése a zöld beruházásoknak köszönhetően. Ezeknek számos előnye ismert, mint a testmozgás miatti egészséges életmódra való ösztönzés (betegségmegelőzés), az autózással szembeni biciklizés következtében a gépjárművek általi károsanyag-kibocsátás csökkenése (környezetvédelem), a tömegsport általi közösségi programok megteremtése (szocializáció) stb. Az a jelenség figyelhető meg, hogy a kiépített kerékpárutak ösztönzően hatnak a lakosságra és egyre nagyobb számú polgár váltja fel az autóját kerékpárra időszakosan vagy akár a napi használatban. A hálózat áttekintése nyomán azonban komoly hiányosságokat figyelhetünk meg az utak kiépítésével kapcsolatban.

A tagállamokon átnyúló, nemzetközi, Európát átszelő kerékpárútnak, amely az Atlanti Óceántól a Fekete-tengerig tartana Magyarország érintésével (EuroVelo), mintegy 1/3-a került idáig megvalósításra.

Véleményem szerint támogatni kell a lokális (tagállami) és a nemzetközi kerékpárutak további fejlesztését.

A Bizottságnak milyen további fejlesztési tervei vannak a tagállami és a nemzetközi kerékpárutak kiépítésével kapcsolatban?

Siim Kallas válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2013. október 22.)

A 2007–2013-as időszakra az uniós strukturális alapokból és a Kohéziós Alapból több mint 600 millió eurót irányoztak elő a kerékpárút-hálózat kiépítésébe történő beruházásokra az uniós régiókban.

A 2014–2020-as időszakra az Európai Hálózatfinanszírozási Eszköz keretében 26,2 milliárd eurót különítettek el a transzeurópai közlekedési hálózat projektjeinek finanszírozására, amely adott esetben az e pénzeszközök felhasználásával épült hidak vagy alagutak mellett húzódó kerékpárutakat is magában foglalja.

A turizmus területén az Unió hatáskörében számos ([1]), a kerékpáros túraútvonalak kiépítésére irányuló figyelemfelhívó és hálózati-építési projekt valósul meg a „fenntartható turizmus” előkészítő intézkedés társfinanszírozásával ([2]). A Bizottság ezenkívül az EuroVelo útvonalhálózat ([3]) központi koordinálásával és a „zöldutak” ([4]) népszerűsítésével ([5]) kapcsolatos projekteket is támogatott.

A Bizottság szorgalmazza a lakosság mobilitásának fokozását és az áruszállítás jobb és fenntarthatóbb módon történő szervezését elősegítő fenntartható városi mobilitási tervek elfogadását. Az ilyen terveket úgy kell kidolgozni, hogy a kerékpárutakat már a tervezési szakaszban figyelembe vegyék.

Ezen túlmenően a Civitas kezdeményezés ([6]) keretében a részt vevő 59 városban 2002 óta 200 millió eurót fordítottak több mint 120 olyan, a kerékpározással összefüggő innovatív intézkedés megvalósítására és értékelésére, amelyek célja a városi kerékpározás új megközelítésbe helyezése.

Az európai mobilitási hétnek ([7]) szintén fontos szerepe van, hiszen ennek köszönhető számos különböző, a részt vevő városok által a tömegközlekedés és a városi infrastruktúra fejlesztésére javasolt állandó intézkedés.

([1]) A Lisszaboni Szerződés hatáskört biztosít az Unió számára, hogy a tagállamok által a turizmus területén hozott intézkedéseket támogassa, koordinálja és kiegészítse. Ugyanakkor a turisztikai infrastruktúra a regionális/tagállami hatóságok hatáskörébe tartozik.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/iron-curtain-trail/year-2/index_en.htm
([3]) www.eurovelo.com vagy www.eurovelo.org
([4]) http://www.aevv-egwa.org/site/hp_en.asp
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/sustainable-tourism/index_en.htm
([6]) http://www.civitas-initiative.org/
([7]) http://www.mobilityweek.eu/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009884/13
to the Commission
Csanád Szegedi (NI)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Building more cycle paths in the EU

Thanks to developments in the European Union, priority has for years been assigned in the Member States to developing and expanding the cycle path network, using green investment. Cycle paths confer many benefits, such as encouraging a healthy life style by means of physical movement (disease prevention), reducing emissions of harmful substances from motor vehicles thanks to cycling (environmental protection), creation of Community programmes through grassroots sport (socialisation), etc. It is observable that the building of cycle paths encourages changes of behaviour, as more and more people take to cycling instead of driving for part of the time or even on a daily basis. However, if one examines the cycle path network, it becomes clear that there are serious gaps in it.

So far, approximately one third of the international, trans-European cycle path passing through Member States, including Hungary, and linking the Atlantic Ocean to the Black Sea (EuroVelo) has so far been built.

I believe that the further development of local (Member State) and international cycle paths should be supported.

What further development plans does the Commission have with the aim of expanding the Member States' and international cycle path networks?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(22 October 2013)

For the period 2007-2013, the EU's Structural and Cohesion Funds made available an estimated budget of over EUR 600 million for the implementation of investment in cycle infrastructure in regions across the EU.

An allocation of EUR 26.2 billion of the EU budget (Connecting Europe Facility) will be made available for the period 2014 -2020 for the financing of projects on the Trans-European Transport Network. This includes cycle lanes where appropriate alongside bridges or tunnels which are built using this funding.

Within the competence of the EU in the field of tourism ([1]), several awareness-raising and networking-building projects for the development of long-distance cycling routes have been co-financed by the Preparatory Action 'Sustainable Tourism' ([2]). Moreover, the Commission supported with grants the projects related to the EuroVelo ([3]) Network central coordination and to greenways' ([4]) promotion ([5]).

The Commission actively encourages the adoption of Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs) to help organise the mobility of people and the delivery of goods in a better and more sustainable way. These will ensure that cycle infrastructure is included at the planning stage.

Furthermore, the Civitas Initiative ([6]) has committed EUR 200 million since 2002 to help 59 participating cities to implement and evaluate over 120 innovative cycling-related measures, in order to develop new approaches to cycling in cities.

European Mobility Week ([7]) also takes credit for a kaleidoscope of permanent measures put forward by participating cities to improve public transport and urban infrastructure in general.

([1]) The Lisbon Treaty grants the Union the competence to carry out actions to support coordinate or supplement the actions of the Member States in the tourism field. However, the competence for tourism infrastructure lies within regional/national authorities.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/iron-curtain-trail/year-2/index_en.htm
([3]) www.eurovelo.com or www.eurovelo.org
([4]) http://www.aevv-egwa.org/site/hp_en.asp
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/sustainable-tourism/index_en.htm
([6]) http://www.civitas-initiative.org/
([7]) http://www.mobilityweek.eu/

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-009885/13
a Bizottság számára
Szegedi Csanád (NI)
(2013. szeptember 4.)

Tárgy: A krónikus légzőszervi betegségek megelőzése és kezelése

A krónikus légzőszervi betegségek, amelyeket összefoglalóan „Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease"-nek (COPD) nevezünk, a súlyos civilizációs betegségeink közé tartoznak. Ilyen a krónikus *bronchitis*, amelyet elsősorban a dohányzás okoz, az allergia és az *asthma bronchiale*, melyek különböző allergén anyagok miatt alakulnak ki. Ezek mellett egyéb tüdőbetegségek (tuberkulózis, emfizéma stb.) is ehhez a csoporthoz tartozhatnak. A légzőszervi betegségek évtizedeken keresztül tartó légzési problémával járnak, és végső soron tüdőelégtelenséghez vezethetnek. Epidemiológiáját tekintve az előfordulásuk mind az USA-ban, mind az Európai Unióban enyhe emelkedést mutat. Európában ezen megbetegedések a populáció mintegy 5%-át érintik valamilyen formában, azonban ez Kelet-Európában akár 10% is lehet.

A betegség előfordulásában elsősorban a környezeti hatások játsszák a döntő szerepet, ami összefügg az iparosodással, a környezetszennyezéssel, az életmóddal, a fertőző betegségekkel és az erdőirtással. A növekvő, rendkívül nagy betegszám jelentős terhet jelent az egyes tagállamok egészségügyi rendszerére (Európában mintegy 3%-a az egészségügyi kiadásoknak). Érdemes tanulmány tárgyává tenni, hogy a betegség következtében mekkora populáció esik ki a munka világából, és ez mekkora hatást gyakorol a gazdaságra.

A morbiditás csökkentésében nagy szerepe van a megelőzésnek (dohányzás elleni kampányok), az egészséges életmódnak, a környezetszennyezés felszámolásának, illetve az allergén anyagok eliminálásának.

Véleményem szerint komprehenzív népegészségügyi programok és a tagállamok egészségügyi ágazatainak bevonása által kellene közösen fellépni a jelenség ellen.

Milyen programja van a Bizottságnak a krónikus légzőszervi betegségek megelőzésével és kezelésével kapcsolatban?

Tonio Borg válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2013. október 21.)

A dohányzás a krónikus obstruktív légzőszervi betegség első számú kiváltó oka. Minél többet dohányzunk, illetve vagyunk kitéve a passzív dohányzás ártalmainak, annál nagyobb eséllyel alakulhat ki szervezetünkben a COPD-nek is nevezett krónikus obstruktív légzőszervi betegség.

A COPD visszaszorítását szolgálja maga a dohánytermékekre vonatkozó jelenlegi uniós szabályozás, illetve az annak felülvizsgálatára irányuló európai bizottsági javaslat, továbbá a tagállami dohányzásellenes törvények elfogadását sürgető intézkedések és „A volt dohányosok megállíthatatlanok" elnevezésű kampány is.

A Bizottság a Közegészségügyi Program ([1]), valamint a hetedik kutatási és technológiafejlesztési keretprogram révén számos, a krónikus légzőszervi betegségekkel kapcsolatos projektet támogatott. A Közegészségügyi Program keretében 2005-től 2009-ig a Bizottság támogatásában részesült „A krónikus obstruktív légzőszervi betegség és az asztma nyomon követésének mutatói" elnevezésű kutatási projekt is.

Összességében 113 kutatási projekt több mint 215 millió euró támogatásban részesült; a támogatott kutatási területek között szerepelt a légúti fertőzések, a ritka betegségek, a COPD, az asztma, az allergiák, valamint a tüdőrák diagnosztizálása, megelőzése és kezelése is. Az érintett projektek közül külön kiemelhető az EvA ([2]), a PREDICTA ([3]), a MedALL ([4]) és a CURELUNG ([5]). Ezen túlmenően az innovatív gyógyszerek kutatására irányuló kezdeményezés ([6]) további három releváns projektet finanszírozott köz-magán társulás formájában, 30,5 millió euró értékben ([7]).

([1]) Lásd: http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html
([2]) Emfizéma markerek kontra RADS markerek a krónikus obstruktív légúti betegségben szenvedőknél: http://www.eva-copd.eu/
([3]) A posztinfekciós immunkezelés és annak összefüggései az allergiás légúti megbetegedések perzisztens és krónikus jellegével: http://www.predicta.eu
([4]) Az allergia kialakulásának mechanizmusai: http://medall-fp7.eu/
([5]) (Epi)genetikus terápiás génaláírások meghatározása a tüdőrák prognózisának javítása érdekében: http://www.curelung.eu/
([6]) http://www.imi.europa.eu
([7]) PREDICT-TB: http://www.predict-tb.eu/, PRO-ACTIVE: http://www.proactivecopd.com/, valamint U-BIOPRED: http://www.ubiopred.eu

A következő Közegészségügyi Programra irányuló – jelenleg tárgyalt – bizottsági javaslat az egészségügyi problémák széles skáláját öleli fel, köztük a krónikus betegségek megelőzését és kezelését is. A jelenlegi fázisban azonban még korai volna a finanszírozásban részesülő konkrét intézkedésekről nyilatkozni.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009885/13
to the Commission
Csanád Szegedi (NI)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Prevention and treatment of chronic respiratory diseases

Those chronic respiratory diseases which are known collectively as Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) are among the serious diseases of our civilisation. One is chronic bronchitis, caused primarily by smoking; allergies; and bronchial asthma; which are caused by various allergens. In addition to these, the category can also include other lung diseases (TB, emphysema, etc.). Respiratory diseases cause breathing difficulties for decades and may ultimately lead to pulmonary insufficiency. From the point of view of their epidemiology, their prevalence is increasing slightly, both in the USA and in the European Union. In Europe, these diseases affect some 5% of the population in some form, while in Eastern Europe the figure may be as high as 10%.

It is primarily environmental factors that play the decisive role in the occurrence of the disease, which is associated with industrialisation, environmental pollution, life style, infectious diseases and deforestation. The growing and extremely large number of patients represents a significant burden on the health systems of individual Member States (accounting for some 3% of healthcare expenditure in Europe). It would be worth researching what proportion of the population is excluded from the labour market on account of the disease, and what impact this has on the economy.

There are large roles to be played in reducing morbidity by prevention (anti-smoking campaigns), healthy life styles, eradication of environmental pollution and elimination of allergens.

In my view, the phenomenon should be combated jointly by introducing comprehensive public health programmes and by involving the healthcare systems of the Member States.

What programme does the Commission have with regard to prevention and treatment of chronic respiratory diseases?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(21 October 2013)

Smoking is the leading cause of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. The more a person smokes or is exposed to second-hand smoke, the more likely he or she is of developing chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases.

As such, current EC law on Tobacco Products, the European Commission proposal to revise such law, action to encourage Member States to adopt smoke free laws, and the campaign 'Ex-smokers are unstoppable' can all contribute to curbing chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

The Commission supported projects on chronic respiratory diseases through the Health Programme ([1]) and the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development. Under the Health programme, the Commission supported a project to develop 'Indicators for monitoring chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases and asthma' from 2005 to 2009.

Over EUR 215 million have been provided to 113 research projects covering such aspects as diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of respiratory infections, rare diseases, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, asthma, allergies, as well as lung cancer. Examples of the projects include EvA ([2]), PREDICTA ([3]), MedALL ([4]), and CURELUNG ([5]). The public-private partnership on the Innovative Medicines Initiative ([6]) further funded three projects in this area for another EUR 30.5 million ([7]).

([1]) See at http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html
([2]) Markers for emphysema versus airway disease in COPD, http://www.eva-copd.eu/
([3]) Post-infectious immune reprogramming and its association with persistence and chronicity of respiratory allergic diseases, http://www.predicta.eu
([4]) Mechanisms of the Development of Allergy, http://medall-fp7.eu/
([5]) Determining (epi)genetic therapeutic signatures for improving lung cancer prognosis, http://www.curelung.eu/
([6]) http://www.imi.europa.eu
([7]) PREDICT-TB http://www.predict-tb.eu/, PRO-ACTIVE http://www.proactivecopd.com/, and U-BIOPRED http://www.ubiopred.eu

The Commission proposal for the next Health Programme, still under negotiation, covers a wide range of health issues including prevention and treatment of chronic diseases. It is however premature at this stage to predict the specific actions that will be funded.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-009886/13
a Bizottság számára
Szegedi Csanád (NI)
(2013. szeptember 4.)

Tárgy: a Szerb–Magyar Rádió fennmaradása

A Délvidéken (Szerbiában) élő jelentős számú magyar kisebbség számára nélkülözhetetlen, nagy múltra visszatekintő magyar rádiózás került veszélybe az utóbbi években. A Szerb Médiatanács sorozatos intézkedései (finanszírozás megvonása, frekvenciaelosztás miatti korlátozás stb.) nyomán próbálja ellehetetleníteni a 40 éve fennálló méltán híres magyar rádiót, amely a tartományban a 3. leghallgatottabb, a magyar kisebbség körében pedig a legnépszerűbb rádióadót jelenti.

A Bizottság milyen lépéseket tesz a délvidéki magyar rádió védelme érdekében?

Štefan Füle válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2013. október 25.)

Az Európai Bizottság az uniós tagság koppenhágai kritériumainak részeként valamennyi uniós tagjelölt országban – köztük Szerbiában is – szorosan nyomon követi a kisebbségek tiszteletben tartását és védelmét. Szerbia joganyaga rendelkezik a kisebbségek nyelvén történő tájékoztatásról, és a Bizottság elvárja az országtól, hogy ezeket a rendelkezéseket továbbra is végrehajtsa.

A magyar nyelvű műsorszolgáltatást elsősorban a Vajdasági Rádió és Televízió (RTV) biztosítja, a rádiós műsorszolgáltatást illetően pedig az RTV-csoportba tartozó Újvidéki Rádió (Radio Novi Sad 2) kizárólag magyar nyelven sugároz. A Bizottság tisztában van vele, hogy Szerbia nehéz társadalmi-gazdasági helyzete számos médiumra – köztük az állami tulajdonban levő RTV-re is – káros hatást gyakorolt. Felhívtuk a szerb hatóságok figyelmét erre a tényre, nyomatékosítva, hogy Szerbiának fenn kell tartania a kisebbségi nyelveken történő műsorszolgáltatást a vonatkozó európai normák, például az Európai Tanács nemzeti kisebbségek védelméről szóló keretegyezménye értelmében tett kötelezettségvállalásaival összhangban.

A Bizottság továbbra is szorosan nyomon követi a kisebbségvédelem alakulását, és a Szerbiáról szóló következő, 2013. október 16-án megjelenő eredményjelentésben beszámol róla.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009886/13
to the Commission
Csanád Szegedi (NI)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Survival of Hungarian-language radio in Serbia

In recent years, Hungarian-language radio broadcasting in Vojvodina (Serbia), which is essential to the large Hungarian-speaking minority there and which has a past that it can be rightly proud of, has come under threat. The Serbian Media Council is seeking by means of a series of measures (withdrawal of funding, restrictions arising from the allocation of frequencies, etc.) to make it impossible for the deservedly renowned Hungarian-language radio broadcasting service to continue; it has been in existence for 40 years and is the third most listened-to radio programme in the province, as well as the most popular among the Hungarian-speaking minority.

What steps will the Commission take to defend Hungarian-language radio broadcasting in Vojvodina?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(25 October 2013)

The European Commission closely monitors the respect for and protection of minorities by all EU-candidate countries, including Serbia, as part of the Copenhagen criteria for EU membership. Information in minority languages is provided for in the Serbian legislation and the Commission expects from Serbia that it continues to implement these provisions.

Broadcasting in Hungarian language is ensured mainly through the Radio Television of Vojvodina (RTV) and regarding radio broadcasting, Radio Novi Sad 2, a radio under the RTV, broadcasts only in Hungarian language. The Commission understands that the difficult socioeconomic context in Serbia has had an adverse effect on the situation of a number of media outlets, including the state owned RTV. We have brought this to the attention of the Serbian authorities, stressing the need for Serbia to maintain broadcasting in minority languages, in line with the country's commitments under the relevant European standards, such as the Council of Europe Framework Convention on National Minorities.

The Commission will continue to closely follow up and report on the protection of minority issues in the upcoming progress report on Serbia, released on 16 October 2013.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-009887/13
do Komisji
Czesław Adam Siekierski (PPE)
(4 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Negocjacje UE z USA w sprawie umowy o wolnym handlu

Konieczna jest analiza skutków ekonomicznych ewentualnej umowy o wolnym handlu z USA.

Wspomniana analiza powinna identyfikować ewentualne korzyści oraz zagrożenia dla poszczególnych działów gospodarski, w tym rolnictwa i jego sektorów.

Komisja powinna w tym raporcie przedstawić m.in. propozycje ewentualnych środków zapobiegających lub łagodzących potencjalne zagrożenia wynikające z liberalizacji handlu z USA.

W negocjacjach należy pamiętać o wrażliwości sektora rolnego i jego specyfiki. Należy mieć na uwadze europejski model rolnictwa oparty na rodzinnych gospodarstwach oraz wysokich standardach, jakie rolnicy muszą spełniać. Wydaje się, że negocjacje i przyszła umowa powinna zawierać również kwestie dobrostanu zwierząt.

Kiedy Komisja udostępni Parlamentowi analizę skutków ekonomicznych wynikających z ewentualnej umowy o wolnym handlu z USA, a zwłaszcza tych odnoszących się do sektora rolnego?

Jaki wpływ umowa może mieć na miejsca pracy w rolnictwie?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Karela De Guchta w imieniu Komisji
(14 października 2013 r.)

Szczegółowa analiza ewentualnego wpływu transatlantyckiego partnerstwa w dziedzinie handlu i inwestycji, przeprowadzona przez Ośrodek Badań Polityki Gospodarczej (Centre for Economic Policy Research – CEPR) na zlecenie Komisji, została udostępniona dnia 12 marca 2013 r. ([1]). Z analizy makroekonomicznej wynika, że liberalizacja handlu między UE i Stanami Zjednoczonymi, a szczególnie możliwość zawarcia umowy o wolnym handlu, zwiększa dobrobyt obu stron.

W analizie zwrócono także uwagę na wrażliwość niektórych sektorów rolnictwa. Komisja jest w pełni świadoma tej sytuacji i weźmie ją pod uwagę podczas negocjacji. Jeżeli chodzi natomiast o prawdopodobny wpływ na miejsca pracy w rolnictwie, w tabelach 34 i 36 sprawozdania CEPR przedstawiono dane obrazujące wpływ na zatrudnienie zarówno bardziej, jak i mniej wykwalifikowanych pracowników, z podziałem na sektory.

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/march/tradoc_150737.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009887/13
to the Commission
Czesław Adam Siekierski (PPE)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: EU-US negotiations on free trade agreement

The economic implications of a free trade agreement with the USA need to be carefully analysed.

That analysis needs to identify the benefits and threats the agreement is likely to bring for each economic sector, including the farming industry and its various branches.

The Commission should include in its analysis report proposals for neutralising or mitigating threats that could arise from the liberalisation of trade with the US.

It must be borne in mind during the negotiations that farming is a sensitive and specific sector. It must also be borne in mind that the European agricultural model is based on family farms and that EU farmers are required to meet high standards. What is more, the issue of animal welfare needs to be addressed during the negotiations and in the final agreement.

When will the Commission be able to provide Parliament with an analysis of the economic implications of a free trade agreement with the US, in particular for the farming industry?

What impact is the agreement likely to have on jobs in farming?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(14 October 2013)

An in-depth study on the possible impacts of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) carried out by the Centre for Economic Policy Research (CEPR) at the request of the Commission was released on 12 March 2013 ([1]). This macroeconomic analysis shows that trade liberalisation between the EU and the US, and in particular the Free Trade Agreement option, improves overall welfare for both partners.

The analysis has also highlighted sensitivities in some agricultural sectors. The Commission is fully aware of these sensitivities and will take them into consideration during the negotiations. Regarding the likely impact on jobs in farming, tables 34 and 36 of the CEPR report outline the effects on employment by sector, both on more and on less skilled workers.

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/march/tradoc_150737.pdf

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009888/13
an den Rat
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(4. September 2013)

Betrifft: Folgemaßnahmen: Bewegung im Kampf gegen Steueroasen — das Steuerabkommen mit Liechtenstein

Da die Fragen zum Thema Steuerabkommen mit Liechtenstein in der Antwort E-004258/2013 nur kursorisch beantwortet wurden und angesichts der Bedeutung dieses Themas wird der Rat erneut um die Beantwortung der folgenden Fragen ersucht:

1. Auf welchen Tagungen hat der Rat das Steuerabkommen mit Liechtenstein „aktiv erörtert"? Welche Ergebnisse gibt es?

2. Wann fanden die letzten Beratungen im Rat über den Entwurf dieses Steuerabkommens statt?

3. Wann wird der Rat die Beratungen über den Entwurf dieses Steuerabkommens wieder aufnehmen?

Antwort
(5. November 2013)

Zuletzt hat sich der Rat auf seiner Tagung vom 5. Juni 2013 speziell mit der Frage eines Betrugsbekämpfungsabkommens mit Liechtenstein befasst ([1]). Bisher hat der Rat noch kein einmütiges Einver-nehmen über diesen Punkt erzielt, wie dies nach dem Vertrag über die Arbeitsweise der Europäischen Union erforderlich ist.

Darüber hinaus sei angemerkt, dass der Rat kürzlich einen Beschluss über die Ermächtigung zur Aufnahme von Verhandlungen mit Liechtenstein und anderen Drittländern angenommen hat, die dazu dienen sollen, die Abkommen der EU mit diesen Ländern im Bereich der Besteuerung von Zinserträgen zu verbessern. Die Kommission unterrichtet den Rat regelmäßig über die Fortschritte bei den Verhandlungen.

([1]) CM 3034/13.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009888/13
to the Council
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Follow-up measures: progress in the fight against tax havens — the tax agreement with Liechtenstein

As the questions concerning the tax agreement with Liechtenstein were only answered cursorily in Reply E-004258/2013, and in view of the importance of the subject, the Council is asked once again to answer the following questions:

1. At which meetings did the Council 'actively discuss' the tax agreement with Liechtenstein? What were the results?

2. When was this draft tax agreement last discussed in the Council?

3. When will the Council resume discussion of this draft tax agreement?

Reply
(5 November 2013)

The latest discussion specifically concentrating on an anti-fraud agreement with Liechtenstein took place within the Council on 5 June 2013 ([1]). The Council has not yet reached unanimous agreement on this issue as required under the Treaty on Functioning of the European Union.

In addition, it is worth mentioning that the Council recently adopted a decision authorising the opening of negotiations with Liechtenstein and other third countries in order to improve the EU's agreements with those countries on savings taxation. The Commission is systematically reporting to the Council on the progress of the negotiations.

([1]) CM 3034/13.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-009889/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(4 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Η περίπτωση της Γ.Μ.Μ.Α.Ε ΛΑΡΚΟ

Η ΛΑΡΚΟ είναι μια από τις 5 μεγαλύτερες εταιρείες παραγωγής σιδηρονικελίου στον κόσμο και η μόνη παραγωγός στην Ευρώπη με σαφή εξωστρεφή προσανατολισμό και ιδιαίτερα σημαντική προστιθέμενη αξία για την ευρωπαϊκή χαλυβουργία, καθώς είναι ο κύριος προμηθευτής των μεγαλύτερων ευρωπαϊκών βιομηχανιών ανοξείδωτου χάλυβα, επί 50 έτη. Οι μεταλλευτικοί της πόροι (μέση περιεκτικότητα Ni 0,94%) εκτιμώνται σε 113 εκατ. τόνους, με την τρέχουσα αξία τους να υπερβαίνει τα 16 δις δολάρια. Διαχρονικά αποτελεί πεδίο έρευνας και εφαρμογής σε συναφείς επιστημονικούς κλάδους με τα αντικείμενα της παραγωγικής της δραστηριότητας, ενώ στο πλαίσιο της λειτουργίας της αναπτύσσονται καινοτομίες που εφαρμόζονται διεθνώς και συγκεντρώνουν παγκόσμιο ενδιαφέρον. Ταυτόχρονα, το εξειδικευμένο-πλήρως καταρτισμένο ανθρώπινο δυναμικό που απασχολεί, καθώς και οι εγνωσμένες δυνατότητές της τόσο στην υιοθέτηση νέων μεθόδων (π.χ. υδρομεταλλουργική σιδηρουργία κ.λπ.), όσο και στη δραστηριοποίησή της σε νέους συναφείς παραγωγικούς τομείς (π.χ. προδιαμορφωμένος ανοξείδωτος χάλυβας υψηλών προδιαγραφών κ.ά.) πιστοποιούν την τεράστια αναπτυξιακή της προοπτική. Η εν λόγω επιχείρηση, όμως, αντιμετωπίζει μια σειρά ζητημάτων που υπονομεύουν την λειτουργία της.

Σε αυτήν την κατεύθυνση ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Διαθέτει στοιχεία για τη μέση τιμή (τιμολόγιο) διάθεσης ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας (Mwh) στις επιχειρήσεις χαλυβουργίας και ενεργοβόρου μεταλλουργίας;

2. Υπάρχει σχετική ευρωπαϊκή νομοθεσία (διάταξη ή οδηγία) που να απαγορεύει την ανανέωση των αδειών παραχώρησης των μεταλλευτικών εκμεταλλεύσεων και λειτουργίας της επιχείρησης;

3. Με δεδομένη, αφενός, τη σαφή δέσμευση της ΕΕ για προώθηση της καινοτομίας με στόχο την ενίσχυση της ανταγωνιστικότητάς της στην παγκόσμια αγορά και, αφετέρου, την υψηλή ποιότητα μεθόδων και προϊόντων παραγωγής της ΛΑΡΚΟ, πώς αξιολογεί το ενδεχόμενο κατάτμησης της εταιρείας, που θα οδηγήσει σε αποδυνάμωση ή οριστική απώλεια των χαρακτηριστικών της καινοτομίας, της ποιότητας των μεθόδων που εφαρμόζει και της μοναδικότητας που διαθέτει;

4. Το σύνολο των αποφάσεων για το μέλλον της ΛΑΡΚΟ στηρίζεται στην «εικασία» ότι θα επιβληθεί από την ΓΔ COMP η επιστροφή 130 εκ. ευρώ λόγω κρατικών ενισχύσεων. Έχει λάβει γνώση αν υπάρχει επίσημος καταλογισμός του ποσού αυτού ή σχετικά με το στάδιο στο οποίο βρίσκεται η διαδικασία διερεύνησης του συγκεκριμένου ζητήματος; Έχει κληθεί η ΛΑΡΚΟ να παρουσιάσει τις απόψεις και να τεκμηριώσει τις αντιρρήσεις της;

Απάντηση του κ. Almunia εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(5 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

1. Η Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει πληροφορίες σχετικά με τη μέση τιμή (τιμολόγιο) διάθεσης ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας (MWh) στις επιχειρήσεις χαλυβουργίας και ενεργοβόρου μεταλλουργίας.

2. Η ανανέωση των αδειών για δραστηριότητες εξόρυξης δεν απαγορεύεται κατ' αρχήν από τους κανόνες της ΕΕ, εφόσον τηρούνται οι σχετικές διατάξεις της Συνθήκης για τη λειτουργία της ΕΕ και της οδηγίας 2004/18/ΕΚ περί δημόσιων συμβάσεων.

3. Η Επιτροπή δεν έχει απαιτήσει με κανένα τρόπο την κατάτμηση της ΛΑΡΚΟ. Ωστόσο, η Ελλάδα περιέλαβε την ΛΑΡΚΟ στον κατάλογο των προς ιδιωτικοποίηση κρατικών περιουσιακών στοιχείων. Η επιχείρηση ενδέχεται επίσης να έχει λάβει παράνομες και μη συμβατές ενισχύσεις στο παρελθόν, όπως αναφέρεται στην απόφαση της Επιτροπής, της 6ης Μαρτίου 2013, με την οποία κινήθηκε η επίσημη διαδικασία έρευνας. Εάν επιβεβαιωθεί η εν λόγω παράνομη ενίσχυση θα πρέπει να ανακτηθεί. Κατ' αρχήν, εάν η επιχείρηση πωληθεί συνεχίζοντας τη λειτουργία της, κάθε υποχρέωση ανάκτησης μεταβιβάζεται και, κατά συνέπεια, ο αγοραστής της ΛΑΡΚΟ θα πρέπει να επιστρέψει την παράνομη ενίσχυση. Εναλλακτικά, θα ήταν δυνατόν να πωληθούν μόνο μέρη της εταιρείας με τρόπο που να αποφευχθεί η οικονομική συνέχεια μεταξύ της ενισχυθείσας οντότητας και της νέας επιχείρησης.

4. Σύμφωνα με τις ισχύουσες διαδικασίες περί κρατικών ενισχύσεων, από τη στιγμή που κινήθηκε η επίσημη διαδικασία έρευνας, το κράτος μέλος και τρίτα μέρη, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της ΛΑΡΚΟ, είχαν την δυνατότητα να εκφράσουν τις απόψεις τους όσον αφορά τα υπό εξέταση μέτρα. Η Επιτροπή δεν έχει ακόμη εκδώσει τελική απόφαση σχετικά με την εν λόγω υπόθεση.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009889/13
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: The case of LARCO GMMSA

LARCO is one of the 5 largest ferronickel production companies in the world and the only producer in Europe that is specifically export-oriented: it represents substantial added value for the European steel industry, having been the main supplier of the major European stainless steel companies for fifty years. Its mining resources (average Ni content of 0.94%) are estimated at 113 million tonnes, whose current value is in excess of USD 16 billion. Over the years, it has been a field of research and application in scientific disciplines related to its production activity, while innovations have been developed in the field in which it operates that are being applied internationally, attracting worldwide interest. At the same time its expert, fully trained workforce and its track record both in adopting new methods (e.g. the use of hydrometallurgy in iron production, etc) and in becoming involved in new related productive sectors (e.g. high quality preformed stainless steel, etc.) demonstrate its tremendous growth prospects. However, this company faces a number of issues that pose a threat its operations.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Does it have any information on the average price (tariff) of electricity (Mwh) supplied to steel and energy-intensive mining companies?

2. Is there any a relevant European legislation (orders or guidelines) prohibiting the renewal of concession licences for the company's mining activities and operations?

3. Given, firstly, the EU's clear commitment to promoting innovation in order to strengthen its competitiveness in the global market and, secondly, LARCO's high quality production methods and products, how does it view the possibility that the company might be split up, leading to a weakening or the permanent loss of its innovative characteristics, the quality of the methods it uses and its uniqueness?

4. All the decisions on LARCO's future are based on 'guesswork' that DG COMP will require it to refund EUR 130 million owing to state aid. Does it know whether this amount has been officially imputed or what stage has been reached in the process of investigating this issue? Has LARCO been called upon to present its views and to substantiate its objections?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(5 November 2013)

1. The Commission does not have any information related to the average price (tariff) of electricity (Mwh) supplied to steel and energy-intensive mining companies.

2. Renewal of authorisations to perform mining activities is not in principle prohibited by the EU rules, provided that it is in line with the relevant provisions of the Treaty on the functioning of the EU and the directive 2004/18/EC on Public Procurement.

3. The Commission has not required any split of Larco. However, Larco has been included by Greece in the list of state assets to be privatised. The company may also have received illegal and incompatible aid in the past, as set out in the Commission decision of 6 March 2013 opening the formal investigation procedure. If confirmed such illegal aid would need to be recovered. In principle, if a company is sold as a going concern, any recovery obligations follow and a purchaser of Larco would then need to reimburse the illegal aid. An alternative could be to sell only parts of the company in a way that avoids economic continuity between the aided entity and the new business.

4. According to the applicable state aid procedures, after the opening of the formal investigation procedure, the Member State and third parties, including Larco, had the possibility to express their views regarding the measures in question. The Commission has not yet adopted a final decision in relation to this case.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009890/13
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(4 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Decreto ministeriale sull'applicazione della formula per il calcolo dell'efficienza energetica degli impianti di incenerimento in relazione alle condizioni climatiche

In data 7 agosto 2013 il Ministero dell'ambiente e della tutela del territorio e del mare ha adottato il decreto ministeriale sull'applicazione della formula per il calcolo dell'efficienza energetica degli impianti di incenerimento in relazione alle condizioni climatiche.

Nell'ambito della Conferenza delle Regioni — Commissione Ambiente ed Energia, la Regione Emilia-Romagna si è espressa in maniera non favorevole all'adozione di tale decreto, rilevando la non conformità alla direttiva 2008/98/CE del procedimento attraverso il quale si è addivenuti alla sua emanazione.

Pur prevedendo la possibilità di introdurre il fattore climatico nella formula indicata all'allegato II per il calcolo dell'efficienza energetica degli impianti di incenerimento, la direttiva 2008/98/CE prescrive infatti a tal fine una specifica procedura tesa a modificare correttamente la formula e il corrispondente punto della direttiva (cfr. gli articoli 38 e 39 della direttiva 2008/98/CE e l'articolo 5 bis della decisione 1999/468/CE, così come modificata dalla decisione 2006/512/CE).

L'adozione del decreto ministeriale citato non risulta quindi preceduta dal compiuto espletamento della procedura suddetta.

L'anticipazione da parte dello Stato italiano del fattore di correzione climatico senza che sia stato prima recepito, attraverso la procedura prevista, dalla Commissione potrebbe determinare una violazione della direttiva vigente che ancora non lo contempla e un conseguente possibile indebito vantaggio per le imprese di uno Stato membro a scapito di quelle degli altri.

È la Commissione al corrente dell'adozione da parte dell'Italia di tale decreto ministeriale? Come intende intervenire in merito?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(17 ottobre 2013)

La Commissione non sapeva che l'Italia avesse emanato un decreto ministeriale che autorizza l'applicazione di un fattore di conversione climatico locale alla formula di cui al punto R1 dell'allegato II della direttiva 2008/98/CE sui rifiuti ([1]).

La Commissione si informerà presso le autorità italiane competenti.

([1]) GU L 312 del 22.11.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009890/13
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Ministerial decree on the application of the formula for calculating the energy efficiency of incineration plants with reference to climatic conditions

On 7 August 2013 the Italian Ministry for the Environment and the Protection of the Land and Sea adopted a ministerial decree on the application of the formula for calculating the energy efficiency of incineration plants with reference to climatic conditions.

The Emilia-Romagna region has made it known within the Environment and Energy Commission of the Italian Conference of the Regions that it does not support the adoption of the decree on the grounds that the procedure used to draw it up was inconsistent with Directive 2008/98/EC.

Although Directive 2008/98/EC does provide for the possibility of including climatic conditions as a factor in the formula (set out in Annex II) for calculating the energy efficiency of incineration plants, it lays down a specific procedure for doing so (Articles 38 and 39 of the directive and Article 5a of Decision 1999/468/EC, as amended by Decision 2006/512/EC).

That procedure was not followed prior to the adoption of the above ministerial decree.

Italy jumped the gun when it included climatic conditions as a factor in the formula without the Commission having first given its approval under the above procedure. This could amount to a breach of the aforementioned directive, which, as yet, makes no provision for this approach, and could lead to companies in Italy gaining an unfair advantage over those in other Member States.

Is the Commission aware that Italy has adopted the aforementioned ministerial decree? How does it intend to respond?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(17 October 2013)

The Commission was not aware of the adoption of the Ministerial Decree by Italy allowing the application of a local climate correction factor to the R1 formula set out in Annex II to the directive 2008/98/EC ([1]) on waste.

The Commission will request information from the competent Italian Authorities.

([1]) OJ L 312 of 22.11.2008.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-009891/13
aan de Commissie
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(4 september 2013)

Betreft: Conformiteit van recordtransfers in het voetbal met staatssteunregels

Maandag 2 september werd bekend gemaakt dat Real Madrid de voetballer Gareth Bale voor de hoogste transfersom ooit heeft weggekocht bij Tottenham. Over de precieze hoogte van de transfersom bestaat nog wat onduidelijkheid, maar zeker lijkt dat het bedrag nabij de 90 à 100 miljoen euro ligt.

Afgezien van de ethische vragen die worden opgeroepen bij het betalen van dergelijke bedragen voor een persoon, zijn er nog enkele zaken die toch de wenkbrauwen doen fronsen. Zo is er de vaststelling dat Real Madrid een niet onaanzienlijke schuldenberg met zich meetorst (sommige schattingen hebben het over meer dan 500 miljoen euro). Daarnaast is er het wrange gevoel dat Real Madrid voor deze ophefmakende transfer een lening aangaat bij Bankia, een Spaanse bank die in grote moeilijkheden is geraakt en mede dankzij Europese steun drijvende wordt gehouden.

Het bedrag (het gaat om de duurste transfer ooit) alsook de context (onverantwoord lenen van banken was de hoofdoorzaak van de financiële crisis, zeker in Spanje) doen de vraag rijzen of er hier geen sprake is van marktverstorende elementen.

Is de commissie van plan om deze uitzonderlijke transfer in detail te bestuderen om er zeker van te zijn dat er hier geen sprake is van enige vorm van staatssteun of van onverantwoorde financiële praktijken?

Antwoord van de heer Almunia namens de Commissie
(17 oktober 2013)

De Commissie is niet voornemens deze voetbaltransfer te onderzoeken, omdat er geen aanwijzingen zijn dat er bij die bepaalde transactie van specifieke staatssteun sprake is. Wat Bankia betreft, verwijst de Commissie naar haar antwoord op schriftelijke vraag E-8303/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009891/13
to the Commission
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Record transfer fees for footballers and compliance with rules on state aid

On Monday 2 September, it was announced that Real Madrid had signed on Tottenham player Gareth Bale for a record transfer fee, the exact amount of which is not altogether clear but is reported to be around EUR 90-100 million.

Aside from the ethical issues raised by the payment of such a sum for a single individual, considerable resentment is being caused by the fact that Real Madrid, which is already heavily in debt (to the tune of over EUR 500 m according to some), is financing this sensational transfer with a loan from Bankia, a Spanish bank which is itself in major difficulties, being kept afloat with European funding.

Both the amount involved (a record transfer fee) and the circumstances (irresponsible loans by banks having been — at least in Spain — the principal cause of the crisis in the first place) are raising questions regarding possible market distortion.

Will the Commission investigate this particularly high-profile transfer in order to ensure that it does not involve any form of state aid or irresponsible financial practices?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(17 October 2013)

The Commission is not investigating this football player transfer, as there is nothing to suggest that specific state aid could be involved in that particular transaction. Regarding Bankia, the Commission refers to its answer to Written Question E-8303/2013.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-009892/13
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(4 de setembro de 2013)

Assunto: Atribuição de médicos de família em mais do que um país da UE

Numa recente visita ao Centro de Saúde do concelho de Almeida, no distrito da Guarda, tive conhecimento de que muitos dos utentes deste centro de saúde são emigrantes portugueses que, tendo residência e estando a trabalhar em outro país (Espanha, França, Bélgica…), passam grandes temporadas na sua terra natal, em Portugal. Esta situação coloca um problema à administração do Centro de Saúde, uma vez que se reconhece a necessidade de atribuição de um médico de família (médico regular) a estes utentes, de forma a seguir o seu historial clínico com mais proximidade, embora estes utentes estejam a trabalhar e a descontar para a segurança social no país onde estão emigrados.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

Existe legislação europeia que preveja esta situação? Quais os direitos em termos de assistência médica para as pessoas que se encontram na situação acima descrita?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(29 de outubro de 2013)

Em conformidade com o artigo 11.° do Regulamento (CE) n.° 883/2004 ([1]), a segurança social das pessoas é apenas da competência de um só Estado-Membro. Regra geral, em conformidade com essa disposição, os trabalhadores estão inscritos no Estado-Membro onde trabalham. Mesmo que uma pessoa trabalhe num Estado-Membro diferente daquele em que reside habitualmente e se desloque para o/do emprego todos os dias ou, pelo menos, uma vez por semana, continua a estar segurada no Estado-Membro em que trabalha. De um modo geral, esse Estado-Membro também é responsável pelo pagamento das prestações sociais e pela emissão do cartão europeu de seguro de doença da pessoa.

Para ter igualmente acesso a cuidados de saúde no país de residência, o segurado tem de pedir à entidade responsável pela sua cobertura médica no Estado-Membro competente que emita um formulário S1, a fim de permitir a sua inscrição junto da instituição de segurança social do Estado-Membro da sua residência, nos termos do artigo 24.° do Regulamento (CE) n.° 987/2009 ([2]). A pessoa pode então receber prestações em espécie no Estado-Membro onde reside, como se estivesse aí segurada e, nas mesmas condições que os nacionais desse Estado-Membro (ver também o artigo 17.° do Regulamento (CE) n.° 883/2004). A instituição do Estado-Membro competente é responsável por reembolsar às instituições do Estado-Membro de residência os serviços prestados à pessoa segurada.

([1]) Regulamento (CE) n.° 883/2004 do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 29 de abril de 2004, relativo à coordenação dos sistemas de segurança social, JO L 166 de 30.4.2004.

([2]) Regulamento (CE) n.° 987/2009 do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 16 de setembro de 2009, que estabelece as modalidades de aplicação do Regulamento (CE) n.° 883/2004 relativo à coordenação dos sistemas de segurança social (JO L 284 de 30.10.2009).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009892/13
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Registration with general practitioners in more than one Member State

Not long ago, when I visited the Almeida municipal health centre, in the district of Guarda, I learned that many of its users are Portuguese emigrants who are habitually resident, and work, in another country (Spain, France, Belgium, etc.) but otherwise spend much of their time in their country of birth, Portugal. This situation poses an administrative problem for the health centre, as a general practitioner (family doctor) has to be assigned to such users — this is recognised to be necessary in order to keep track of their medical histories from a closer vantage-point — in spite of the fact that they are working, and paying social security contributions, in the country to which they have emigrated.

Is there any European legislation to cover this case? To what extent are patients entitled to medical treatment when they in the situation described?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(29 October 2013)

In accordance with Article 11 of Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 ([1]), only one Member State at a time is competent for a person's social security cover. As a rule, workers are insured in the Member State where they work, in line with those provisions. If a person works in a Member State other than that in which he/she habitually resides and he/she commutes between them each day or at least once a week, he/she continues to be insured in the Member State where he/she works. That Member State is generally also responsible for providing the benefits and for issuing the person's European Health Insurance Card.

To enjoy access to healthcare in the country of residence as well, the insured person must ask the healthcare authority in the competent Member State to issue an S1 form to allow him/her to register with the social security institution in the Member State of residence, pursuant to Article 24 of Regulation (EC) No 987/2009 ([2]). He or she can then receive benefits in kind in the Member State where he/she resides as if he/she were insured there and on the same conditions as nationals of the latter Member State (see also Article 17 of Regulation (EC) No 883/2004). The institution in the competent Member State is responsible for reimbursing the institutions in the Member State of residence for the services provided to the insured person.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the coordination of social security systems, OJ L 166, 30.4.2004.

([2]) Regulation (EC) No 987/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 September 2009 laying down the procedure for implementing Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 on the coordination of social security systems, OJ L 284, 30.10.2009.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-009893/13
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(4 de setembro de 2013)

Assunto: Apoio às organizações de produtores pecuários

Visitei recentemente a Sanicobe, Associação de Defesa Sanitária da Cova da Beira, sediada no Fundão, visita na qual tomei conhecimento de muitos dos problemas com que se defrontam os produtores pecuários em Portugal. Hoje, em Portugal, as associações de produtores pecuários têm a seu cargo a prestação de diversos serviços, realizando às suas custas o controlo da sanidade animal, indispensável para a continuidade da sua atividade e fundamental para a saúde pública. Durante o ano de 2012 e no presente ano, as Associações de Produtores Pecuários não receberam qualquer apoio do Estado. A somar aos elevados custos da energia, os produtores têm agora a seu cargo os custos relacionados com a sanidade animal. Tal significa que muitos produtores, especialmente os mais pequenos, têm cada vez mais dificuldade em manter-se em atividade, abandonando-a muitas vezes, o que tem impactos profundamente negativos, não só para a vida e família dos próprios, mas para as regiões onde estão sediados, que sofrem já com o abandono e a desertificação. O abandono da atividade por muitos produtores tem também consequências profundamente negativas nas exportações nacionais, setor que, tanto o governo, como a «troika», dizem eleger como prioridade para o país.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Que apoios pode a UE mobilizar para as atividades de controlo da sanidade animal, sejam eles apoios diretos aos produtores, sejam eles apoios ao Estado português?

2. Quais os países da UE em que o controlo da sanidade animal obrigatório é suportado pelos próprios produtores, e não pelo Estado?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(30 de outubro de 2013)

1. Os controlos zoossanitários obrigatórios são pagos pelo Estado em todos os Estados-Membros. Os criadores de gado pagam uma contribuição fixa às OPP em Portugal (ou a fundos sanitários, fundos destinados às doenças dos animais e fundos aviários, consoante o Estado-Membro) que é equiparada a uma taxa. A Decisão 2009/470/CE do Conselho, de 25 de maio de 2009, relativa a determinadas despesas no domínio veterinário ([1]) , nomeadamente o artigo 27.°, n.° 10, define os procedimentos que regulam a participação financeira da União em programas de erradicação, controlo e vigilância das doenças animais e zoonoses.

De acordo com o quadro jurídico atual, a UE pode apoiar controlos zoossanitários através do cofinanciamento de determinadas medidas consideradas elegíveis no âmbito dos programas cofinanciados, sob a forma de apoios concedidos aos Estados-Membros da UE.

2. Por exemplo, Portugal recebeu um total de 5 901 758,98 EUR, em 2011, para reembolsar os custos de medidas elegíveis executadas no âmbito dos programas de controlo e erradicação supervisionados pela autoridade competente (por exemplo, brucelose, tuberculose, febre catarral, gripe aviária, salmonelose, encefalopatias espongiformes transmissíveis, encefalopatia espongiforme bovina e tremor epizoótico).

([1]) JO L 155 de 18.6.2009, p. 30.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009893/13
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Support for stockbreeders' organisations

Not long ago, when I visited SANICOBE, the Fundão-based Cova da Beira Health Protection Association, I learned about many of the problems which Portuguese stockbreeders are having to face. At this time in Portugal stockbreeders' organisations are being called upon to perform various services and have to pay the cost of animal health checks, which, as well as being essential to keep farms going, are vitally important for public health. The organisations did not receive any state support in 2012, nor have they received any this year. On top of high energy costs, stockbreeders are now having to meet costs related to animal health. What this means is that many of them, especially the smallest, are finding it increasingly difficult to remain viable; the fact that large numbers of stockbreeders are going out of business is doing great harm, not just to those concerned and their families, but also to farming regions, which are already undergoing depopulation and desertification. The large-scale abandonment of stockbreeding is also having a highly damaging effect on Portugal's exports, a sector which both the Government and the 'Troika' claim to be treating as a national priority.

1. By what means can the EU support animal health checks, whether such aid is in the form of direct support to stockbreeders or of support granted to the Portuguese state?

2. In which Member States are compulsory animal health checks paid for by stockbreeders themselves and not by the state?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(30 October 2013)

1. Compulsory animal health checks are paid by the state in all Member States. Stockbreeders pay a fixed contribution to OPPs in Portugal (or Sanitary Funds, Animal Disease Funds, Poultry Fund etc. depending on the Member State) which is assimilated to a tax. Council Decision 2009/470/EC of 25 May 2009 on expenditure in the veterinary field [1] , and in particular Article 27(10) thereof, lays down the procedures governing the Union financial contribution for programmes for the eradication, control and monitoring of animal diseases and zoonoses.

According to the current legal framework, the EU can support animal health checks by co-financing certain measures deemed eligible under the approved co-financed programmes in the form of support granted to the EU Member States.

2. For example, Portugal was granted a total of EUR 5 901 758.98 in 2011 to reimburse the costs of eligible measures implemented under the following monitoring, control and eradication programmes supervised by the competent authority such as brucellosis, tuberculosis, bluetongue, avian influenza, salmonella, transmissible spongiform encephalopathies, bovine spongiform encephalopathy and scrapie.

[1] OJ L 155, 18.6.2009, p. 30.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-009895/13
do Komisji
Małgorzata Handzlik (PPE)
(4 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Regulacje dotyczące obowiązkowego wyposażenia pojazdów – informowanie obywateli

Przemieszczanie się wewnątrz UE jest dla obywateli coraz łatwiejsze, a kolejne inicjatywy KE znoszą istniejące bariery i trudności. Niestety jedna bardzo ważna kwestia nie została nadal poruszona. Wciąż brak jest jakichkolwiek unijnych regulacji dotyczących obowiązkowego wyposażenia pojazdów. Państwa członkowskie mają własne, często bardzo odmienne wymagania w tej kwestii. Przepisy międzynarodowe w tym zakresie stanowi konwencja wiedeńska o ruchu drogowym. Wedle jej postanowień pojazd musi być wyposażony zgodne z przepisami kraju rejestracji, a nie kraju, przez który przejeżdża. Niestety świadomość społeczna, co do postanowień konwencji jest bardzo niska. W rejonach przygranicznych sprzedawcy często wprowadzają kierowców w błąd, przekonując o konieczności spełniania wymogów danego kraju i sprzedając rozmaite akcesoria. Zdarza się, że o postanowieniach konwencji wiedeńskiej nie wiedzą nawet funkcjonariusze policji krajów członkowskich karząc kierowców.

Czy Komisja uważa, że w tym zakresie konieczne jest harmonizacja przepisów na szczeblu UE, a jeśli takiej potrzeby zdaniem KE nie ma, to czy nie należałoby zadbać o interes obywateli informując ich o przysługujących im w świetle konwencji wiedeńskiej prawach i przeciwdziałać wprowadzaniu ich w błąd?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Siima Kallasa w imieniu Komisji
(10 października 2013 r.)

Komisja uprzejmie prosi Panią Poseł o zapoznanie się z odpowiedzią na pytanie nr E-4284/2012 ([1]) wymagające odpowiedzi na piśmie.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009895/13
to the Commission
Małgorzata Handzlik (PPE)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Regulation on mandatory vehicle equipment — informing the public

It is becoming ever easier for citizens to move around within the EU, and further Commission initiatives are abolishing existing barriers and difficulties. Unfortunately, one very important question has still not been addressed. There are still no EU regulations whatsoever on mandatory vehicle equipment. The Member States have their own, often very different, requirements. International rules in this area are provided by the Vienna Convention on Road Traffic, according to which a vehicle must be equipped in accordance with the provisions of the country of registration, not the country through which it is travelling. Unfortunately, public awareness as far as the provisions of the Convention are concerned is very low. In border regions, salespeople often mislead drivers by convincing them that they need to meet a particular country's requirements, and sell them various accessories. Even police officers in the Member States can punish drivers mistakenly because they are unfamiliar with the provisions of the Vienna Convention.

Does the Commission consider that, in this respect, the rules should be harmonised at EU level? If the Commission does not believe this to be necessary then would it not be appropriate to inform the public of their rights under the Vienna Convention in order to prevent them from being misled?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(10 October 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-4284/2012 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=EN

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-009896/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)
(5 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Έκτακτα μέτρα για την αντιμετώπιση της αναμενόμενης αύξησης του αριθμού των Σύρων προσφύγων

Σύμφωνα με δηλώσεις της αρμόδιας Επιτρόπου Διεθνούς Συνεργασίας, Ανθρωπιστικής Βοήθειας και Αντιμετώπισης Κρίσεων στις 3 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013, ο αριθμός των προσφύγων που εγκαταλείπουν τη Συρία καταφεύγοντας σε γειτονικές χώρες άγγιξε τον αριθμό-ορόσημο των 2 εκατομμυρίων. Επιπροσθέτως, η Επίτροπος υπογράμμισε την προοπτική ενίσχυσης του μαζικού προσφυγικού ρεύματος από τη Συρία, υπονοώντας σαφώς τις επιπτώσεις από μια ενδεχόμενη δραματική αύξηση της έντασης στη χώρα αυτή, μετά τη βάναυση και παράνομη από πλευράς διεθνούς δικαίου χρήση χημικών όπλων κατά αμάχων. Συγκεκριμένα, η Επίτροπος δήλωσε: «Όσο τραγικό και σκληρό και να είναι με τη χρήση βίας να γίνεται ολοένα και πιο άγρια, κτηνώδης και απάνθρωπη, είναι βέβαιο ότι το κύμα των προσφύγων θα ενισχυθεί.»

Σε συνέχεια των ανωτέρω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Σχεδιάζει έκτακτες δράσεις με στόχο να βοηθήσει τις χώρες που γειτονεύουν με τη Συρία (Λίβανο, Ιορδανία, Τουρκία και Ιράκ) και στις οποίες καταφεύγουν πρωτίστως οι Σύροι πρόσφυγες, λαμβάνοντας υπόψη τις εκτιμήσεις για επιδείνωση της προσφυγικής κρίσης; Εάν ναι, ποιες είναι αυτές;

2. Πώς προτίθεται η Επιτροπή να ενισχύσει εκείνα τα κράτη-μέλη που πλήττονται περισσότερο στην προσπάθειά τους να αντιμετωπίσουν τις συνέπειες μιας έκτακτης και δραματικής αύξησης του προσφυγικού ρεύματος από τη Συρία;

3. Σκοπεύει η Επιτροπή να παράσχει έκτακτη επιπλέον βοήθεια στην Ελλάδα, στις έκτακτες αυτές συνθήκες, για να αντιμετωπίσει τις συνέπειες του «ωστικού κύματος» ενός ολοένα αυξανόμενου αριθμού Σύρων προσφύγων, δεδομένου ότι είναι η πρώτη κοινοτική χώρα που θα τις υποστεί; Εάν ναι, ποιά μορφή θα έχει αυτή;

Απάντηση της κ. Malmström εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(7 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Από την έναρξη της κρίσης στη Συρία, η ΕΕ έχει κινητοποιήσει ποσό ύψους 842 εκατ. ευρώ (ανθρωπιστική βοήθεια: 515 εκατ. ευρώ, οικονομική και αναπτυξιακή βοήθεια, καθώς και βοήθεια για τη σταθεροποίηση: 327 εκατ. ευρώ) για τη στήριξη δραστηριοτήτων τόσο εντός όσο και εκτός Συρίας: Η ανθρωπιστική βοήθεια της ΕΕ στηρίζει πρωτίστως την άμεση ιατρική ανταπόκριση σε καταστάσεις έκτακτης ανάγκης, την παροχή βασικών φαρμάκων, τροφίμων και ειδών διατροφής, πόσιμου νερού, εγκαταστάσεων αποχέτευσης και υγιεινής (WASH), στέγασης, διανομής βασικών ειδών εκτός τροφίμων (NFIs) και την προστασία για τη βοήθεια των πλέον ευάλωτων οικογενειών. Εκτός από το ποσό των 515 εκατ. ευρώ που διέθεσε για ανθρωπιστική βοήθεια, η Επιτροπή βρίσκεται σήμερα σε διαδικασία χορήγησης 250 εκατ. ευρώ για την αντιμετώπιση των τρεχουσών ανθρωπιστικών αναγκών, καθώς και την προετοιμασία για ενδεχόμενες μαζικές εισροές σε γειτονικές χώρες. Χορηγείται επίσης ένα πρόσθετο ποσό ύψους 150 εκατ. ευρώ για αναπτυξιακή βοήθεια ώστε να αντιμετωπιστούν οι πιο μακροπρόθεσμες ανάγκες των Σύρων και να ενισχυθεί η ικανότητα των χωρών υποδοχής για να αντιμετωπίσουν την αυξημένη εισροή των Σύρων προσφύγων.

Η Επιτροπή, σε συνεργασία με την Ευρωπαϊκή Υπηρεσία Υποστήριξης για το Άσυλο (ΕΥΥΑ) και τον Frontex, είναι έτοιμη να παρέχει βοήθεια ή να τη συντονίζει, συμπεριλαμβανομένης ιδίως της χρηματοοικονομικής συνδρομής και της στήριξης εκ μέρους των εμπειρογνωμόνων της ΕΥΥΑ προς εκείνα τα κράτη μέλη που ενδέχεται να υποστούν ιδιαίτερες πιέσεις, συμπληρώνοντας έτσι τα εθνικά μέτρα των κρατών μελών για την αντιμετώπιση περιπτώσεων έκτακτης ανάγκης.

Η Επιτροπή συνεργάζεται στενά με τις ελληνικές αρχές για την ενίσχυση του ελληνικού συστήματος ασύλου και μετανάστευσης. Στο πλαίσιο αυτό, η Ελλάδα λαμβάνει επίσης ενίσχυση από την ΕΥΥΑ και τον Frontex. Η Ελλάδα μπορεί να επωφεληθεί επίσης από περαιτέρω πρωτοβουλίες που αναλαμβάνει η Επιτροπή για την υποστήριξη των κρατών μελών προκειμένου να αντιμετωπίσουν την εισροή προσφύγων από τη Συρία.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009896/13
to the Commission
Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: Emergency measures to cope with the expected increase in the number of Syrian refugees

According to statements made by the Commissioner for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response on 3 September 2013, the number of refugees fleeing Syria for neighbouring countries has reached the milestone of two million. The Commissioner also emphasised that this mass exodus of refugees from Syria is set to increase: she was clearly referring here to the consequences of a potential dramatic increase in tension in the country following the savage use of chemical weapons against civilians, which is illegal under international law. Specifically, she said: 'Tragic and cruel as it is, the truth is that with violence becoming ever more ferocious, brutal and inhumane, the tide of refugees is bound to continue to rise.'

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Does it plan any emergency actions to help countries neighbouring Syria (Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey and Iraq), the main destinations of Syrian refugees, taking into account the assessments about a worsening refugee crisis? If so, which actions?

2. How does it intend to help those Member States most affected as they attempt to cope with the consequences of an extraordinary and dramatic increase in the flow of refugees from Syria?

3. Will it provide additional emergency aid to Greece, under these exceptional circumstances, to address the consequences of the shock wave of an ever increasing number of Syrian refugees arriving on its territory, since it is the first EU country that will be affected? If so, what form will this aid take?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(7 October 2013)

Since the beginning of the Syria crisis, the EU has mobilised EUR 842 million (humanitarian aid: EUR 515 million, economic, development and stabilisation assistance: EUR 327 million) to support activities both inside and outside Syria: The EU humanitarian assistance primarily supports life-saving medical emergency responses, the provision of essential drugs, food and nutritional items, safe water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), shelter, distribution of basic non-food items (NFIs) and protection to help the most vulnerable families. Out of the EUR 515 million mobilised for humanitarian assistance, the Commission is currently in the process of allocating EUR 250 million to respond to the current humanitarian needs but also to be prepared for potential massive influx in neighbouring countries. An additional EUR 150 million development assistance is also being allocated to address the longer-term needs of the Syrians and strengthen the capacity of host countries to deal with an increased influx of syrian refugees.

The Commission, in cooperation with the European Asylum Support Office and Frontex, is ready to provide or coordinate assistance, including in particular financial assistance and expert support from EASO, to those Member States that could find themselves under particular pressure, to complement Member States' national contingency arrangements.

The Commission is working in close cooperation with the Greek authorities to strengthen their asylum and migration system. In this context Greece also receives support from EASO and Frontex. Greece may also benefit from further initiatives that the Commission is undertaking to support Member States to cope with the influx of persons from Syria.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009897/13
to the Commission
Keith Taylor (Verts/ALE)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: Rights of ports regarding trade in live animals

The Commission has publicly stated that it will not amend or look at Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on live transport until 2015 at the earliest, which is when the current animal welfare strategy ends.

Furthermore, the live transport of animals from the UK to the European mainland recently moved to the port of Dover, despite large-scale local opposition. At present, the powers of any port to refuse to accept the transport of animals are limited. Under existing UK legislation, ports have no option other than to be open for trade in any goods when the appropriate fees are paid. Goods are not defined under this law, but this would include live animals.

With this in mind, can the Commission state:

1. whether a change in UK law allowing ports to choose whether their facilities may be used to transport live animals by sea would constitute a breach of EC law;

2. when it will publish its report regarding the UK's implementation of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005?

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

1. Article 1(3) of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport ([1]) states that 'this regulation shall not be an obstacle to any stricter national measures aimed at improving the welfare of animals during transport taking place entirely within the territory of a Member State or during sea transport departing from the territory of a Member State.'

Yet, measures restricting the use of port facilities must be compliant with the EU Treaties and in particular with the fundamental freedom of free movement of goods.

2. While it does not constitute a legal obligation, the Commission publishes all Member States inspections reports in accordance with Article 27(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005. ([2])

Annual reports from Member States are already published up to 2011. The 2012 reports should be available within a month of this reply.

([1]) OJ L 3, 5.1.2005, p. 1.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/welfare/transport/inspections_reports_reg_1_2005_en.htm

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009898/13
a la Comisión
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D), Alejandro Cercas (S&D) y Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto (S&D)
(5 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Prácticas laborales abusivas en los contratos de prácticas en el sector de los servicios financieros

Distintos medios de comunicación han publicado recientemente la muerte en Londres de un joven alemán de 21 años, becario de Bank of America, después de haber realizado, según relatan diferentes testimonios, tres jornadas laborales consecutivas de 21 horas. Estas informaciones vuelven a suscitar preguntas sobre las condiciones de trabajo de los becarios en la Unión Europea, y especialmente en el sector de los servicios financieros.

¿Qué iniciativas ha adoptado o va adoptar la Comisión para evitar que la crisis y su impacto en el desempleo juvenil tengan como efecto la aceptación social de prácticas laborales abusivas? ¿Va a plantear medidas como el establecimiento de sistemas de control independientes, encuestas anónimas o la protección de aquellos que denuncian estas prácticas?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(21 de octubre de 2013)

La Comisión está prestando mucha atención a la calidad de los periodos de prácticas en la EU. Una reciente encuesta de Eurobarómetro ([1]) confirma que las condiciones de trabajo de los becarios son con frecuencia peores que las de los trabajadores normales (23 % de los casos) y pone también de manifiesto otros aspectos problemáticos que pueden menoscabar la contribución positiva de los periodos de prácticas a la empleabilidad de los jóvenes, como, por ejemplo, la falta de contenidos de aprendizaje, la tendencia a ir acumulando un periodo de prácticas tras otro y unas remuneraciones muy bajas o inexistentes. La Comisión tiene previsto presentar en diciembre de 2013 una propuesta destinada a establecer un marco de calidad para los períodos de prácticas con el objetivo de garantizar que las prácticas contribuyan eficazmente a la mejor transición posible entre la educación y el trabajo y que las condiciones de trabajo de las mismas en la EU mejoren sustancialmente.

([1]) Está previsto que se publique el 7 de octubre de 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009898/13
to the Commission
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D), Alejandro Cercas (S&D) and Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto (S&D)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: Unfair labour practices in internship contracts in the financial services sector

Several media sources have recently reported on the death of a 21-year-old German man, an intern at the Bank of America, who died in London after working three consecutive 21-hour days, according to various accounts. This information has once again raised questions about the working conditions of interns in the European Union, and particularly in the financial services sector.

What initiatives has the Commission adopted or will it adopt to ensure that the crisis and its impact on youth unemployment does not lead to unfair labour practices becoming socially acceptable? Will it put in place measures such as the establishment of independent control systems, anonymous inquiries or protection for people who report these practices?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(21 October 2013)

The Commission is closely watching developments regarding the quality of traineeships in the EU. A recent Eurobarometer survey ([1]) confirms that the working conditions of trainees are often worse than those of normal employees (23% of cases). It also highlights other problematic issues that may weaken the positive contribution traineeships can make to increasing young people's employability. These include a lack of learning content, the tendency for the individual to have one traineeship after another, and the fact that traineeships may not be paid, or the pay may be very low. In December 2013 the Commission intends to put forward a proposal for a quality framework for traineeships, which will aim at ensuring that traineeships can contribute effectively to successful education-to-work transitions and improving traineeship working conditions within the EU.

([1]) To be published on 7 October 2013.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009899/13
a la Comisión
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D), Luis Yáñez-Barnuevo García (S&D), Alejandro Cercas (S&D) y Cristina Gutiérrez-Cortines (PPE)
(5 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Sostenibilidad del fútbol en la Unión Europea

En el último mundial de fútbol, tres de las cuatro selecciones semifinalistas eran de Estados miembros de la Unión. Las ligas europeas han conseguido atraer a los mejores jugadores del mundo y son seguidas por las mayores audiencias globales. El fútbol es un activo y una parte importante de la vida en la Unión Europea que merece la máxima atención.

A lo largo de los últimos años, los precios en el mercado de traspasos de jugadores, así como las retribuciones de algunos deportistas de élite por sus clubes, han aumentado exponencialmente. Esta burbuja que no ha dejado de crecer a pesar de la crisis contrasta además con las dificultades financieras de algunos clubes, que han motivado su cambio de propiedad o el incumplimiento de sus obligaciones sociales y fiscales.

Algunos expertos han señalado que la deficiente gobernanza económica, la existencia de conflictos de intereses y de opacidad, los elevados costes de intermediación extradeportiva, las enormes diferencias en el reparto de los ingresos obtenidos por la emisión de competiciones, así como la ausencia de límites en las cláusulas de rescisión contractual y en los niveles salariales, pueden afectar a la libre circulación de trabajadores y la existencia de una competencia equilibrada, y llegar a minar la credibilidad y el apoyo social al mundo del fútbol, comprometiendo su futuro.

¿Comparte la Comisión esta preocupación? ¿Considera que es necesario abordar esta situación de una manera estructurada con el objeto de asegurar el ejercicio de las libertades fundamentales y la sostenibilidad del fútbol europeo?

Respuesta de la Sra. Vassiliou en nombre de la Comisión
(31 de octubre de 2013)

La Comisión conoce los problemas a los que aluden Sus Señorías y tiene constancia de que los organismos y las partes interesadas con responsabilidades en el ámbito futbolístico a nivel europeo y nacional están trabajando, junto con las autoridades públicas, para remediarlos debidamente.

De acuerdo con las competencias que le asigna el Tratado, la Comisión participa en debates con la finalidad de respaldar los esfuerzos de las organizaciones deportivas y los Estados miembros para proteger la sostenibilidad del fútbol europeo. En este contexto, su empeño es garantizar que se respeten las libertades fundamentales del mercado interior y el Derecho de competencia europeo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009899/13
to the Commission
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D), Luis Yáñez-Barnuevo García (S&D), Alejandro Cercas (S&D) and Cristina Gutiérrez-Cortines (PPE)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: Sustainability of football in the European Union

In the last World Cup, three of the four semi-finalists were EU Member States. The European leagues have managed to attract the best players from across the world and have the greatest following in terms of global audiences. Football is an asset and an important part of life in the European Union which deserves the utmost attention.

In recent years, prices in the football transfers market, and the pay some elite players receive from their clubs, have risen exponentially. This bubble, which has continued to grow in spite of the crisis, is in stark contrast to the financial difficulties facing some clubs, which have led to changes in ownership or failure to fulfil their social and fiscal obligations.

According to some experts, conflicts of interest, the lack of economic governance and transparency, the high cost of non-sports mediation, the huge differences in the distribution of revenues obtained from broadcasting matches and the lack of restrictions in contract termination clauses and wage levels could affect the free movement of workers and fair competition, and ultimately undermine the credibility of and social support for the world of football, putting its future in jeopardy.

Does the Commission share this concern? Does it consider it necessary to take a structured approach to this situation in order to safeguard the exercise of fundamental freedoms and the sustainability of European football?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(31 October 2013)

The Commission is aware of the issues highlighted by the Honourable Members. The Commission understands that relevant football governing bodies and stakeholders at European and national level are working, together with public authorities, to find appropriate remedies.

In line with its competence under the Treaty, the Commission is participating in discussions with a view to assisting and accompanying the efforts of sports organisations and Member States to safeguard the sustainability of European football. In this context, the Commission will ensure the respect of the fundamental freedoms of the internal market and EU competition law.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009900/13
a la Comisión
Andrés Perelló Rodríguez (S&D)
(5 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Extracción de hidrocarburos en la Comunidad Valenciana

Las concesiones para la extracción de hidrocarburos en el mar, que han sido otorgadas recientemente en la Comunidad Valenciana, están creando una gran alarma social debido no solamente a la falta de garantías de seguridad con las que se están planificando las mismas, sino también respecto a las supuestas afecciones medioambientales que estas actividades puedan tener para el medio ambiente de la zona.

Cabe destacar que dichos proyectos de perforación se sitúan a proximidad de áreas protegidas dentro de Natura 2000, como es el caso de la Albufera, donde cualquier vertido de hidrocarburos sería fatal para los hábitats y las especies que alberga.

Por otro lado, en zonas como la del Golfo de Valencia, donde la empresa Cairn acaba de obtener la concesión, conviven especies como gorgonias y corales que, en otras áreas de España, han dado motivo a figuras de protección específicas e incluso a la declaración de Reserva Marina de Interés dentro de la Red Natura 2000.

Dado que la Comisión Europea ya se ha dirigido a las autoridades españolas interesándose por la seguridad de dichas concesiones de extracción de hidrocarburos:

— ¿Puede la Comisión garantizar que los permisos han sido otorgados con arreglo a la legislación comunitaria para garantizar que no haya ningún accidente, fallo de seguridad o daño medioambiental provocado por dicha actividad de extracción?

— ¿Cree la Comisión que, dadas las especies y la rica biodiversidad que alberga la zona, esta podría optar a su inclusión en la futura ampliación de Natura 2000 como nueva Reserva Marina?

— ¿Podría la Comisión detallar de qué manera garantiza la salvaguarda de la legislación medioambiental vigente en el caso de las concesiones para extracción de hidrocarburos, cuyo número está viéndose incrementado últimamente en áreas como la Comunidad Valenciana?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(13 de noviembre de 2013)

La Comisión ha solicitado información a las autoridades españolas sobre el asunto planteado y está evaluando en estos momentos la información recibida. De acuerdo con dicha información, los cinco permisos de investigación de hidrocarburos concedidos para la zona del Golfo de Valencia no eximen de la necesidad de obtener cualquier otra autorización que sea requerida en caso de obras, trabajos de construcción o trabajos de instalación.

La solicitud de autorización para realizar una campaña sísmica 3D en esta zona está siendo estudiada actualmente por las autoridades competentes, y queda supeditada a una evaluación del impacto ambiental. Puesto que estos procedimientos se encuentran todavía en curso, no ha sido posible constatar infracción alguna de la legislación de la UE sobre la base de los datos de que se dispone.

La Comisión ha ido perfeccionando progresivamente las normas de seguridad aplicables a las actividades marítimas, especialmente mediante la reciente adopción de la Directiva 2013/30/UE ([1]), sobre la seguridad de las operaciones relativas al petróleo y al gas mar adentro, y la adhesión de la UE al «Protocolo Offshore» del Convenio de Barcelona ([2]). Los Estados miembros deben adoptar las disposiciones legales y reglamentarias y los procedimientos administrativos necesarios para dar cumplimiento a lo establecido en la mencionada Directiva sobre seguridad mar adentro, a más tardar el 19 de julio de 2015.

En lo que respecta a la posible inclusión de esta zona en la red Natura 2000, hay actualmente en marcha un proyecto LIFE +, denominado Indemares ([3]), cuyo objetivo es ayudar a completar la designación de espacios marinos Natura 2000 en España.

([1]) DO L 178 de 28.6.2013.
([2]) http://www.unepmap.org/index.php?module=content2&catid=001001004
([3]) www.indemares.es

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009900/13
to the Commission
Andrés Perelló Rodríguez (S&D)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: Extraction of hydrocarbons in Valencia

Concessions for the extraction of hydrocarbons in the sea, which have recently been granted in Valencia, are causing a great deal of public concern, not only because of the lack of safety guarantees in the planning of these activities, but also because of the supposed environmental effects that these activities could have on the local environment.

It should be noted that these drilling projects are situated near protected areas within the Natura 2000 network, as is the case in Albufera, where any discharge of hydrocarbons would be fatal for the area's habitats and species.

However, in areas such as the Gulf of Valencia, where the Cairn company has just obtained a concession, there are species such as gorgonian and coral which, in other parts of Spain, have led to the introduction of specific protective measures and even declarations of Marine Reserves of Interest within the Natura 2000 network.

Given that the Commission has already referred this matter to the Spanish authorities with regard to the safety of these concessions for the extraction of hydrocarbons:

— Can the Commission ensure that the permits have been granted in accordance with EU legislation to ensure that there will not be any accidents, safety issues or environmental damage as a result of this extraction?

— Does the Commission believe that, considering the species and the rich biodiversity in the area, it could be chosen for inclusion in the upcoming expansion of the Natura 2000 network as a new Marine Reserve?

— Could the Commission provide details of how it ensures the safeguarding of environmental legislation in force with regard to concessions for the extraction of hydrocarbons, the number of which has recently been on the rise in areas such as Valencia?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(13 November 2013)

The Commission has requested information from the Spanish authorities on the matter raised and is currently assessing the information received. In accordance with this information, the five hydrocarbon prospection permits (HPPs) awarded in the Gulf of Valencia do not exempt from the need to obtain any other authorisation required in the event of work, construction or installation.

The request for an authorisation to carry out 3D seismic activity in this area is currently under consideration of the competent authorities, and subject of an environmental impact assessment. Since these procedures are still ongoing, it has not been possible, based on the information available, to identify any breach of the EU legislation.

The Commission has progressively upgraded the safety standards applicable to offshore activities, most notably through the recent adoption of Directive 2013/30/EU ([1]) on safety of offshore oil and gas operations, and the accession of the EU to the 'offshore protocol' of the Barcelona Convention ([2]). Member States shall bring into force the laws, regulations, and administrative procedures necessary to comply with the offshore safety Directive by 19 July 2015.

As regards the eventual inclusion of this area in the Natura 2000 network, the LIFE+ project INDEMARES ([3]) is currently ongoing in order to help complete the designation of marine Natura 2000 sites in Spain.

([1]) OJ L 178, 28.6.2013.
([2]) http://www.unepmap.org/index.php?module=content2&catid=001001004
([3]) www.indemares.es

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009901/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto (S&D) y María Muñiz De Urquiza (S&D)
(5 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Protección de los derechos del colectivo LGTB en Rusia

En la Federación de Rusia, el Gobierno ha aprobado dos leyes homofóbicas que discriminan y persiguen la homosexualidad. La primera de ellas prohíbe bajo la consideración de «propaganda homosexual» cualquier actividad pública en defensa de los derechos del colectivo LGTB. La segunda prohíbe la adopción por parte de homosexuales extranjeros o solteros procedentes de países donde son legales los matrimonios o las uniones entre personas del mismo sexo.

Ambas leyes han contribuido a fomentar la homofobia, la estigmatización y la discriminación en contra de la población LGTB, produciéndose recientemente graves episodios de violencia por parte de grupos radicales que han agredido a homosexuales.

Atendiendo al principio de igualdad ante la ley y al principio de no discriminación de la Unión Europea, teniendo en cuenta que desde las instituciones trabajamos por la construcción de un espacio político, social y cultural realmente democrático, con leyes y valores que garanticen la libertad, igualdad y bienestar de los ciudadanos, y recordando que este tipo de leyes discriminatorias no pueden tolerarse en países con tan estrecha relación con la UE:

¿Qué tipo de respuesta y medidas contundentes pretende tomar la Alta Representante. Catherine Ashton, para atajar esta situación?

¿Piensa aprovechar la presidencia rusa del G20 para provocar el debate sobre la discriminación por motivos de orientación sexual? ¿Podría informarnos de los resultados de estas conversaciones bilaterales o multilaterales, si tienen lugar?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(22 de octubre de 2013)

La Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta es plenamente consciente de los hechos a que se refiere Su Señoría y ha seguido con mucha atención su curso, habiendo expresado públicamente su decepción por la adopción, primero a escala regional y ahora también a nivel nacional, de leyes que prohíben la «propaganda homosexual». La Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta considera que esta ley pueda estigmatizar a determinados grupos y personas, así como dar lugar a prácticas y discursos discriminatorios contra ellos y que, por lo tanto, se opone al Convenio Europeo de Derechos Humanos.

La UE ha aprovechado las dos últimas rondas de sus consultas de derechos humanos con la Federación de Rusia (diciembre de 2012 y mayo de 2013) para interesarse por la conformidad de la ley de «propaganda homosexual» con los compromisos internacionales de Rusia y, en particular, con el Convenio Europeo de Derechos Humanos, así como para instar a dicho país a atenerse a sus compromisos.

La Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta recuerda que la última reunión del G20 celebrada en San Petersburgo propició un debate profundo sobre temas de interés común para la comunidad internacional, sobre todo los esfuerzos por resolver el conflicto sirio y mejorar las perspectivas económicas mundiales, pero no permitió abordar cuestiones bilaterales, ya que no se habían previsto reuniones de este tipo con los dirigentes rusos.

La UE sigue atentamente este asunto y, en especial, la incidencia de esta legislación en la situación de los derechos humanos en Rusia y continuará apoyando a las organizaciones de la sociedad civil presentes en Rusia, sobre todo a través del Instrumento Europeo para la Democracia y los Derechos Humanos (IEDDH). La UE también planteará sus inquietudes de todas las maneras adecuadas y en todos los foros internacionales pertinentes en materia de derechos humanos, tal como procedió el 17 de septiembre de 2013 en el Consejo de Derechos Humanos de las Naciones Unidas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009901/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto (S&D) and María Muñiz De Urquiza (S&D)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Protecting the rights of the LGBT community in Russia

In the Russian Federation, the Government has passed two homophobic laws which discriminate against and persecute homosexuals. The first bans any public activity defending the rights of the LGBT community that could be considered 'homosexual propaganda'. The second bans foreign homosexuals or single people from countries where gay marriage or civil partnership is legal from adopting children.

Both laws have played a part in encouraging homophobia, stigmatisation of and discrimination against the LGBT population, leading recently to serious episodes of violence by radical groups attacking homosexuals.

In view of the principle of equality before the law and the principle of non-discrimination in the EU, bearing in mind that here in the institutions we are working towards building a truly democratic political, social and cultural space, with laws and values that guarantee the freedom, equality and well-being of our citizens, and considering that discriminatory laws such as these cannot be tolerated in countries with such close ties to the EU:

What kind of powerful response and measures does the High Representative, Catherine Ashton, intend to take to address this situation?

Does she intend to use the Russian Presidency of the G20 to start the debate on discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation? Could she inform us of the outcome of these bilateral or multilateral talks, should they take place?

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

The HR/VP is fully aware of the developments referred to by the Honourable Members. She has been following these developments very closely, expressing publically her disappointment with the adoption, first at regional, and now also at national level, of bills prohibiting 'homosexual propaganda'. The HR/VP believes that this law could stigmatise particular groups and individuals and lead to discriminatory practices and discourse against them, and is therefore in contradiction with the European Convention on Human Rights.

The EU has used the last two recent rounds of its regular Human Rights Consultations with the Russian Federation (December 2012 and May 2013) to enquire about the conformity of the 'homosexual propaganda' law with Russia's international commitments, in particular with the European Convention on Human Rights, and to invite Russia to put them in conformity with its committments.

The HR/VP notes that the last G20 in St Petersburg allowed for an in-depth discussion of issues of common concern among the international community, in particular the efforts to solve the Syrian conflict and to improve the global economic outlook, but didn't allow touching on bilateral issues of concern, as no bilateral meetings were foreseen with the Russian leadership.

The EU is closely monitoring this issue and notably the impact of this legislation on the situation of human rights in Russia and will continue to support civil society organisations in Russia notably through the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR). The EU will also raise its concerns in all appropriate formats and in all relevant Human Rights international fora, as it most recently did on 17 September 2013 in the context of the United Nations Human Rights Council.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009902/13
an die Kommission
Bernd Lange (S&D)
(5. September 2013)

Betrifft: Belastungen durch Stromleitungen in der EU

Angesichts der notwendigen Ertüchtigung und Neuerrichtung von Stromleitungen in der EU stellt sich zunehmend die Frage der Belastungen für Mensch und Natur.

Diese Fragen sind insbesondere für die Entscheidung zwischen Erdverkabelung oder Freileitung relevant.

Dies vorausgeschickt frage ich die Kommission:

1. Wie bewertet die Kommission die elektromagnetische Feldbelastung unter Freileitungen?

2. Welche europäischen Grenzwerte hält die Kommission für angemessen?

3. Welche Schritte wird die Kommission unternehmen, um die Belastungen für den Menschen durch strenge einheitliche Grenzwerte auf das gesundheitsungefährliche Maß zu beschränken?

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission
(17. Oktober 2013)

Die Empfehlung des Rates zur Begrenzung der Exposition der Bevölkerung gegenüber elektromagnetischen Feldern (1999/519/EG) ([1]) wurde mit dem Ziel angenommen, einen gemeinsamen Rahmen von Schutzmaßnahmen zu schaffen, um einen Beitrag zur Gewährleistung der Einheitlichkeit zwischen nationalen Systemen zu leisten.

Der unabhängige Wissenschaftliche Ausschuss „Neu auftretende und neu identifizierte Gesundheitsrisiken" (SCENIHR) ([2]), der für die Kommission arbeitet, verfügt über ein ständiges Mandat für die Bewertung der durch elektromagnetische Felder (EMF) verursachten Risiken. Dies betrifft alle Frequenzen, einschließlich der Felder im Niederfrequenzbereich (ELF-Felder), die um Überlandleitungen herum entstehen. Die Risikobewertung fußt auf den wissenschaftlichen Erkenntnissen, die bei der Ausarbeitung der Stellungnahme vorliegen.

Die Kommission zieht diese Stellungnahmen heran, um zu prüfen, ob die in der Ratsempfehlung (1999/519/EG) vorgeschlagenen Expositionsgrenzwerte noch angemessen sind oder ob sie angepasst werden müssen.

Derzeit aktualisiert der SCENIHR seine EMF-Stellungnahme, die bis Ende 2013 vorliegen sollte. Diese Stellungnahme wird alle Frequenzbereiche abdecken, einschließlich möglicher Gesundheitsrisiken durch ELF-Felder entlang Stromleitungen.

Was Schutzmaßnahmen betrifft, so ist die EU gemäß den Artikeln 168 und 169 des Vertrags über die Arbeitsweise der Europäischen Union nicht zum Erlass von Rechtsvorschriften zum Schutz der Bevölkerung vor möglichen Auswirkungen elektromagnetischer Felder zuständig, sondern diese Verantwortung liegt weiterhin in erster Linie bei den Mitgliedstaaten.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:1999:199:0059:0070:DE:PDF
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/emerging/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009902/13
to the Commission
Bernd Lange (S&D)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: Effects of exposure to power lines in the EU

The need to upgrade and install power lines in the EU increasingly raises the issue of the effects of exposure on people and nature.

These issues are particularly relevant when it comes to deciding between underground cabling and overhead lines.

This being the case, I would like to ask the Commission:

1. How does it assess the level of exposure to electromagnetic fields under overhead lines?

2. Which European limits does it regard as appropriate?

3. What steps will it take to restrict the effects of exposure on people to a level harmless to health by imposing strict, uniform limits?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(17 October 2013)

The Council Recommendation on the limitation of exposure to Electromagnetic fields (1999/519/EC) ([1]) was adopted with a view to establishing a common protective framework and in an effort to contribute to consistency between the various national approaches.

The independent Scientific Committee on Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks (SCENIHR) ([2]) serving the Commission has a standing mandate to evaluate the risks from electromagnetic fields (EMF). This regards all frequency fields including extremely low frequency fields (ELF) generated by overhead lines. The risk assessment is based on the most available scientific evidence at the time when the opinion is prepared.

The Commission uses these opinions to check whether the exposure limits as proposed in the Council Recommendation on EMF (1999/519/EC) are still appropriate or if there is a need for revision.

An update of the SCENIHR EMF opinion is ongoing and it is expected to be finalised by the end of 2013. This opinion will cover all the frequency range including the possible health risk from ELF generated from power lines.

Regarding preventive measures, the provisions of Articles 168 and 169 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union do not confer the EU competence to legislate in the area of protection of the general public from the potential effects of EMF and leaves the primary responsibility with the Member States.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/electrical/files/lv/rec519_en.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/emerging/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009903/13
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: Reclassification of electronic cigarettes as medicinal products

Could the Commission advise me of any impact assessment it has carried out in relation to the possible reclassification of electronic cigarettes as medicinal products?

What would be the impact on the industry in terms of the costs of testing these products?

What would be the effect in terms of job losses if the product were taken off the market either for the duration of the testing process or permanently?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(18 October 2013)

The Commission's impact assessment ([1]) contains an analysis of the policy options available for the regulation of nicotine containing products such as e-cigarettes. This includes the expected impacts of subjecting nicotine containing products to the medicinal products' legislation (Directive 2001/83/EC ([2])).

The amount of tests and therefore the associated costs will depend on the existing data to which industry can refer at the time of market authorisation. On the other hand, these tests will allow the quality, safety and efficacy of such products to be ascertained, which will be of direct benefits to consumers.

The effect on jobs is estimated to be limited. The Commission proposal provides for a transitional period during which nicotine containing products not in compliance with the directive will continue to be allowed to be placed on the market, ensuring adequate time to obtain a marketing authorisation.

([1]) SWD (2012) 452 final.
([2]) Directive 2001/83/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 November 2001 on the Community code relating to medicinal products for human use.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009904/13
à la Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(5 septembre 2013)

Objet: Distorsion de TVA entre la France et l'Italie concernant la TVA sur les grands bateaux de plaisance

En novembre 2012, la Commission européenne a demandé à la France de supprimer l'exonération de TVA appliquée à la location des grands bateaux de plaisance à des fins d'agrément. Suite à une plainte déposée par l'Italie devant la CJUE, cette suppression d'exonération a pris effet le 15 juillet 2013 sur proposition du gouvernement français. Depuis cette date, la taxation en Italie s'élève à 6,6 %, tandis qu'elle est désormais de 9,8 % en France, soit un différentiel de 3,2 points.

Certes, l'exonération de TVA sur cette catégorie d'activité était contestable mais la situation actuelle l'est plus encore car cette distorsion de concurrence entraîne une délocalisation des activités nautiques des côtes françaises.

La Corse est une région qui concentre une part importante de ces activités puisque 20 % de la flotte mondiale croise au large de ses côtes pendant la saison estivale. Dans une région durement touchée par le chômage et de nombreux handicaps géographiques, il est important de défendre l'ensemble des activités industrielles et touristiques qui se développent sur son territoire.

Dans ce contexte, il convient de trouver une solution pour un problème né de la réglementation communautaire.

La Commission souhaite-t-elle revoir son jugement sur la situation de la TVA dans le secteur avant le 15 juillet en France?

La Commission accepterait-elle un régime dérogatoire pour le secteur des grands bateaux de plaisance en termes de TVA?

La Commission souhaite-t-elle appeler les États membres à une harmonisation de la TVA dans l'ensemble des pays du Bassin méditerranéen dans ce domaine afin d'éviter les distorsions de concurrence?

Réponse donnée par M. Šemeta au nom de la Commission
(11 octobre 2013)

En réalité, l'Italie et la France appliquent un taux normal de respectivement 21 % et de 19,6 % pour l'utilisation de bateaux de plaisance. Cependant, ces deux pays appliquent la clause ([1]) dite «d'utilisation et de consommation» lorsque le bateau croise en dehors des eaux de l'UE. Cette clause donne lieu à une réduction de la TVA acquittée pour ces prestations de services proportionnelle à l'utilisation du bateau en dehors des eaux de l'UE.

Les modifications de la TVA applicables en France depuis le 15 juillet 2013 sont une conséquence de l'arrêt rendu par la Cour de justice de l'Union européenne dans l'affaire Bacino ([2]), qui dispose que «l'exonération de la taxe sur la valeur ajoutée […] ne s'applique pas aux prestations de services consistant à mettre un bateau, contre rémunération, avec équipage, à la disposition de personnes physiques à des fins de voyages d'agrément en haute mer». Dans cette affaire, le rôle de la Commission s'est limité à s'assurer de la bonne application de cet arrêt.

Étant donné que les prestations de services portant sur l'usage de bateaux de plaisance sont soumises au taux de TVA normal, un régime dérogatoire de TVA ne peut leur être appliqué. Tout changement ultérieur du taux auquel sont soumises ces prestations de services s'appliquerait également à tous les biens et services soumis au taux de TVA normal. Chaque État membre a toute discrétion pour fixer son taux normal.

L'un des objectifs fondamentaux visé dans la communication de la Commission sur l'avenir de la TVA ([3]) est d'élargir l'assiette fiscale et de limiter le recours aux taux réduits, ainsi que d'encourager le principe de l'imposition au taux normal afin d'améliorer l'efficacité et la neutralité de la TVA. La création d'un régime dérogatoire pour le secteur des grands bateaux de plaisance en termes de TVA irait à l'encontre de cet objectif.

([1]) Article 59 bis de la directive TVA.
([2]) Affaire C-116/10, Bacino Charter Company.
([3]) COM(2011) 851 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009904/13
to the Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: VAT rates on large recreational vessels distorting competition between France and Italy

In November 2012 the Commission asked France to discontinue the VAT exemption hitherto applying to large recreational vessels. Following a complaint lodged by Italy with the Court of Justice, the exemption was discontinued on 15 July 2013. Since then, the VAT rate on large recreational vessels has been 6.6% in Italy and 9.8% in France — a difference of 3.2 percentage points.

However difficult to justify the granting of a VAT exemption to firms operating in this sector may have been, the current disparity in rates is even more so because it is distorting competition and resulting in nautical business moving away from France's coasts.

Corsica, for instance, is a leading centre for such business, with 20% of the world's recreational fleet congregating around its coasts during the summer months. In view of the island's high levels of unemployment and many geographical handicaps, it is vitally important to protect local manufacturing and tourism-related businesses.

A solution therefore needs to be found to this problem, which has been created by the EU's regulatory system.

Will the Commission be reviewing its appraisal of the pre-15 July VAT situation in France?

Would it look favourably on the idea of a special VAT regime for large recreational craft?

Does it intend to call on Member States to standardise VAT rates in this sector in the Mediterranean area, in order to guard against any future distortion of competition?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(11 October 2013)

Italy and France are in fact applying a standard rate of 21% and 19.6% respectively to the use of recreational vessels. However, both also apply the 'use and enjoyment' clause ([1]) in cases where the boat is used outside EU waters, which entails a reduction in the VAT paid for those services in proportion to the use outside EU waters.

The changes applying in France since 15 July 2013 were caused by the ruling of the Court of Justice of the European Union in Bacino ([2]) which determined that 'the exemption from value added tax … does not apply to services consisting of making a vessel available, for reward, with a crew, to natural persons for purposes of leisure travel on the high seas'. The role of the Commission in this case was limited to monitoring that the ruling was correctly implemented.

As services involving the use of recreational vessels are subject to the standard rate of VAT, it is not possible to apply a special rate to them. Subsequently, any change to the rate applied to these services would apply to all goods and services which are subject to the standard rate. It is at the discretion of each Member State to set their standard rate.

One of the fundamental features envisaged in the Commission's Communication on the future of VAT ([3]) was to broaden the tax base and to limit the use of reduced rates, as well as encouraging the principle of taxation at the standard rate to improve the efficiency and neutrality of VAT. Creating a special VAT regime for large recreational vessels would run counter to that objective.

([1]) Article 59a of the VAT Directive.
([2]) Case C-116/10 Bacino Charter Company.
([3]) COM(2011) 851 final.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009905/13
à la Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(5 septembre 2013)

Objet: Interférences entre ondes TNT et 4G

Le déploiement en France des réseaux de quatrième génération (4G) de la téléphonie mobile a mis en évidence des interférences avec le réseau de la Télévision Numérique Terrestre (TNT). Ces deux normes permettent de répondre aux attentes des entreprises et des citoyens en termes de services et de rapidité d'accès à ces services.

Cependant, les interférences qui se produisent actuellement montrent la difficile cohabitation de ces normes et la nécessaire coordination des politiques industrielles dans ce domaine.

Suite à ces problèmes:

La Commission souhaite-t-elle accompagner les entreprises, les collectivités et les citoyens qui rencontrent des problèmes d'interférence?

La Commission souhaite-t-elle améliorer la coordination des normes qu'elle promeut pour éviter à l'avenir ce genre de problème?

La Commission procède-t-elle à une diffusion de l'information sur ce problème dans les pays membres afin d'éviter qu'il ne se reproduise ailleurs?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Kroes au nom de la Commission
(10 octobre 2013)

La Commission est consciente des problèmes d'interférences pouvant survenir entre la radiodiffusion numérique terrestre et les systèmes de communications mobiles, et en particulier entre les terminaux mobiles et les récepteurs de télévision fonctionnant dans la même gamme de fréquences, comme le dividende numérique (790-862 MHz) et les bandes de fréquences voisines.

Il incombe aux États membres de résoudre les problèmes de perturbations radioélectriques sur leur territoire, conformément à la législation européenne. Selon la décision 2010/267/UE de la Commission sur l'harmonisation des conditions techniques d'utilisation de la bande de fréquences 790-862 MHz pour les systèmes de Terre permettant de fournir des services de communications électroniques dans l'Union européenne ([1]), les États membres doivent offrir une protection appropriée aux systèmes de radiodiffusion dans les bandes adjacentes et favoriser les accords de coordination transfrontalière.

La Commission suit de près l'évolution de la situation dans les États membres où des réseaux de communication mobile à haut débit LTE (Long Term Evolution) sont mis en place ([2]) et encourage la diffusion d'informations sur les cas de brouillage et les bonnes pratiques à mettre en œuvre pour les résoudre. En octobre 2012, les services de la Commission ont organisé un grand atelier réunissant les parties concernées, consacré à la situation en matière de normalisation et aux mesures à prendre. L'une des grandes questions soulevées était celle du brouillage et de l'immunité des récepteurs et des équipements de télévision par câble destinés au grand public.

En outre, dans une lettre à l'ETSI et au Cenelec datée du 13 février 2013, la Commission a demandé que des travaux supplémentaires soient menés sur les questions de compatibilité électromagnétique et de normalisation, afin de faciliter la mise en œuvre de la décision 2010/267/UE. Les deux organismes ont confirmé leur engagement à cet égard. La Commission prendra en compte cette expérience pour l'élaboration, avec toutes les parties concernées, d'une stratégie durable pour le développement de la bande de radiodiffusion UHF (470-790 MHz).

([1]) JO L 117 du 11.5.2010, p. 95.
([2]) Par exemple, l'Allemagne, la France, le Royaume-Uni et la Suède.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009905/13
to the Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: Interference between terrestrial digital television and 4G signals

Problems are being encountered in France as a result of interference between the recently developed fourth generation (4G) mobile telephone networks and digital terrestrial television signals.

While both sets of standards provide companies and individuals with the services and speed of access they require, the problem of signal interference highlights the need for coordinated industrial strategies to ensure their smooth coexistence.

In view of this:

Does the Commission intend to assist companies, organisations and individual citizens encountering problems with signal interference?

Does it intend to improve coordination between the standards advocated by it so as to prevent such problems arising in future?

Is it taking action to inform Member States about this problem and avoid it occurring elsewhere?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(10 October 2013)

The Commission is aware of potential interference issues between digital terrestrial broadcasting and mobile communications systems, in particular between mobile end user devices and TV receivers, operating within the same frequency range such as the digital dividend (the 790-862 MHz band) or in adjacent frequency bands.

It is Member States' responsibility to resolve radio interference problems on their territory in line with EC law. In this regard, Commission Decision 2010/267/EU on harmonised technical conditions of use in the 790-862 MHz frequency band for terrestrial systems capable of providing electronic communications services in the European Union ([1]) obliges Member States to ensure appropriate protection to broadcast systems in adjacent bands and facilitates cross-border coordination agreements.

The Commission closely monitors developments in the Member States, where LTE mobile broadband networks are being rolled out ([2]) and encourages the dissemination of information on interference cases and best practices for their resolution. In October 2012, the Commission services organised a broad stakeholder workshop devoted to relevant standardisation situation and the necessary next steps. One prominent issue was interference to and immunity of consumer TV and cable equipment.

Furthemore, in a letter to ETSI and CENELEC of 13 February 2013, the Commission requested additional work on electromagnetic compatibility and radio standardisation to support the implmentation of Decision 2010/267/EU. Both organisations have confirmed their commitment. The Commission will take this experience into account in developing with all relevant stakeholders a sustainable strategy for the UHF broadcasting band (470-790 MHz).

([1]) OJ L 117, 11.5.2010, p. 95.
([2]) (e.g. Germany, Sweden, France or the UK).

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-009907/13
aan de Commissie
Lambert van Nistelrooij (PPE) en Esther de Lange (PPE)
(5 september 2013)

Betreft: Verspilling in de zorg: onnodig grote verpakkingen tegengaan

Verspilling in de zorg ondergraaft de solidariteit. In Nederland is het ministerie van VWS in samenwerking met patiënten- en ouderenorganisaties (CSO) het actieplan „Aanpak verspilling genees- en hulpmiddelen" gestart. Een onderdeel van het actieplan is een meldpunt voor burgers om verspilling in de zorg te melden. In ongeveer 70 % van de duizenden meldingen over geneesmiddelen wordt de grootte van de verpakking als oorzaak of één van de oorzaken genoemd. Het is aan de fabrikanten om de soort en de omvang van de verpakking van geneesmiddelen te bepalen. Hier ligt de Geneesmiddelenwet met gedetailleerde wetgeving aan ten grondslag. Dit deel van de Geneesmiddelenwet is voor 99 % implementatie van Europese regelgeving, dat wil zeggen dat er op nationaal niveau geen instrumenten zijn om de industrie/fabrikanten over te laten gaan tot kleinere verpakkingen. Fabrikanten kunnen enkel gevraagd worden om hiertoe vrijwillig over te gaan.

In het licht van het bovenstaande:

Welke mogelijkheden ziet de Commissie om bij fabrikanten invloed uit te oefenen op de verpakkingsgrootte van geneesmiddelen?

Antwoord van de heer Borg namens de Commissie
(18 november 2013)

Een vergunning voor het in de handel brengen van een geneesmiddel, die door de Commissie is verleend voor de hele EU of door een lidstaat voor het eigen grondgebied, stelt overeenkomstig de wetgeving inzake geneesmiddelen ([1]) ook de toegestane verpakkingsgrootten vast.

In het richtsnoer voor aanvragers, dat door de Commissie en de lidstaten is opgesteld ([2]), wordt vermeld dat het belangrijk is dat de principes van een rationeel gebruik van geneesmiddelen in acht worden genomen, en dat bij het vaststellen van de juiste verpakkingsgrootten rekening moet worden gehouden met de duur van de behandeling en met de dosering zoals die wordt vermeld in de productinformatie.

Bij de behandeling van een aanvraag voor een vergunning voor het in de handel brengen van geneesmiddelen wordt beoordeeld of de voorgestelde verpakking van het geneesmiddel de juiste grootte heeft, in het licht van een correct en veilig gebruik van het product. Als de Commissie de vergunning voor het in de handel brengen van het geneesmiddel verleent, wordt deze beoordeling uitgevoerd door het Comité voor Geneesmiddelen voor menselijk gebruik (CHMP) van het Europees Geneesmiddelenbureau.

Nadat een vergunning is verleend, kan de vergunninghouder beslissen om een aanvraag in te dienen voor aanvullende verpakkingsgrootte. Dezelfde principes zijn dan van toepassing en het CHMP zal een beoordeling uitvoeren van de gepastheid van de voorgestelde verpakkingsgrootte in het licht van een correct en veilig gebruik van het product.

De beslissingen met betrekking tot verpakkingsgrootte die dan worden genomen in het kader van de prijs en vergoeding vallen onder de bevoegdheid van de lidstaten.

([1]) Verordening (EG) nr. 726/2004 tot vaststelling van communautaire procedures voor het verlenen van vergunningen en het toezicht op geneesmiddelen voor menselijk en diergeneeskundig gebruik en tot oprichting van een Europees Geneesmiddelenbureau, PB L 136 van 30.4.2004, zoals gewijzigd, Richtlijn 2001/83/EG tot vaststelling van een communautair wetboek betreffende geneesmiddelen voor menselijk gebruik, PB L 311 van 28.11.2001, zoals gewijzigd.

([2]) *Guideline on the packaging information of medicinal products for Human use authorised by the Union* (richtsnoer betreffende de informatie die moet worden vermeld op de verpakking van geneesmiddelen voor menselijk gebruik waarvoor de Unie een vergunning heeft afgegeven), http://ec.europa.eu/health/files/eudralex/vol-2/c/bluebox_06_2013_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009907/13
to the Commission
Lambert van Nistelrooij (PPE) and Esther de Lange (PPE)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: Waste in the health service: combating needlessly large packaging

Waste in the health service undermines solidarity. In the Netherlands, the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport has launched, in collaboration with patient associations and organisations for the elderly (CSO), the action plan for tackling waste involving medicines and medical equipment. One aspect of the action plan is a website for citizens to report incidences of waste in the health service. Roughly 70% of the thousands of reports about medicines mention packaging size as the reason or one of the reasons for getting in contact. It is the manufacturers' job to determine the type and size of packaging for medicines. The detailed legislation in the Netherlands Medicines Act provides the basis for this. This part of the Netherlands Medicines Act is 99% implementation of European regulations. This means that there are no instruments available at national level allowing the industry/manufacturers to switch to smaller packaging. Manufacturers can only be requested to make this switch voluntarily.

In light of what has been said:

What opportunities does the Commission see for exerting influence on manufacturers with regard to packaging size for medicines?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(18 November 2013)

In accordance with the pharmaceutical legislation ([1]), a marketing authorisation granted for a medicinal product either by the Commission for the entire EU or by a Member State for its own territory, includes also approved package sizes.

The guideline to applicants, agreed by the Commission and the Members States ([2]) states, that when presenting a range of pack sizes with the marketing authorisation application 'it is important that the principles of rational use of medicinal products are taken into consideration' and the appropriate range of pack sizes should be chosen in accordance with the duration of treatment and in accordance with the dosing as mentioned in the product information.

The evaluation of the marketing authorisation application includes assessment of the appropriateness of the proposed pack sizes in the view of the correct and safe use of the medicinal product. If the marketing authorisation is granted by the Commission, this assessment is performed by the Committee for Human Medicinal Products (CHMP) of the European Medicines Agency.

The marketing authorisation holder may decide to apply for additional pack size presentations after initial approval, the same principles as described above apply and the CHMP will assess the appropriateness of the proposed pack sizes in the view of the correct and safe use of the product.

The decisions on pack sizes which are then taken within the pricing and reimbursement framework are under the competence of the Member States.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 726/2004 laying down Community procedures for the authorisation and supervision of medicinal products for human and veterinary use and establishing a European Medicines Agency, OJ L 136, 30.4.2004, as amended, Directive 2001/83/EC on the Community code relating to medicinal products for human use, OJ L 311, 28.11.2001, as amended.

([2]) Guideline on the packaging information of medicinal products for Human use authorised by the Union (July 2013), http://ec.europa.eu/health/files/eudralex/vol-2/c/bluebox_06_2013_en.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-009909/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(5 de setembro de 2013)

Assunto: Disputa sobre a ZEE das Ilhas Selvagens — 2

As Ilhas Selvagens são um subarquipélago do arquipélago da Madeira, localizado no Oceano Atlântico que, administrativamente, faz parte da freguesia da Sé, concelho do Funchal, da Região Autónoma da Madeira.

Ao abrigo da Convenção das Nações Unidas sobre o Direito do Mar, assinada em Montego Bay, na Jamaica, a 30 de abril de 1982, os países costeiros têm direito a declarar uma Zona Económica Exclusiva (ZEE) de espaço marítimo para além das suas águas territoriais, na qual têm prerrogativas na utilização dos recursos e responsabilidade na gestão ambiental.

Espanha contestou junto da ONU a pretensão de Portugal de alargar a sua ZEE de 200 para 350 milhas com base na jurisdição sobre as Ilhas Selvagens, insistindo em que a delimitação da ZEE se faça ignorando as Ilhas Selvagens ao considerá-las como rochedos, enquanto o Estado português insiste na sua classificação como ilhas, ampliando assim a ZEE portuguesa.

De acordo com o princípio da cooperação leal previsto no artigo 4.°, n.° 3, do Tratado da União Europeia, a União e os Estados-Membros assistem-se mutuamente no cumprimento das missões decorrentes dos Tratados.

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Qual o seu parecer relativamente ao impacto dessa disputa na execução da política comum das pescas e noutras áreas do Direito da União?

2. Tendo em conta os seus efeitos ao nível do Direito da União, pretende tomar alguma iniciativa para evitar que este diferendo comprometa a realização dos objetivos da União?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-009917/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(5 de setembro de 2013)

Assunto: Disputa sobre a ZEE das Ilhas Selvagens — 1

Considerando o seguinte:

— As Ilhas Selvagens são um subarquipélago do arquipélago da Madeira, localizado no Oceano Atlântico e que, administrativamente, fazem parte da freguesia da Sé, concelho do Funchal, da Região Autónoma da Madeira;

— Ao abrigo da Convenção das Nações Unidas sobre o Direito do Mar, assinada em Montego Bay, na Jamaica, a 30 de abril de 1982, os países costeiros têm direito a declarar uma Zona Económica Exclusiva (ZEE) de espaço marítimo para além das suas águas territoriais, na qual têm prerrogativas na utilização dos recursos e responsabilidade na gestão ambiental dessa área;

— Embora Portugal detenha a soberania das Ilhas Selvagens e possa, por isso, alargar a fronteira da ZEE mais para sul, a Espanha defende que a fronteira da ZEE mais a sul entre Espanha e Portugal deve consistir numa linha equidistante delimitada a meia distância entre a Madeira e as Canárias, argumentando que as Ilhas Selvagens não formam uma plataforma continental separada, de acordo com o artigo 121 da Convenção das Nações Unidas sobre o Direito do Mar;

— A União Europeia possui competência exclusiva em matéria de política comum das pescas e competência partilhada com os vinte e oito Estados-Membros em várias matérias, nas quais uma questão sobre a delimitação e gestão da ZEE pode ter implicações, sendo necessário garantir não só o cumprimento das obrigações dos Estados-Membros ao abrigo do Tratado, mas também a realização dos objetivos da União Europeia;

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Que informações possui, da parte dos Estados de Portugal e de Espanha, relativamente à jurisdição da ZEE em questão nesta disputa?

2. Quais os meios que a União Europeia e as suas instituições têm ao seu alcance para facilitar a resolução deste diferendo?

Resposta conjunta dada por Maria Damanaki em nome da Comissão
(14 de novembro de 2013)

A Comissão tem conhecimento do diferendo que opõe Portugal e Espanha sobre a delimitação das respetivas Zonas Económicas Exclusivas (ZEE) através das várias reivindicações coincidentes relativas, designadamente, à inclusão das Ilhas Selvagens nas águas situadas ao largo da Madeira, por um lado, e nas águas situadas ao largo das ilhas Canárias, por outro.

A declaração das ZEE e respetiva delimitação é da exclusiva competência nacional dos Estados-Membros da União Europeia que são Estados costeiros. Por esta razão, a Comissão não tem competência para intervir diretamente nestes diferendos.

No caso vertente, a Comissão gostaria de encorajar a resolução pacífica, equitativa e rápida deste diferendo sobre a delimitação do espaço marítimo entre os dois Estados-Membros em causa, em conformidade com as disposições pertinentes da Convenção das Nações Unidas sobre o Direito do Mar (Unclos), em especial o artigo 74, n.° 2, e os artigos 279.° e 280.°.

Sempre que um Estado-Membro declara uma ZEE, essas águas passam a ser «águas da União», de modo que a legislação da União adotada por força dos poderes reguladores da UE num domínio de competência exclusiva (p. ex., a Política Comum das Pescas) ou num domínio de competência partilhada (p. ex., legislação da União no domínio ambiental), se aplica plenamente a essas águas. Neste contexto, o diferendo sobre a delimitação entre Portugal e Espanha não prejudicou a aplicação do chamado Regulamento «Águas Ocidentais», ou seja, o Regulamento (CE) n.° 1954/2003 ([1]), que prevê um regime de conservação específico que também abarca as águas em causa. Do mesmo modo, o diferendo não é suscetível de afetar a concretização dos objetivos da Política Comum das Pescas ou os objetivos futuros de qualquer outra política da União na matéria.

([1]) JO L 289 de 7.11.2003.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009909/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: Dispute over the Ilhas Selvagens exclusive economic zone — 2

The Ilhas Selvagens, in the Atlantic Ocean, are a sub-archipelago of the Madeira archipelago and, administratively, part of the parish of Sé in the municipality of Funchal, in the Autonomous Region of Madeira.

Under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, signed in Montego Bay, Jamaica, on 30 April 1982, coastal states are entitled to declare a maritime area beyond their territorial waters as an exclusive economic zone (EEZ), for which they have privileges relating to the use of resources and responsibility for environmental management.

Appealing to the UN, Spain has contested Portugal's intention of extending its EEZ from 200 to 350 miles on the grounds that it, Portugal, has jurisdiction over the Ilhas Selvagens. Spain insists that the EEZ should be delimited so as to exclude the Ilhas Selvagens, which it considers to be rocks, whereas Portugal maintains that they should be classified as islands and hence encompassed within an expanded Portuguese EEZ.

The principle of sincere cooperation laid down in Article 4(3) of the Treaty on European Union implies that the Union and the Member States should assist each other in carrying out tasks deriving from the Treaties.

1. What impact does the Commission think this dispute will have on the implementation of the common fisheries policy and on other areas of Union law?

2. Bearing in mind the implications for Union law, will it take any steps to prevent this dispute from jeopardising the attainment of EU objectives?

Question for written answer E-009917/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: Dispute over the Selvagens Islands EEZ — 1

The Selvagens are a sub-archipelago of the archipelago of Madeira in the Atlantic Ocean which for administrative purposes belong to the parish of Sé in the municipality of Funchal in the Autonomous Region of Madeira. Under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea signed in Montego Bay, Jamaica, on 30 April 1982, coastal countries have the right to declare a sea area beyond their territorial waters as an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), where they enjoy certain prerogatives as regards the use of resources and are responsible for managing the marine environment.

Even though Portugal has sovereignty over the Selvagens and is therefore entitled to extend the southernmost boundary of the EEZ, Spain argues that the southernmost boundary of the EEZ between Spain and Portugal should be defined by an equidistant line halfway between Madeira and the Canaries, on the grounds that the Selvagens do not form a separate continental shelf pursuant to Article 121 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

The European Union has exclusive competence with regard to the common fisheries policy and shares competence with the 28 Member States as regards various other matters which could be affected by issues concerning the demarcation and management of the EEZ, whereby it is necessary to guarantee both compliance with the Member States' obligations under the Treaty and achievement of the European Union's objectives.

1. What information has the Commission received from Portugal and Spain in relation to jurisdiction over the EEZ that is at the centre of this dispute?

2. What tools are available to the European Union and its institutions to facilitate a settlement to this dispute?

Joint answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(14 November 2013)

The Commission is aware of the dispute between Portugal and Spain about the delimitation of their respective Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) on account of overlapping claims pertaining among others to the appropriate treatment of the Selvagens Islands in the waters off Madeira, on the one side, and the waters off the Canary Islands, on the other.

The proclamation of EEZs and their delimitation is an entirely national competence of the Member States of the European Union, which are coastal States. For this reason, the Commission is not in a position to intervene directly in such disputes.

In the present instance, the Commission would encourage a peaceful, equitable and rapid resolution of this delimitation dispute between the two Member States concerned, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (Unclos), particularly articles74 paragraph 2, 279 and 280.

Once a Member State has proclaimed an EEZ, those waters become 'Union waters' such that Union legislation enacted by virtue of the Union's prescriptive jurisdiction in a field of exclusive competence (e.g. the common fisheries policy) or in an area of shared competence (e.g. environmental Union legislation), fully applies within those waters. In this vein, the delimitation dispute between Portugal and Spain has not adversely affected the application of the so-called Western Waters Regulation (EC) No 1954/2003 ([1]), which provides for a specific conservation regime that also covers the waters in question. Similarly, the dispute is not likely to affect the attainment of the objectives of the common fisheries policy or the objectives of any other relevant Union policy henceforth.

([1]) OJ L 289, 07.11.2003.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009910/13
to the Commission
Liam Aylward (ALDE)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: Legality of low user standing changes in the energy market

An electricity supply company in Ireland has recently introduced a 'low user standing charge' which applies to customers who use an average of two units or less per day in any billing period. This additional charge has added a significant cost to customers' energy bills. While the charge was initially aimed at recouping costs from empty/vacant households and premises, in reality it is hitting low-income and vulnerable customers the hardest, as they seek to lower their energy usage in order to reduce their energy bills.

What is the Commission's position on 'low user standing charges' which vulnerable, low-income customers are obliged to pay regardless of their energy usage? Could the Commission comment on the legality of such charges?

Secondly, a public service organisation levy, which has been approved by the Commission, is also charged to all energy consumers in Ireland. At a time of economic hardship this levy is hitting vulnerable, elderly and low-income energy users the hardest.

Could the Commission comment on the possibility of suspending this levy for those facing economic hardship?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(3 October 2013)

In a competitive electricity (or gas) retail market, competing electricity suppliers have the freedom to set their prices according to their business strategies. According to the information provided to the Commission, the electricity market for household consumers is liberalised, so customers should be able to switch to another supplier who price offers fits customers better.

With respect to vulnerable customers, it appears that the electricity supplier in question takes into account consumers who receive the 'electricity allowance' and excludes them from the application of the 'low user standing charge' (https://www.electricireland.ie/ei/residential/price-plans/low-user-standing-charge.jsp).

For public service obligations (PSO) it is up to each Member State to decide the specific framework for their application, including any associated levies and their collection, provided it complies with the conditions set out in the Third Energy Package and in other relevant EU legislation.

(Slovenska različica)

Vprašanje za pisni odgovor P-009911/13
za Komisijo
Romana Jordan (PPE)
(5. september 2013)

Zadeva: Zagotavljanje odkupnih cen energije na Hrvaškem

Zakonodaja Evropske unije na področju energije in okolja dovoljuje sheme spodbujanja obnovljivih virov energije, da se doseže večja energetska neodvisnost in zmanjša ogljični odtis evropske energetike. Tovrstne sheme morajo ustrezati pravilom skupnega notranjega trga, konkurence in državne pomoči.

Fotovoltaična industrija nas je obvestila o stanju na trgu nove države članice EU, Hrvaške. Na hrvaškem trgu je namreč višina zagotovljene odkupne cene energije odvisna od tega, kako proizvajalec prispeva k razvoju lokalnih skupnosti, pri čemer se kot lokalne skupnosti na podlagi hrvaške zakonodaje razumejo mesta in skupnosti na področju Republike Hrvaške. ([1]) ([2])

Zato Komisijo sprašujem:

1. Ali je takšna diskriminacija na hrvaškem trgu energije v skladu z zakonodajo EU?

2. Ali namerava Komisija pregledati hrvaško zakonodajo in prakso na tem področju?

3. Kako namerava Komisija ukrepati v primeru, da se izkaže neskladnost hrvaške nacionalne zakonodaje z zakonodajo Evropske unije?

Odgovor g. Oettingerja v imenu Komisije
(4. oktober 2013)

Hrvaška je uradno sporočila več pravnih aktov kot ukrepe za prenos Direktive o obnovljivih virih energije; presoja skladnosti teh aktov z zakonodajo EU že poteka. Če bo presoja pokazala, da Hrvaška zakonodaja ni v skladu z zakonodajo EU o obnovljivih virih energije ali drugo zakonodajo EU, predvsem o notranjem trgu, bo Komisija pravno ukrepala.

([1]) Energetski zakon: http://www.hep.hr/opskrba/Zakon_o_energiji_pocisceni_tekst.pdf in pravila za določanje tarif za proizvodnjo elektrike iz obnovljivih virov energije in kogeneracije http://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2012_06_63_1508.html

([2]) Novice o tarifnem sistemu s strani ponudnikov http://microstar-elektronika.hr/elektronicki-uredaji/prodaja/suncane-elektrarne-opis-zakoni-prihodni-od-prodaje-struje in http://www.croenergo.eu/usvojen-novi-tarifni-sustav-za-proizvodnju-elektricne-energije-iz-obnovljivih-izvora-energije-i-kogeneracije-7237.aspx

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009911/13
to the Commission
Romana Jordan (PPE)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: Guaranteeing energy feed-in tariffs in Croatia

Under EU energy and environmental legislation, renewable energy incentive schemes may be implemented in order to achieve greater energy independence and reduce the carbon footprint of Europe's energy sector. Schemes of this kind have to be in accordance with the rules on the common internal market, competition, and state aid.

The photovoltaic industry has informed us about the market situation in the EU's new Member State, Croatia. On the Croatian market, the guaranteed energy feed-in tariff rate depends on the producer's contribution to the development of local communities, a term which, for the purposes of the Croatian legislation, means localities and communities in Croatia ([1]), ([2]).

1. Does EU legislation allow discrimination of the kind occurring on theCroatian energymarket?

2. Will the Commission examine Croatian law and practice in this area?

3. What steps will the Commission take if Croatian national law is found to be at variancewith EU legislation?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(4 October 2013)

Croatia notified a number of legal acts as transposition measures under the Renewable Energy Directive; the assessment of these acts with EC law is ongoing. Should the assessment conclude that Croatia's legislation is not in line with the EU legislation on renewable energy or other EU legislation, notably on the internal market, legal action will be taken.

([1]) Energy Act: http://www.hep.hr/opskrba/Zakon_o_energiji_pocisceni_tekst.pdf in pravila za določanje tarif za proizvodnjo elektrike iz obnovljivih virov energije in kogeneracije http://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2012_06_63_1508.html

([2]) News from providers concerning the tariff system: http://microstar-elektronika.hr/elektronicki-uredaji/prodaja/suncane-elektrarne-opis-zakoni-prihodni-od-prodaje-struje in http://www.croenergo.eu/usvojen-novi-tarifni-sustav-za-proizvodnju-elektricne-energije-iz-obnovljivih-izvora-energije-i-kogeneracije-7237.aspx

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-009912/13
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(5 september 2013)

Betreft: Illegale subsidie voor hernieuwbare energie (vervolgvraag)

In haar antwoord op vraag nr. E-007675/2013 was de Commissie van mening dat huishoudens die elektriciteit opwekken via zonnepanelen en stroom leveren aan het net, voor btw-doeleinden als echte ondernemers met een economische activiteit worden beschouwd. De Commissie stelde voorts dat de btw-verplichting en de mogelijke belastingvermindering of -teruggave voor huishoudens die zonnepanelen installeren, voortvloeien uit de toepassing van de btw-richtlijn en bijgevolg niet kunnen worden beschouwd als overheidssubsidies in de zin van artikel 107 van het VWEU.

1. Kan de Commissie voor dit specifieke geval het verschil toelichten tussen de gevolgen van het vrijwaringsmechanisme tegen dubbele belasting en overheidssteun?

2. Is de Commissie van mening dat de toepassing van een Europese wetgevingshandeling betekent dat een maatregel automatisch in overeenstemming is met de Verdragen?

Enkele jaren geleden werd er in Nederland een overheidssubsidie ingevoerd voor met behulp van zonnepanelen opgewekte elektriciteit. Vorig jaar was de subsidie voor zonnepanelen vooral afkomstig uit de subsidieregeling voor de productie van duurzame energie in Nederland en maakte ongeveer de helft van de nieuwe zonnepaneelgebruikers gebruik van deze subsidie.

3. Heeft de Commissie weet van andere lidstaten waar dergelijke subsidies worden toegekend om de aankoop van zonnepanelen te stimuleren?

4. Is de Commissie het met mij eens dat deze specifieke groep ondernemers als gevolg van illegale overheidssteun een bijzonder voordelige plaats inneemt op de interne markt en dat dit tot een ernstige verstoring van de mededinging in de EU leidt?

5. Wat denkt de Commissie van het geval waarin een Nederlandse ondernemer elektriciteit levert aan het net in een andere lidstaat die geen zulke subsidies verleent? Vindt zij nog altijd dat dit in overeenstemming is met de voorschriften inzake mededinging?

Antwoord van de heer Almunia namens de Commissie
(24 oktober 2013)

1) Het btw-stelsel verleent personen die in de zin van artikel 9 van de btw-richtlijn ([1]) een economische activiteit uitoefenen, het recht op aftrek van voorbelasting; doel hiervan is ervoor te zorgen dat, anders dan bij de eindgebruikers, de belasting niet op de belastingplichtigen rust. Het recht voor belastingplichtigen om voorbelasting af te trekken van de output-btw vormt in de zin van artikel 107, lid 1, VWEU geen staatssteun, onder meer omdat dat recht niet door een lidstaat wordt verleend, maar het wordt opgelegd door de btw-richtlijn ([2]), en omdat het op alle economische sectoren van toepassing is. Het is derhalve niet selectief ([3]).

2) Het primaire recht van de EU kan niet worden geïnterpreteerd in het licht van of worden aangepast door secundaire EU-wetgeving.

3) Een aantal EU-lidstaten heeft steunregelingen die specifiek voor kleinschalige zonnepanelen bestemd zijn. Deze regelingen nemen verschillende vormen aan: een teruglevertarief, belastingverlagingen, leningen enz. Een overzicht van deze steunmaatregelen en de gesteunde technologieën is beschikbaar op www.res-legal.eu.

4) Ingevolge artikel 108, lid 3, VWEU is staatssteun onrechtmatig indien deze door de lidstaat ten uitvoer wordt gelegd zonder voorafgaande kennisgeving aan en goedkeuring van de Commissie. De Commissie heeft echter herhaaldelijk correct aangemelde Nederlandse steunregelingen ten behoeve van hernieuwbare energie (zie steunmaatregelen N 478/07 en SA.34411 (2012/N)) goedgekeurd, omdat de regelingen in overeenstemming waren met de communautaire richtsnoeren inzake staatssteun voor milieubescherming (PB C 82 van 1.4.2008, blz. 1).

([1]) PB L 347 van 11.12.2006, blz. 1.
([2]) Zie de artikelen 167 tot 172 van de btw-richtlijn.
([3]) Dit beginsel van btw-neutraliteit ligt aan de basis van het btw-stelsel (zie het antwoord van de Commissie op vraag nr. E-007675/2013).

5) Het feit dat een subsidie in één lidstaat wel en in een andere niet bestaat, is op zich geen schending van het mededingingsrecht ([4]).

([4]) Wanneer een subsidie aan een onderneming die elektriciteit aan een andere lidstaat verkoopt, staatssteun in de zin van artikel 107, lid 1, VWEU vormt, moet deze subsidie op haar verenigbaarheid met de interne markt worden getoetst. Op het gebied van de productie van hernieuwbare energie bevatten de communautaire richtsnoeren inzake staatssteun voor milieubescherming (PB C 82 van 1.4.2008, blz. 1) een reeks criteria op basis waarvan steun voor het gebruik van hernieuwbare energiebronnen met de interne markt verenigbaar kan worden verklaard. Het behoort echter tot de bevoegdheid van de lidstaten, mits de voorwaarden inzake kennisgeving en de materiële vereisten worden nageleefd, al dan niet een regeling in te voeren om steun te verlenen ten behoeve van de levering van bepaalde soorten van stroomproductie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009912/13
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: Illegal subsidies for renewable energies (follow-up question)

In its answer to Question No E-007675/2013, the Commission took the view that households generating electricity from solar panels and delivering power to the grid are to be considered for VAT purposes as fully-fledged entrepreneurs carrying out economic activity. It further stated that the VAT liability and potential tax deductions or refunds for households installing solar panels result from the application of the VAT Directive and thus cannot be considered as state aid within the meaning of Article 107 TFEU.

1. Can the Commission specify the differences between the consequences of the 'safeguard mechanism against double taxation' and state aid in this case?

2. Does the Commission think that the application of a European legislative act means that a measure is automatically in accordance with the Treaties?

Furthermore, a few years ago a government subsidy for power generated by solar panels was introduced in the Netherlands. Last year, the subsidy scheme for durable energy production was the most important subsidy for solar panels in the Netherlands and about half of new solar panel users took advantage of this support.

3. Is the Commission aware of any other Member States where this kind of subsidy is granted in order to facilitate the purchase of solar panels?

4. Does the Commission agree with me that this particular group of entrepreneurs has a much more advantageous position in the internal market, due to illegal state aid which represents a serious distortion of competition in the EU?

5. How does the Commission view the situation in which a Dutch entrepreneur is delivering power to the grid in another Member State where this kind of subsidy is not granted? Does it still believe this is in accordance with the rules governing competition?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(24 October 2013)

1) The reason why the VAT system grants persons who carry out an economic activity in the sense of Article 9 the VAT Directive ([1]) the right to deduct input VAT is to ensure that, contrary to final consumers, taxable persons do not bear the burden of the tax. The right granted to taxable persons to deduct input VAT from output VAT does not constitute state aid in the sense of Article 107(1) TFEU, *inter alia* because that right is not granted by a Member State, but is mandatory under the VAT Directive ([2]), and because it applies across the board to economic sectors. It is thus not selective ([3]).

2) EU primary law cannot be interpreted in the light of or be modified by EU secondary legislation.

3) A number of EU Member States have support schemes dedicated to small-scale solar panels. These schemes take various forms: feed-in tariff, tax reductions, loans, etc. An overview of the support schemes and technologies supported can be found at www.res-legal.eu.

4) Under Article 108(3) TFEU, State aid is illegal if it is implemented by the Member State without prior notification to and approval by the Commission. However, the Commission has repeatedly approved duly notified Dutch state aid schemes on the support of renewable energy (see cases N 478/07 and SA.34411 2012/N), as the schemes complied with the Community guidelines on state aid for environmental protection (OJ C 82, 1.4.2008, p. 1).

([1]) OJ L 347,11.12.2006, p.1.
([2]) See Articles 167 to 172 of the VAT Directive.
([3]) This principle of neutrality of VAT is at the basis of the VAT system (see Commission's answer to Question No E-007675/2013).

5) The existence of a subsidy in one Member State and not another does not infringe competition law as such ([4]).

([4]) Where a subsidy given to an undertaking that sells electricity to another Member State constitutes state aid in the sense of Article 107(1) TFEU, it needs to be declared compatible with the internal market. In the field of renewable energy production, the Commission's Community guidelines on state aid for environmental protection (OJ C 82, 1.4.2008, p. 1) contain a set of criteria on which basis aid for renewable energy sources can be found compatible with the internal market. However, it is a matter for the discretion of Member States, subject to compliance with notification and substantive requirements, whether or not to put in place a scheme granting state aid to supply of certain types of electricity generation.

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor E-009913/13
upućeno Komisiji
Tonino Picula (S&D) i Davor Ivo Stier (PPE)
(5. rujna 2013.)

Predmet: Institucionalna jednakost Hrvata u Bosni i Hercegovini

Provedba presude Sejdić-Finci bit će važna tema za raspravljanje na sastanku koji je Komisija sazvala za 1. listopada 2013. u Bruxellesu s političkim vođama Bosne i Hercegovine (BiH).

Kako će na sastanku u Bruxellesu biti riješeno pitanje institucionalne jednakosti Hrvata u BiH i koji će biti pristup Komisije u tom pogledu?

Odgovor gospodina Fülea u ime Komisije
(30. rujna 2013.)

Povjerenik Füle pozvao je predstavnike institucija Bosne i Hercegovine i sedam čelnika glavnih političkih stranaka na treći sastanak dijaloga na visokoj razini o pristupnom procesu koji će se održati u Bruxellesu 1. listopada. Jedna od točaka dnevnog reda bit će presuda u slučaju Sejdić-Finci. Bosna i Hercegovina nije, do današnjeg dana, provela odluku Europskog suda za ljudska prava iz slučaja Sejdić-Finci i stoga nije prekinula diskriminacijsku praksu prema kojoj su građani Bosne i Hercegovine koji se nisu izjasnili kao pripadnici jednog od triju konstitutivna naroda isključeni iz kandidature za Predsjedništvo Bosne i Hercegovine i/ili Doma naroda Parlamentarne skupštine. Neudovoljavanje Europskoj konvenciji o ljudskim pravima predstavlja kršenje Sporazuma o stabilizaciji i pridruživanju koji je Bosna i Hercegovina potpisala s EU.

Komisija očekuje da će sugovornici iz Bosne i Hercegovine na ovom sastanku predstaviti svoj plan provedbe presude Sejdić-Finci uključujući i vremenski rok za usvajanje ustavnih i zakonodavnih promjena. Vijeće je 22. srpnja ponovno pozvalo Bosnu i Hercegovinu da se složi s provedbom ove presude kao žurnog predmeta te da se, u ovom okviru, ponovno konstruktivno uključi u nju s EU-om putem posebnog predstavnika EU-a/voditelja delegacije. Nije na Komisiji da nameće bilo kakvo posebno rješenje, nego bi nadležna tijela i politički vođe Bosne i Hercegovine trebali postići dogovor prije sastanka u Bruxellesu. Na njima je da osiguraju jednak tretman svim građanima Bosne i Hercegovine u izbornom postupku.

Unutar EU postoje različiti pristupi kojima se jamče civilna i ljudska prava te se osigurava zastupljenost svih građana u javnim tijelima na nediskriminirajućoj osnovi neovisno o etničkoj pripadnosti. Pristup koji zauzima svaka država članica odražava njezine vlastite posebne okolnosti i stanovništvo. Komisija potiče nadležna tijela Bosne i Hercegovine da iskoriste ove različite pristupe kako bi izgradili konsenzus i osigurali jednak tretman svih etničkih skupina Bosne i Hercegovine u izbornom postupku.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009913/13
to the Commission
Tonino Picula (S&D) and Davor Ivo Stier (PPE)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: Institutional equality of Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina

The implementation of the Sejdić-Finci ruling will be a prominent topic to be discussed at the meeting convened by the Commission with political leaders of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) for 1 October 2013 in Brussels.

How will the Brussels meeting address the issue of institutional equality of Croats in BiH, and what will be the Commission's approach in this regard?

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

Commissioner Füle has invited representatives of the institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the seven leaders of the main political parties to the third meeting of the High Level Dialogue on the Accession Process (HLDAP) planned to be held in Brussels on 1 October. One of the topics on the agenda is the Sejdić-Finci judgment. Bosnia and Herzegovina has, to date, not implemented the European Court of Human Rights ruling on the Sejdić-Finci case and thus not ended the discriminatory practice whereby citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina not declaring themselves as belonging to one of the three Constituent People are prevented to run for the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina and/or the House of Peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Not complying with the European Convention of Human Rights represents a breach of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement, which Bosnia and Herzegovina has signed with the EU.

The Commission expects the interlocutors of Bosnia and Herzegovina to present at this meeting how they intend to address the implementation of the Sejdić-Finci judgment including the timeline for the adoption of constitutional and legislative amendments this would require. On 22 July the Council has urged Bosnia and Herzegovina again to agree on the implementation of this judgment as a matter of urgency and, in this context, to reengage constructively with the EU, through the EU Special Representative/Head of Delegation. It is not for the Commission to impose any specific solution but for the competent Bosnia and Herzegovina authorities and political leaders to reach an agreement prior to the Brussels meeting. In particular, it is for them to ensure equal treatment of all citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina in an electoral process.

There are different approaches within the EU to guaranteeing civil and human rights and ensuring representation in public bodies of all citizens on a non-discriminatory basis regardless of ethnicity. The approach taken by each Member State reflects its own specific circumstances and population. The Commission encourages the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina to draw on these diverse approaches to build a consensus to ensure equal treatment of all ethnic groups of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the electoral process.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009914/13
alla Commissione
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(5 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Chiarimenti in merito al rinvio dell'obiettivo comunitario del roaming zero

Il roaming viene utilizzato dagli operatori telefonici di telefonia cellulare per permettere agli utenti mobili di collegarsi tra loro eventualmente utilizzando anche una rete non di loro proprietà dietro una quota di pagamento all'altro operatore. Questo può accadere, ad esempio, quando l'utente si trova all'estero e l'operatore telefonico non possiede una rete propria («roaming internazionale»).

La Commissione europea, al fine di abolire gli elevati costi del roaming, ha incoraggiato le società di telefonia a stipulare accordi e alleanze transnazionali al fine di offrire pacchetti più vantaggiosi ai consumatori.

Ogni giorno milioni di cittadini utilizzano la telefonia mobile per telefonare, inviare e ricevere SMS o navigare in Internet, mentre il numero degli utenti di servizi Internet mobili aumenta quotidianamente. Parallelamente è in continua crescita anche il gruppo dei potenziali utenti dei servizi di roaming. In una recente indagine dell'Eurobarometro sul roaming, ad esempio, quasi tre quarti degli intervistati afferma di aver utilizzato durante un soggiorno all'estero servizi per la terminazione delle chiamate, l'invio di SMS o la navigazione in Internet. Nonostante tale tendenza, la maggior parte dei cittadini europei disattiva i servizi mobili all'estero per timore di ricevere bollette esorbitanti.

La proposta della Commissione (COM(2011)0402) prevede una riduzione del 90 per cento delle tariffe internazionali.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione fornire la motivazione circa il presunto rinvio dell'obiettivo comunitario del roaming zero?

Risposta di Neelie Kroes a nome della Commissione
(14 ottobre 2013)

La Commissione è decisa a trovare soluzioni alle tariffe di roaming elevate rendendo più competitive le condizioni di mercato. Ciò consentirà di conseguire l'obiettivo fissato dall'agenda digitale europea, ossia rendere praticamente inesistente la differenza fra le tariffe in roaming e le tariffe nazionali. Il COM(2011)402 definitivo è stato infine adottato come la modifica 2012 del regolamento sul roaming, il cui obiettivo che gli europei non debbano più pagare costi aggiuntivi per il roaming rimane valido. Le proposte relative al mercato unico delle telecomunicazioni presentate dalla Commissione l'11 settembre 2013 si basano su tale regolamento e mirano a realizzare un mercato unico autentico in cui le tariffe di roaming non esistano più. La Commissione confida nel fatto che, a seguito di tale proposta, gli utenti europei saranno in grado, quando viaggiano in un altro paese dell'UE, di beneficiare delle stesse tariffe che pagano nel proprio paese d'origine per le chiamate, gli SMS e i servizi di dati.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009914/13
to the Commission
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: Clarification requested regarding the postponement of the EU goal to abolish roaming charges

Roaming is used by mobile telephone operators to allow mobile users to connect with each other, where necessary also by using a network belonging to another operator by paying a fee to that operator. This can happen, for example, when the user is abroad and the telephone operator does not have its own network ('international roaming').

In order to tackle the high cost of roaming, the Commission has encouraged phone companies to draw up agreements and make cross-border alliances in order to offer more attractive packages to consumers.

Each day millions of people use mobile phones to make phone calls, send and receive SMS messages or surf the Web, while the number of users of mobile Internet services is constantly growing. At the same time, the group of potential users of roaming services is also growing. In a recent Eurobarometer survey on roaming, for example, nearly three-quarters of respondents said that during a stay abroad they had used call termination services, sent text messages or surfed the Internet. Despite this trend, the majority of EU citizens disable their mobile services abroad, for fear of receiving exorbitant bills.

Commission proposal COM(2011) 0402 provides for a 90% reduction in international tariffs.

Can the Commission therefore say why the EU objective of abolishing roaming charges has allegedly been postponed?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(14 October 2013)

The Commission is determined to find solutions to high roaming charges by reinforcing competitive market conditions. This will allow achieving the target set by the Digital Agenda for Europe, namely the difference between roaming and national tariffs approaching zero. COM(2011)402 was ultimately adopted as the 2012 amendment to one Roaming Regulation, and whose objective that Europeans no longer have to pay roaming premiums remains valid. The Telecoms Single Market proposals presented by the Commission on 11 September 2013 builds on that regulation, with the objective of reaching a genuine single market in which roaming charges no longer exist. The Commission trusts that as a result of its proposal, European users will be able, when roaming in any other EU country, to benefit from the same calling, texting, and data rates as in their home country.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009915/13
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(5 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Conseguenze del «Quantitative Easing» della Fed

Nel corso della riunione informale dei banchieri centrali, svoltasi a Jackson Hole nel Wyoming alla fine d'agosto, la direttrice del FMI Christine Lagarde ha ammesso che con le nuove crisi delle economie emergenti «siamo in una nuova pericolosa fase che potrebbe far deragliare la fragile ripresa», mentre le riverberazioni sui mercati finanziari «potrebbero ritornare dove hanno avuto origine, cioè negli Usa». La prospettiva non è rosea e ci si chiede se la politica monetaria futura della Fed rimarrà identica a quella del recente passato, vale a dire all'immissione di liquidità nel sistema. Con la terza operazione QE, essa ha convogliato 85 miliardi di dollari al mese per acquistare nuove obbligazioni del Tesoro e altri titoli bancari meno solvibili, come i derivati asset-backed-security. Probabilmente anche in Europa si è capito che con una finanza drogata non si risolvono i problemi del debito pubblico e non si opera sulle cause che hanno prodotto la crisi sistemica.

Può la Commissione riferire:

1. se ha un'opinione sulle conseguenze della politica di Quantitative Easing della Fed;

2. quali risultati ha raggiunto tale politica per l'economia americana;

3. quali sono stati i risultati per il resto del mondo, Europa compresa;

4. quale impatto potrebbe avere la crisi delle economie emergenti sulle economie degli Stati membri dell'UE?

5. se ha proposte da presentare al prossimo G20 nel caso in cui la Fed modificasse la sua politica di QE?

Risposta di Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione
(22 ottobre 2013)

La Commissione non commenta la politica monetaria della Federal Reserve degli Stati Uniti o di altre banche centrali e ne rispetta pienamente l'indipendenza.

La Commissione rimanda l'onorevole parlamentare alla dichiarazione rilasciata dai capi di Stato e di governo in occasione del vertice G20 tenutosi il 5-6 settembre 2013 a San Pietroburgo: «La stabilità dei prezzi interni e il sostegno della ripresa economica continuano ad essere gli obiettivi della politica monetaria, in conformità con il mandato impartito dalle rispettive banche centrali. Siamo consapevoli del sostegno apportato all'economia mondiale negli ultimi anni da politiche monetarie accomodanti, incluse le politiche monetarie straordinarie. Abbiamo ben presenti i rischi e gli effetti secondari negativi generati involontariamente da periodi prolungati di allentamento monetario. Siamo consapevoli del fatto che una crescita rafforzata e costante consentirà infine di normalizzare gradualmente le politiche monetarie. Le nostre banche centrali si impegnano affinché le modifiche future delle politiche monetarie siano attentamente calibrate e comunicate in modo chiaro.»

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009915/13
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: Consequences of the Federal Reserve's quantitative easing policy

At the informal meeting of central bankers held in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, at the end of August, the director of the IMF, Christine Lagarde, admitted that with the new crisis in the emerging economies 'we are in a dangerous new phase and risk seeing the fragile recovery derailed', while the reverberations in financial markets 'could go back to where they started — the United States.'

The outlook is not good and one cannot but wonder whether the future monetary policy of the Federal Reserve will remain the same, i.e. that of injecting liquidity into the system. With its third quantitative easing (QE) operation, it has funnelled USD 85 billion a month into buying new Treasury bonds and other less reliable bank stocks, such as asset-backed security derivatives. Probably even in Europe it has been understood that doping the finance system does not resolve government debt problems and does not work on the causes of the systemic crisis.

Can the Commission say:

1. whether it has an opinion on the consequences of the Federal Reserve's quantitativeeasing policy;

2. what results this policy has achieved for the US economy;

3. what results it has achieved for the rest of the world, including Europe;

4. what impact the crisis of the emerging economies could have on the economies of the EUMember States;

5. whether it has any proposals to present to the next G20 meeting should the FederalReserve change its QE policy?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(22 October 2013)

The Commission does not comment on the monetary policy of the U.S. Federal Reserve or other central banks, in full respect of their independence.

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to the statement of the G20 Leaders' Summit held in Saint Petesburg on 5-6 September 2013: 'Monetary policy will continue to be directed towards domestic price stability and supporting the economic recovery according to the respective mandates of central banks. We recognise the support that has been provided to the global economy in recent years from accommodative monetary policies, including unconventional monetary policies. We remain mindful of the risks and unintended negative side effects of extended periods of monetary easing. We recognise that strengthened and sustained growth will be accompanied by an eventual transition toward the normalization of monetary policies. Our central banks have committed that future changes to monetary policy settings will continue to be carefully calibrated and clearly communicated.'

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys P-009918/13
komissiolle
Tarja Cronberg (Verts/ALE)
(5. syyskuuta 2013)

Aihe: EU:n yhteinen metsästrategia

Maailman väkiluku lähenee yhdeksää miljardia vuonna 2050. Vaikkei väestönkasvu keskity Eurooppaan, on Euroopankin suunniteltava tarkasti niukkenevien luonnonvarojensa käyttöä. Uuden talouden tulee olla kestävä. Kilpailukykyä ja hyvinvointia voidaan lisätä vain uusiutuvien luonnonvarojen ehdoilla. Metsien osuus on tässä kiistaton. Metsätalous tarjoaa työtä, kaupallisia tuotteita ja ei-kaupallisia ekosysteemipalveluja. Metsässä on myös valtava innovaatiopotentiaali, sieltä haetaan ratkaisuja mm. ilmastonmuutokseen sekä veden ja ravinnon puutteeseen.

Metsäteollisuuden rooli EU:ssa on merkittävä: 350 miljardin euron tuotantoarvolla ja 120 miljardin euron kerrannaisvaikutuksilla on luotu yli kolme miljoonaa työpaikkaa. Biotalouden kautta vaikutus vain kasvaa: EU:n biotaloudessa työllistyy yli 22 miljoonaa työntekijää eli yhdeksän prosenttia Euroopan työllisistä. EU:n alueella on viisi prosenttia maailman metsistä. EU28:n maa-alasta on metsää 38 %, yhteensä 159 miljoonaa hehtaaria. Yksityismetsiä on 60 % ja niiden keskimääräinen pinta-ala vaihtelee jäsenmaittain 0,7 hehtaarista 130 hehtaariin.

EU:n ja jäsenmaiden metsäpolitiikka on pirstoutunutta. Sitä ohjataan kansallisista lähtökohdista ja myös toisten EU-politiikkojen näkökulmista. Voimassa oleva EU:n yhteinen metsästrategia on vuodelta 1998 ja auttamattomasti vanhentunut. Yksimielisyys uuden metsästrategian tarpeellisuudesta on olemassa. Useat tahot ovat antaneet panoksensa uuden strategian valmisteluun ja komission yksiköiden viralliset neuvottelut on saatu päätökseen alkuvuodesta. Komissio on silti jättänyt esityksen antamatta parlamentille ja neuvostolle.

Mikä todellisuudessa on metsän asema – ja mikä on siis myös biotalouden asema – EU:ssa, kun siltä puuttuu ajantasainen, kokoava ja tulevaisuusorientoitunut metsästrategia?

Miksi ja minne komission valmistelema uusi yhteinen metsästrategia on kadonnut?

Mikä on EU:n suhde vihreään talouteen ja globaaleihin ongelmiin, kun aivan keskeinen luonnonvara, metsät, on vailla uutta yhteistä kestävän metsänhoidon määrittelevää asiakirjaa?

Dacian Cioloşin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(30. syyskuuta 2013)

Euroopan komissio hyväksyi tiedonannon ”Uusi EU:n metsästrategia: metsien ja metsäalan puolesta” 20. syyskuuta 2013 ([1]). Tiedonannossa käsitellään keskeisiä haasteita, joita metsät ja metsäala kohtaavat EU:ssa nykyisin ja seuraavien kymmenen vuoden aikana, ja tavoitteena on varmistaa, että kaikki asiaan liittyvät EU:n toimintalinjat otetaan täysin huomioon metsäalaa koskevissa EU:n toimintalinjoissa ja aloitteissa. EU:n uudessa metsästrategiassa käsitellään eräässä jaksossa erityisesti (muun muassa) vihreää taloutta.

([1]) KOM(2013)0659 lopullinen.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009918/13
to the Commission
Tarja Cronberg (Verts/ALE)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: The EU's common forestry strategy

In 2050, the world population is expected to be approaching nine billion. Although population growth is not centred on Europe, even there it is necessary to plan carefully how to use the dwindling natural resources. The new economy needs to be sustainable. Competitiveness and prosperity can be increased only with the aid of renewable natural resources. The contribution to be made by forests is indisputable. Forestry provides employment, commercial products and non-commercial ecosystem services. There is also an enormous potential for innovation in forests: they are a source of solutions, *inter alia*, to the problem of climate change and shortages of water and food.

The forestry industry plays a substantial role in the EU: with the aid of EUR 350 billion in production value and EUR 120 billion in multiplier effects, more than three million jobs have been created. Through the bioeconomy, its influence is only growing: more than 22 million people are working in the EU's bioeconomy, thus accounting for 9% of employment in the EU. The EU has 5% of the world's forests. Of the EU-28's territory, 38% consists of forests — a total of 159 million hectares. 60% are privately owned, and their average area ranges from 0.7 hectares to 130 hectares, depending on the Member State.

In the EU and the Member States, forestry policy is fragmented. It is based on national considerations, and also on considerations derived from other EU policies. The EU common forestry strategy which is in force dates from 1998 and is hopelessly outdated. It is unanimously agreed that that a new forestry strategy is needed. Various parties have contributed to the preparation of a new strategy, and official negotiations by the Commission were completed at the beginning of the year. Yet the Commission has not submitted a proposal to Parliament and the Council.

What in reality is the position of forests — and therefore also of the bioeconomy — in the EU, given the lack of an up-to-date, comprehensive and future-oriented strategy for forests?

Why has the new common forestry strategy drafted by the Commission disappeared, and what has become of it?

What is the EU's relationship to the green economy and to global problems, bearing in mind that a vital natural resource — forests — lacks a new common document providing for sustainable forestry?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(30 September 2013)

The communication on a New EU Forest Strategy: for forests and the forest-based sector was adopted by the European Commission on 20 September 2013 ([1]). It aims at addressing the key challenges that EU forests and the forest-based sector are facing and will face in the next decade and at ensuring that all relevant EU policies be fully integrated into EU-level forest-related policies and initiatives. One section of the new EU forest Strategy specifically addresses (*inter alia*) the green economy.

([1]) COM(2013) 659 final.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009919/13
a la Comisión
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(5 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: El legado religioso-cultural de Europa

Según informaciones del Gobierno andorrano, la Unión Europea no ha permitido que las monedas de 10, 20 y 50 céntimos de los futuros euros andorranos, que entrarán en circulación a partir del 1 de enero de 2014, muestren la imagen del Pantocrátor de Sant Martí de la Cortinada, aduciendo que no quiere que se usen imágenes religiosas en el euro.

Fuentes gubernamentales andorranas han pedido que se reconsidere el diseño para no romper el principio de neutralidad en materia de creencias religiosas. En otros países europeos, como es el caso de Eslovaquia o España, se utilizan símbolos religiosos en sus monedas, como la doble cruz o los santos patrones Cirilo y Metodio en el caso eslovaco o la catedral de Burgos y de Santiago de Compostela, así como la mezquita de Córdoba, en el caso español, haciendo referencia a la historia de su país o al propio legado europeo.

A la luz de lo expuesto:

Me gustaría apuntar que el Pantocrátor es considerado un icono del arte románico del país de los Pirineos. Por este motivo, me gustaría conocer con mayor detalle el razonamiento que ha llevado a la Comisión a no permitir que los símbolos culturales e históricos de un país europeo puedan ser representados en sus monedas.

¿No considera la Comisión que esta voluntad de laicizar Europa no hace sino ignorar las raíces religioso-culturales que han hecho Europa tal y como la concebimos hoy en día en su plena diversidad y riqueza?

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

De conformidad con los Tratados, la Unión Europea y sus instituciones contribuyen al florecimiento de las culturas de los Estados miembros, en el respeto de su diversidad nacional y regional. La importancia del arte románico en la historia y sociedad andorrana es indiscutible.

Los Estados miembros y los terceros países que han firmado un convenio monetario con la UE, como Andorra, deben tener en cuenta al preparar un diseño para una moneda en euro que ya no no se trata de un asunto meramente nacional. Una moneda en euro circula en todos los Estados miembros de la zona del euro y en los países que han firmado un convenio monetario con la UE. Estos Estados miembros tienen diferentes tradiciones e historia.

Las dudas de la Comisión sobre el primer diseño para las futuras monedas andorranas de 10, 20 y 50 céntimos de euro no se referían a la imagen de la iglesia románica de Sant Martí de la Cortinada, la cual figura de hecho en el diseño definitivo y aprobado de la moneda en euro andorrana, sino al nimbo de San Bricio, ya que ese nimbo es, como tal, un signo de fe religiosa. En cambio, las imágenes de catedrales, por ejemplo, la de Santiago de Compostela en el caso de España, las utilizan frecuentemente los Estados miembros de la zona del euro como motivos de las monedas en euros, porque representan monumentos históricos y culturales. La doble cruz eslovaca ([1]) y la cruz de Malta ([2]) son símbolos nacionales.

Las personas de diversas creencias religiosas pueden considerar inconveniente que se les obligue a aceptar o usar una moneda ([3]) con claros elementos religiosos, los cuales también son problemáticos en los países en los que el carácter laico del Estado es un componente fundamental del Derecho público nacional, a veces hasta consagrado en su constitución. Por consiguiente, la Comisión aconsejó a Andorra evitar los motivos que puedan suscitar reacciones negativas entre los ciudadanos de otros Estados miembros cuya moneda es el euro.

([1]) Como figura en las monedas normales de 1 y 2 euros de Eslovaquia.
([2]) Como figura en las monedas normales de 1 y 2 euros de Malta.
([3]) Se trata de la propia definición de su curso legal.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009919/13
to the Commission
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: The link between religion and culture in Europe

According to information from the Andorran Government, the European Union has forbidden the future Andorran 10, 20 and 50 euro cent coins, which will enter into circulation from 1 January 2014, from bearing the image of the Christ Pantocrator of the Sant Martí de la Cortinada church, on the grounds that it does not want religious imagery to be used on the euro.

Andorran Government sources have asked for the coin to be redesigned so as not to breach the principle of neutrality with regard to religious beliefs. Other EU countries, like Slovakia or Spain, use religious symbols on their coins, such as the double cross or the patron saints Cyril and Methodius in the case of Slovakia, or the cathedrals of Burgos and Santiago de Compostela, as well as the Mosque-Cathedral of Cordoba, in the case of Spain, referring to the country's history or to its European legacy.

I would like to point out that the Christ Pantocrator is considered an icon of Andorran Romanesque art. For that reason, I would like to know more about the reasoning that led the Commission not to allow a European country's cultural and historic symbols to appear on its coins.

Does the Commission not think that this desire to secularise Europe only disregards the religious and cultural roots that have made Europe as we know it today, a place of diversity and richness?

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

In accordance with the Treaties, the EU and its institutions contribute to the flowering of the cultures of the MS, while respecting their national and regional diversity. The importance of the Roman art for the Andorran history and society is uncontested.

Member States and third countries having signed a monetary agreement with the EU, such as Andorra, have to take into account when preparing a design for a euro coin that this coin is no longer a mere national matter. A euro coin circulates in all euro area MS and in countries that have signed a monetary agreement with the EU. These States all have different traditions and backgrounds.

The Commission's concerns about the first design for the future Andorran 10, 20 and 50 euro cent coins regarded not the image of the Romanesque church of Sant Martí de la Cortinada — which is actually presented on the final and approved Andorran euro coin design — but the halo of St. Brice, given that the halo as such is sign of religious belief. In contrast, images of cathedrals, for example the one of Santiago de Compostela in the case of Spain, are widely accepted as designs of euro coins among the euro area MS as they represent historical and cultural monuments. The Slovak double cross ([1]) and the Maltese cross ([2]) are national symbols.

Persons of different religious belief may find it inappropriate to be forced to accept or use a coin ([3]) with clear religious elements, while the latter are also problematic in countries where secularism is a fundamental building block of national public law, sometimes even of constitutional nature. Therefore, the Commission advised Andorra to avoid designs which are likely to create adverse reactions among citizens in other States whose currency is the euro.

([1]) as pictured on the 1 and 2 Slovak regular euro coins.
([2]) as pictured on the 1 and 2 Maltese regular euro coins.
([3]) the very definition of their legal tender.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009920/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(5 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — La situación del pueblo uigur

El pasado 20 de agosto, 22 personas de etnia uigur y un policía de etnia han-la mayoritaria en China-murieron en un enfrentamiento en una zona desértica de la provincia de Xinjiang, y cuatro personas más fueron detenidas acusadas de supuesto terrorismo. Los 22 muertos fueron enterrados de manera inmediata sin que sus familiares fueran informados.

Este nuevo tiroteo se suma a la ola de violencia que ha azotado a la región de Xinjiang en los últimos meses, dando lugar a decenas de muertes y detenciones masivas. Por citar solo un ejemplo, a principios del mes de agosto, la policía abrió fuego contra un grupo de uigures que protestaban en contra de la restricción de rezar en la ciudad de Akyol, matando a tres personas e hiriendo a más de cincuenta, días antes de la fiesta que marca el final del mes sagrado del Islam.

A la luz de estos acontecimientos:

¿Está la Vice-Presidenta/Alta Representante al corriente de los sucesos recientes en contra la población uigur? ¿Qué opinión le merece al respecto?

¿Tiene la Sra. Vice-presidenta/Alta Representante previsto discutir próximamente la discriminación étnica que sufre la minoría uigur, así como el futuro del Turkestán Oriental, con las autoridades chinas?

En 2009, el 30 de agosto fue declarado por la Resolución 65/209 de la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas como el Día Internacional de las Víctimas de Desapariciones Forzadas. La adopción de esta resolución coincidió con la entrada en vigor de la Convención Internacional para la Protección de Todas las Personas contra las Desapariciones Forzadas, consagrando en el derecho internacional el marco legal que tiene por objeto prevenir este delito. A pesar de que la República Popular China no ha ratificado dicha Convención, sí que es signataria del Pacto Internacional de Derechos Civiles y Políticos, que contiene varias de sus disposiciones. El Congreso Mundial Uigur ha documentado más de 30 casos de uigures que han sido víctimas de desapariciones forzadas ¿Cuál es la postura de la Vice-presidenta/Alta Representante con respecto a la situación aquí descrita?

Respuesta de la alta representante y vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(12 de noviembre de 2013)

La UE plantea sistemáticamente la cuestión de los derechos humanos de las personas pertenecientes a minorías en China, incluidos los uigures, ante el Consejo de Derechos Humanos y la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas. Más recientemente, durante el vigésimo cuarto periodo de sesiones del Consejo de Derechos Humanos, en la declaración emitida con ocasión del debate sobre los derechos humanos que requieren la atención del Consejo, la UE manifestó su preocupación acerca de los «actuales denuncias de violaciones de los derechos humanos en China, en particular el uso de la fuerza contra manifestantes pacíficos, especialmente en zonas de población tibetana y en Xinjiang» e instó a China a «respetar plenamente los derechos a la libertad de expresión, de reunión y de asociación y los derechos de las personas pertenecientes a minorías».

El asunto se ha planteado recientemente con ocasión del diálogo UE-China sobre derechos humanos, que tuvo lugar en Guiyang (provincia de Guizhou) el 25 de junio, y durante la visita del Representante Especial de la UE para los derechos humanos, Stavros Lambrinidis, a China en septiembre, en la cual también se mantuvieron conversaciones con la Administración del Estado para Asuntos Religiosos. Además, en ambas ocasiones, la UE planteó la cuestión de la ratificación por parte de China del Pacto Internacional de Derechos Civiles y Políticos (PIDCP), firmado en 1998, sobre todo con vistas al examen periódico universal, ya que la pronta ratificación de este documento fue una de las recomendaciones aceptadas por China en 2009. El próximo examen periódico universal, previsto para el 22 de octubre, abordará la cuestión del seguimiento.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009920/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Situation of the Uyghur people

On 20 August 2013, 22 Uyghurs and a policeman of Han Chinese ethnicity — the majority ethnic group in China — were killed in a clash in a desert area of Xinjiang province, and a further four people were arrested on terrorism charges. The 22 victims were buried immediately without their families being informed.

This skirmish is the latest in a wave of violence that has swept through the Xinjiang region in recent months, leaving dozens dead and leading to mass arrests. To give just one example, in early August the police opened fire on a group of Uyghurs who were protesting against the restriction on prayer in the town of Akyol, killing three people and wounding another 50, just days before the celebration marking the end of the Islamic holy month.

Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the recent attacks on the Uyghur people? What does she think about them?

Does the Vice-President/High Representative plan to discuss ethnic discrimination against the Uyghur minority, as well as the future of East Turkestan, with the Chinese authorities soon?

In 2009, the General Assembly of the United Nations, by Resolution 65/209, declared 30 August to be International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances. The adoption of that resolution coincided with the entry into force of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, enshrining in international law the legal framework for preventing such crimes. Although the People's Republic of China has not ratified that Convention, it is a signatory to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which contains several of the Convention's provisions. The World Uyghur Congress has documented over 30 cases involving Uyghurs who have been victims of enforced disappearances. What is the Vice-President/High Representative's position with regard to the above situation?

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

The EU systematically raises the human rights of persons belonging to minorities in China, including the Uighurs, in the Human Rights council and the UN General Assembly. Most recently, during the 24th session of the Human Rights Council, in the statement delivered during the debate on Human Rights that require the Council's attention, the EU expressed its 'concerns about ongoing reports of human rights violations in China, particularly the use of force against peaceful protesters, especially in Tibetan-inhabited areas and Xinjiang' and urged China 'fully to respect the rights to freedom of expression, assembly and association, and rights of persons belonging to minorities.'

The issue was most recently raised at the EU-China Human Rights Dialogue, which took place in Guiyang (Guizhou Province) on 25 June, and during the visit of EU Special Representative for Human Rights, Mr Stavros Lambrinidis, to China in September where discussions were also held with the State Administration for Religious Affairs. Furthermore, on both occasions, the EU raised the question of the ratification by China of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), signed in 1998, especially in view of the Universal Periodic Review, as early ratification was one of the recommendations accepted by China in 2009. The next UPR, on 22 October, will address the issue of follow-up.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009921/13
a la Comisión
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D), Alejandro Cercas (S&D), Ricardo Cortés Lastra (S&D), Luis Yáñez-Barnuevo García (S&D), Carmen Romero López (S&D), Antonio Masip Hidalgo (S&D) y María Muñiz De Urquiza (S&D)
(5 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Prestaciones sociales y obligaciones fiscales de emigrantes en la EU

Miles de ciudadanos europeos que han sido emigrantes en otros Estados miembros y perciben pensiones de jubilación u otras prestaciones sociales de carácter económico desde estos países se ven en dificultades a su retorno para conocer su situación fiscal y cumplir con sus obligaciones tributarias en sus países de residencia a consecuencia de la ausencia de medidas a escala europea. Se debe asegurar:

1. Que disponen gratuitamente y en tiempo hábil de un certificado anual justificativo al menos de la cuantía de las percepciones, retenciones e impuestos hechos efectivos en el país de origen.

2. Que los certificados responden a un estándar o existen medidas para asegurar su efectividad en cualquier Estado miembro sin necesidad de traducción o sin que esta corra a cargo de los perceptores de la prestación.

3. Que el tratamiento fiscal de las prestaciones sociales no discrimina por razón del número o nacionalidad de los pagadores en el ámbito de la Unión Europea.

4. Que existe un sistema para que los beneficios, incluyendo las exenciones fiscales, reconocidos a las rentas de los trabajadores en los países de acogida, incluidos los relacionados con las prestaciones de incapacidad o invalidez y jubilación, no se vean distorsionados en el caso de los emigrantes a causa de su retorno a su país de origen o residencia en otro Estado miembro.

5. Que existe un marco europeo para evitar la doble imposición a los emigrantes retornados y para posibilitar el establecimiento y, en su caso, la modificación de Convenios entre Estados de forma consistente.

En la presente situación, determinadas prácticas y requerimientos fiscales en algunos Estados miembros son percibidos por los emigrantes retornados como actos de hostigamiento injusto, contrarios a los principios comunitarios y a las libertades fundamentales europeas.

¿Comparte la Comisión estos problemas? ¿Va a adoptar alguna iniciativa?

Respuesta del Sr. Šemeta en nombre de la Comisión
(29 de octubre de 2013)

La fiscalidad directa compete principalmente a los Estados miembros de la UE, por lo que la Comisión se limita a actuar dentro de los límites de las competencias que los Estados miembros le atribuyen. Por esta razón, está facultada para formular propuestas de legislación de la UE dirigidas a mejorar el funcionamiento del mercado interior, pero esas propuestas solo podrán entrar en vigor si los Estados miembros de la UE las aprueban por unanimidad. A falta de legislación vigente de la UE en la materia, los Estados miembros tienen libertad para diseñar sus regímenes y procedimientos de imposición directa como prefieran, siempre que sus normas no sean discriminatorias o contrarias a los Tratados. No existe ninguna disposición en los Tratados de la UE relativa a los tratados fiscales y la doble imposición no se considera contraria al Derecho de la UE. A este respecto, la Comisión está tomando las medidas siguientes.

1. y 2. La Comisión ha determinado los ámbitos en los que las administraciones tributarias de los Estados miembros podrían facilitar la vida de los trabajadores transfronterizos ([1]). Entre las propuestas figuran la creación de ventanillas únicas centrales en que los trabajadores móviles podrían recibir todos los certificados necesarios de las autoridades fiscales de sus países, la puesta a disposición de formularios en varios idiomas y la adopción de normas especiales aplicables a los trabajadores móviles y fronterizos. La Comisión presentará en 2014 un informe sobre las mejores prácticas en la gestión de los problemas fiscales transfronterizos.

([1]) Comunicación Eliminar las barreras fiscales transfronterizas en beneficio de los ciudadanos de la UE, COM(2010) 769.

3. y 4. La Comisión está examinando las leyes fiscales de los Estados miembros para detectar indicios de medidas discriminatorias en los ámbitos concretos de las pensiones, las personas móviles y los trabajadores fronterizos. Además, incoará procedimientos de infracción contra los Estados miembros que incurran en este tipo de discriminación.

5. La Comisión está estudiando posibles soluciones a los problemas de doble imposición no resueltos en la actualidad mediante convenios fiscales bilaterales.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009921/13
to the Commission
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D), Alejandro Cercas (S&D), Ricardo Cortés Lastra (S&D), Luis Yáñez Barnuevo García (S&D), Carmen Romero López (S&D), Antonio Masip Hidalgo (S&D) and María Muñiz De Urquiza (S&D)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: Social welfare benefits and tax obligations of emigrants in the EU

Thousands of EU citizens who have emigrated to other Member States and receive retirement pensions or other financial benefits from those countries have difficulty, when they return home, finding out what their tax status is and complying with their tax obligations in their countries of residence, as a result of there being no EU-level measures in place. It should be ensured that:

1. They can obtain, free of charge and in good time, an annual certificate showing at least the amount of payments, deductions and taxes applicable in the country of origin.

2. The certificates conform to a standard or there are measures in place to ensure that the certificates are valid in any Member State without needing to be translated or without the cost of such translation being borne by benefit recipients.

3. The tax treatment of social welfare benefits does not discriminate on the basis of the number or nationality of agencies paying them within the European Union.

4. A system is in place so that benefits, including tax exemptions, applied to the income of workers in host countries, including those relating to disability or invalidity and retirement benefit, are not distorted for emigrants due to them returning to their country of origin or living in another Member State.

5. There is a European framework to avoid double taxation of returning emigrants and to make it possible to create and, where appropriate, consistently amend agreements between Member States.

In the current situation, certain tax practices and requirements in some Member States are felt by returning emigrants to amount to unfair harassment, at odds with the principles of the EU and fundamental European freedoms.

Does the Commission agree that these are problems? Will it take any action?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(29 October 2013)

Direct taxation mainly falls under the competence of the EU Member States and the Commission is therefore confined to act within the boundaries of the competences that the Member States confer to it. Hence it has the power to make proposals for EU legislation to improve the functioning of the internal market but the proposals will only become law if EU Member States unanimously agree to them. In the absence of existing EU legislation, Member States are free to design their direct tax systems and procedures as they choose as long as their rules are not discriminatory or otherwise contrary to the Treaties. There is no provision in the EU Treaties concerning tax treaties and double taxation is not considered to be contrary to EC law. Within this framework, the Commission is taking the following actions:

1 and 2. The Commission has identified areas where Member States' tax administrations could make life easier for cross-border workers ([1]). Suggestions included setting up central one-stop-shops where mobile workers could receive all necessary certificates for their home countries' tax authorities; making forms available in several languages; and adopting special rules for frontier and mobile workers. The Commission will present a report on best practices in dealing with cross-border tax issues in 2014.

3 and 4. The Commission is examining Member States' tax laws for evidence of discriminatory measures in the specific areas of pensions, mobile persons and cross-border workers and will launch infringement procedures against any Member States practising such discrimination.

5. The Commission is currently examining possible solutions to double taxation problems that are not currently resolved by bilateral tax treaties.

([1]) Communication 'Removing cross-border tax obstacles for EU citizens' — COM(2010) 769.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009922/13
an die Kommission
Burkhard Balz (PPE) und Peter Simon (S&D)
(5. September 2013)

Betrifft: SEPA Online-Lastschriftmandat

Ab Februar 2014 muss das SEPA-Verfahren für alle Überweisungen und Lastschriften in Euro angewendet werden. In vielen Mitgliedstaaten werden Lastschriften häufig für Internetzahlungen genutzt. Das bedeutet auch, dass die weitere Verfügbarkeit von Online-Lastschriften wichtig für einen reibungslosen Übergang zum SEPA-Verfahren ab Februar 2014 ist.

Der European Payment Council (EPC) war damit beauftragt, die zugehörigen Zahlungssysteme und Rahmenbedingungen zu entwickeln. Das vom EPC herausgebrachte SEPA Direct Debit (SDD) Rulebook legt verpflichtend fest, wie Zahlungsvorgänge durchgeführt werden sollen. Das Rulebook lässt momentan „physically signed" — also unterschriebene, in Papierform vorliegende — Ermächtigungen als die einzig mögliche Option zu, um Lastschriften durchzuführen. Ein digitales Mandat ist bisher nicht vorgesehen.

1. Wie schätzt die Kommission die Verbraucherfreundlichkeit des SEPA-Verfahrens in Bezug auf Online-Lastschriftmandate ein? Besteht die Gefahr, dass Verbraucher dies als hinderlich und nicht benutzerfreundlich empfinden könnten?

2. Wie bewertet die Kommission die rechtlichen Unsicherheiten für Onlinehändler und Banken in Bezug auf die weitere Verfügbarkeit von Online-Lastschriften?

3. Welche Auswirkungen wird SEPA auf die europäische Digitalwirtschaft haben, insbesondere vor dem Hintergrund, dass Lastschriften in vielen Mitgliedstaaten bevorzugt für Internetzahlungen genutzt werden?

4. Besteht die Gefahr, dass Onlinegeschäfte, die heute auf nicht papierhafte, digitale Mandate für Lastschriften vertrauen, eine Unterbrechung ihrer Zahlungsströme befürchten müssen und sogar eine Insolvenz riskieren, da diese Mandate für Lastschriften nicht mehr von Banken akzeptiert werden?

5. Wie bewertet die Kommission die Entwicklung von Alternativen zu unterschriebenen, in Papierform vorliegenden Ermächtigungen?

6. Wird das Problem bei Online-Lastschriften zwischen der Kommission und dem EPC diskutiert? Gibt es vonseiten der Kommission und des EPC Lösungsvorschläge?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(25. Oktober 2013)

Nach Auffassung der Kommission müssen SEPA-Zahlungsdienste zuverlässig sowie nutzer- und verbraucherfreundlich sein. Eine digitale Mandatserteilung für SEPA-Lastschriften wird in der SEPA-Verordnung nicht verlangt. Der Europäische Zahlungsverkehrsausschuss (EPC) spricht in seinem Regelwerk für SEPA-Lastschriften von eMandaten (Anhang VII). Die Umstellung auf SEPA-Lastschriftverfahren wird aber auch ohne eine solche eMandat-Lösung möglich sein. In Ermangelung eines (vom EPC geplanten, aber noch nicht entwickelten) EPC-„eMandats", das auf breiter Ebene verfügbar wäre, bleiben derzeit gängige Formen der Mandatserteilung und Unterzeichnungsmethoden auch nach dem 1. Februar 2014 gültig. Da die Banken Vorbehalte hinsichtlich der Verarbeitung von SEPA-Lastschriften haben könnten, die mittels eines der derzeitigen, nicht harmonisierten elektronischen Mandate in Auftrag gegeben werden, hat die Kommission den EPC dazu ermutigt, seinen Mitgliedern die klare Botschaft zu übermitteln, dass die derzeit verwendeten elektronischen Mandate für SEPA-Lastschriften nach dem 1. Februar 2014 weiterhin genutzt werden können. Dies sollte Zweifel und Unsicherheiten bei Verbrauchern und Händlern ausräumen.

Die Kommission sieht die Ausarbeitung einer harmonisierten Lösung für ein europäisches eMandat für SEPA-Lastschriften als Schritt in die richtige Richtung, der der Nutzung von SEPA-Lastschriften im elektronischen Handel — als Alternative zu Kreditkarten — förderlich wäre.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009922/13
to the Commission
Burkhard Balz (PPE) and Peter Simon (S&D)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: SEPA online direct debit mandate

As of February 2014, the SEPA process must be applied for all credit transfers and direct debits in euros. In many Member States, direct debits are frequently used for Internet payments. This also means that the continued availability of online direct debits is important for a smooth transition to the SEPA process from February 2014.

The European Payment Council (EPC) was tasked with developing the associated payment systems and framework conditions. The SEPA Direct Debit (SDD) Rulebook published by the EPC lays down mandatory requirements for how payment transactions are to be carried out. The Rulebook currently permits 'physically signed' authorisations — in other words signed, paper-based authorisations — as the only possible option for executing direct debits. No digital mandate has as yet been envisaged.

1. How consumer-friendly does the Commission believe the SEPA process to be with regard to online direct debit mandates? Is there a risk that consumers could view this as cumbersome and not user-friendly?

2. What is the Commission's assessment of the legal uncertainty for online traders and banks with regard to the continued availability of online direct debits?

3. What effects will SEPA have on the European digital economy, in particular in view of the fact that direct debits are the preferred method for Internet payments in many Member States?

4. Is there a danger that online shops which currently rely on non-paper-based digital mandates for direct debits are likely to suffer an interruption to their cash flow and even risk insolvency, as these direct debit mandates will no longer be accepted by banks?

5. What is the Commission's assessment of the development of alternatives to signed, paper-based authorisations?

6. Is the problem associated with online direct debits being discussed by the Commission and the EPC? Have the Commission and the EPC put forward any proposals to resolve this problem?

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

The Commission considers that SEPA-complying payment services must be reliable and user-friendly for consumers. An e-mandate for SEPA Direct Debits (SDDs) is not required by the SEPA Regulation. In its Rulebook on SDDs, the European Payments Council (EPC) refers to e-mandates (Annex VII). However, the migration to SDDs will be possible even without such an SDD e-mandate solution. In the absence of a widely available EPC 'e-mandate' (as envisaged by the EPC but not yet developed) mandate forms and methods of signature which are currently available will remain a valid option also after 1 February 2014. Since banks might be reluctant to process SDD payments based on the current non-harmonised electronic mandate solutions, the Commission has encouraged the EPC to send a clear message to its members, clarifying that currently used e-mandate solutions for collecting SDD mandates can continue to be used also after 1 February 2014. This should ensure clarity and reassurance to consumers and merchants.

The Commission considers that the development of a harmonised solution for a European e-mandate for SDDs would be a step in the right direction in order to improve the usage of SDDs in the domain of e-commerce — as an alternative to credit cards.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-009923/13
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(5 september 2013)

Betreft: Grillige interpretatie van het Verdrag door de Europese Centrale Bank

Op 5 september 2013 heeft de Nederlandse krant *De Telegraaf* een artikel ([1]) gepubliceerd waarin wordt gesteld dat de centrale bank van Frankrijk en die van Portugal de terugbetaling van de Griekse staatsobligaties die zij bezitten en die binnenkort aflopen, echt verwachten, terwijl de voorzitter van de Europese Centrale Bank de voorbije maanden druk uitoefende op zijn collega's om „coulant" te zijn.

Kan de Commissie in het licht hiervan antwoorden op de volgende vragen:

1. Is de Commissie het ermee eens dat het mogelijke uitstel van de terugbetaling van de Griekse staatsobligaties die de centrale bank van Frankrijk en van Portugal bezitten, in feite hetzelfde gevolg zou hebben als rechtstreekse monetaire financiering, die door het Verdrag expliciet verboden is onder de zogenaamde „no bailout clause" (artikel 125 van het Verdrag van Lissabon)?

2. Zo ja, welke acties en/of initiatieven zal de Commissie, als hoedster van de Verdragen, nemen?

3. Zo nee, kan de Commissie uiteenzetten waarom, naar haar mening, dergelijk uitstel niet hetzelfde gevolg zou hebben als rechtstreekse monetaire financiering?

4. Is de Commissie van mening dat het gedrag van de voorzitter van de ECB strookt met de geest van het Protocol betreffende de statuten van het Europees stelsel van Centrale Banken en van de Europese Centrale Bank?

Antwoord van de heer Rehn namens de Commissie
(22 oktober 2013)

De Commissie spreekt zich niet uit over de mogelijke besluiten die het Eurosystem neemt in verband met het beheer van de obligaties die door het systeem worden aangehouden. Dit beheer is een onderdeel van het monetair beleid en de onafhankelijkheid van de ECB en de ncb's bij het voeren van dit beleid is beschermd door artikel 130 (VWEU).

([1]) http://www.telegraaf.nl/dft/nieuws_dft/21865269/__Centrale_bankiers_ruzien_over_Grieken__.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009923/13
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: Fickle interpretation of the Treaty by European Central Bank

On 5 September 2013, the Dutch newspaper *De Telegraaf* published an article ([1]) which stated that although the central banks of France and Portugal are genuinely expecting the repayment of Greek bonds which they hold and which are set to expire in the very next future, the President of the European Central Bank (ECB) has been putting pressure on his colleagues in the past few months by asking them to be 'more lenient'.

In the light of the above:

1. Does the Commission agree that the possible postponement of the repayment of Greek bonds held by the central banks of France and Portugal would in fact have the same effect as direct monetary financing, which is explicitly forbidden under the Treaty by the so-called 'no bailout' clause (Article 125 of the Treaty of Lisbon)?

2. If so, what actions and/or initiatives does the Commission intend to undertake, it being the guardian of the Treaty?

3. If not, can the Commission explain why, in its view, such a postponement would not have the same effect as direct monetary financing?

4. Does the Commission think that the President of the ECB's behaviour is in line with the spirit of the Protocol on the Statute of the European System of Central Banks and of the European Central Bank?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(22 October 2013)

The Commission does not comment on the possible decisions of the Eurosytem related to the management of the bonds it holds. This management is part of monetary policy, for the implementation of which the independence of the ECB and NCBs is protected by Article 130 (TFEU).

([1]) http://www.telegraaf.nl/dft/nieuws_dft/21865269/__Centrale_bankiers_ruzien_over_Grieken__.html

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-009924/13
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(5 september 2013)

Betreft: De Europese Commissie, beschermster van de mensenrechten

In de krant *The Telegraph* stond te lezen ([1]) dat de ondervoorzitter van de Commissie, Viviane Reding, „een plan heeft uitgewerkt om de EU te laten uitgroeien tot de hoogste juridische instantie, die onafhankelijke rechtbanken en de grondrechten beschermt", en de Commissie aan de zijde van de invloedrijke Europese commissaris voor justitie een rol als quasi-juridische autoriteit wil toekennen.

1. Kan de Commissie de details van mevrouw Redings voorstel toelichten?

2. Kan de Commissie bevestigen dat dit initiatief een wijziging van de Verdragen zou vereisen en een verregaande impact zou hebben op de betrekkingen tussen de EU en de lidstaten, in het nadeel van deze laatsten?

3. Vindt de Commissie ook niet dat een dergelijk initiatief moet worden voorafgegaan door een referendum, om ervoor te zorgen dat de burgers van de EU zich bewust zijn van de overheveling van macht en bevoegdheden naar de Commissie en van het feit dat hun rechten en vrijheden als gevolg hiervan zouden worden gegarandeerd door de EU-administratie?

Antwoord van mevrouw Reding namens de Commissie
(17 oktober 2013)

In zijn beleidsverklaring van september 2013 herinnerde voorzitter Barroso eraan dat het vermogen van de Unie om bedreigingen voor de rechtsstaat binnen de EU aan te pakken moet worden versterkt door meer mogelijkheden te creëren dan de keuze tussen politieke overreding en gerichte inbreukprocedures enerzijds, en de „nucleaire optie" van artikel 7 van het Verdrag, dat wil zeggen de schorsing van bepaalde rechten van een lidstaat anderzijds.

De ervaring heeft het nut van de rol van de Commissie als een onafhankelijke en objectieve scheidsrechter bevestigd. Deze ervaring zou op basis van het beginsel van gelijkheid van de lidstaten aan de hand van een algemener kader moeten worden geconsolideerd, dat slechts geactiveerd wordt in situaties waarin van een ernstig, systemisch risico voor de rechtsstaat sprake is, en dat door vooraf bepaalde benchmarks op gang gebracht wordt.

De Commissie zal te gelegener tijd haar verdere beschouwingen over deze kwestie in een mededeling voorstellen.

([1]) http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/eu/10287411/Brussels-seeks-federalising-EU-powers-over-justice-and-human-rights.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009924/13
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: European Commission — saviour of human rights

The Telegraph newspaper has reported that the Vice-President of the Commission, Viviane Reding, 'has set out a plan for the EU to become the highest judicial authority safeguarding independent courts and fundamental rights' ([1]), with the Commission acting as a quasi-judicial authority alongside the powerful Commissioner for Justice.

1. Could the Commission specify the details of Ms Reding's proposal?

2. Can the Commission confirm that this initiative would require a Treaty change and a complete transformation of relationships between the EU and the Member States at the expense of the latter?

3. Does the Commission agree that any such initiative should be preceded by a referendum to ensure that EU citizens are aware of the shift in powers and competences to the Commission, which would result in the protection of their rights and freedoms by the EU administration?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(17 October 2013)

In his State of the Union address of September 2013, President Barroso recalled the need to strengthen the Union's capacity to address threats to the rule of law within the EU by making a bridge between political persuasion and targeted infringement procedures on the one hand, and the 'nuclear option' of Article 7 of the Treaty, namely suspension of a Member State's rights, on the other hand.

Experience has confirmed the usefulness of the Commission's role as an independent and objective referee. This experience should be consolidated through a more general framework, based on the principle of equality between Member States, activated only in situations where there is a serious, systemic risk to the rule of law and triggered through pre-defined benchmarks.

The Commission will in due time present its further reflections on this matter in a communication.

([1]) http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/eu/10287411/Brussels-seeks-federalising-EU-powers-over-justice-and-human-rights.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009925/13
to the Commission
Alyn Smith (Verts/ALE)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: Buyer's premium

The Commission may be aware of the buyer's premium; an increasingly common charge introduced by auction houses in addition to the seller's commission.

While vendors selling an item are justifiably charged by the auction house for the service provided, the auctioneer does not provide any service to the buyer which would support an additional charge on the hammer price. Consequently, the buyer's premium — kept by the auction house and not passed on to the vendor — could be described as a levy upon the sale.

Could the Commission confirm whether the widespread practice of charging both the seller and the buyer a fee on the same auction lot is deemed to be illegal under EC law?

Is the Commission planning to investigate practices among auction houses and address the issue of buyer's premiums as appropriate?

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

The Commission does not interfere with the freedom of companies to decide their business model and the applicable policy concerning prices and charges. Under EC law, nothing prevents an auction house from charging both the seller and the buyer a premium or fee; however, consumers should be properly informed in advance about the charges applicable to them. In this connection, Directive 2005/29/EC on Unfair Commercial Practices requires traders to adequately and timely inform consumers about the total price of a service, inclusive of taxes and other charges.

National competent authorities are best placed to investigate individual cases and make an appraisal of all relevant facts.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009926/13
à la Commission
François Alfonsi (Verts/ALE) et Michèle Rivasi (Verts/ALE)
(5 septembre 2013)

Objet: Lutte contre le dégazage en mer Méditerranée

Le lundi 2 septembre 2013, en fin d'après-midi, les côtes ouest de la Corse, comprenant la réserve de Scàndula, zone classée au patrimoine mondial de l'Unesco, ont été menacées par le dégazage d'un navire, à ce jour non identifié. Une nappe de pétrole de plus de 40 km de long aurait pu provoquer une catastrophe écologique. Par chance, la météo en a décidé autrement.

Néanmoins, il faut s'interroger sur les défaillances qui ont conduit à une telle situation. Chaque année, près de 1,5 million de tonnes d'hydrocarbures sont déversées en Méditerranée, l'équivalent de 20 marées noires.

Il est notoire que les ports de la Méditerranée ne disposent pas d'infrastructures homologuées suffisantes pour le dégazage légal des navires. L'Europe ne devrait-elle pas intervenir pour mettre fin à cette carence?

Des moyens satellitaires existent pour réagir rapidement et trouver les coupables en cas de pollution. Quelle est donc l'efficacité du système CleanSeaNet, mis en place en 2007 et visant à détecter la pollution maritime afin d'empêcher les comportements criminels de certains armateurs? Les autorités françaises ont-elles été alertées dans la demi-heure comme le prévoit ce programme? Le bateau incriminé a-t-il été identifié comme cela devrait être possible? La Commission juge-t-elle ce système de surveillance efficace ou envisage-t-elle de l'améliorer? Si oui, comment?

Au vu du faible respect des normes mises en place en matière de dégazage, que compte faire la Commission en matière de durcissement de la législation actuelle? Et que compte-t-elle faire pour, ensuite, contrôler sa mise en œuvre?

Réponse donnée par M. Kallas au nom de la Commission
(15 octobre 2013)

La directive 2000/59/CE ([1]) impose aux États membres de fournir aux navires des installations de réception portuaires adéquates pour les déchets qu'ils ne peuvent rejeter en mer. Tous les ports sont tenus de prévoir des installations et des services adéquats de réception portuaires.

CleanSeaNet est un service de surveillance des marées noires et de détection des navires par satellite un temps réel ou quasi réel. Il n'assure pas une surveillance continue et dépend des contraintes imposées par les orbites des satellites. Lorsqu'un satellite passe au-dessus d'une région à surveiller, l'image est traitée et les États côtiers sont avertis en moins de 30 minutes.

Grâce à CleanSeaNet, il est plus risqué pour les commandants de bord de déverser des déchets de façon illégale ou de ne pas notifier les rejets accidentels dont ils sont responsables. La preuve de son effet dissuasif est que le nombre de rejets détectés pour chaque zone de 1000x1000 km est tombé de 11 en 2008 à 4,5 en 2012.

Il est prévu d'améliorer encore CleanSeaNet, sous réserve des disponibilités budgétaires:

— nouvelles capacités d'observation afin d'accroître la couverture globale, dans le cadre du programme Copernicus ([2]) grâce au lancement de 2 missions satellites supplémentaires et à la fourniture d'informations sur les courants marins;

— amélioration de la capacité de traitement des images pour garantir une meilleure fiabilité de la détection.

([1]) Directive 2000/59/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 27 novembre 2000 sur les installations de réception portuaires pour les déchets d'exploitation des navires et les résidus de cargaison — Déclaration de la Commission, JO L 332 du 28.12.2000.
([2]) COM(2013) 312 final.

La directive 2005/35/CE ([3]) relative à la pollution causée par les navires, telle que modifiée par la directive 2009/123/CE ([4]), oblige les États membres à introduire des «sanctions effectives, proportionnées et dissuasives». La Commission procède actuellement à l'évaluation de cette législation afin de déterminer si des mesures supplémentaires sont nécessaires.

En outre, le fait que les marées noires soient considérées comme des rejets de déchets a des conséquences juridiques, notamment l'application de la directive 2008/98/CE ([5]) relative aux déchets.

([3]) JO L 255 du 30.9.2005.
([4]) JO L 280 du 27.10.2009.
([5]) JO L 312 du 22.11.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009926/13
to the Commission
François Alfonsi (Verts/ALE) and Michèle Rivasi (Verts/ALE)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: Combating the dumping of oil in the Mediterranean Sea

In the late afternoon of Monday 2 September 2013, the west coast of Corsica, including the Scandola reserve, a Unesco World Heritage Site, was put in danger by an as yet unidentified ship dumping oil. An oil slick over 40 km long could have caused an environmental disaster. As luck would have it, the weather averted such a disaster.

Nonetheless, questions need to be asked about the failings that led to this situation. Every year, nearly 1.5 million tonnes of hydrocarbons are dumped into the Mediterranean, which is the equivalent of 20 oil spills.

It is common knowledge that Mediterranean ports do not have enough approved infrastructure for ships to dump oil legally. Should the EU not take action to rectify this situation?

Rapid-response satellite systems are in place to trace those responsible for pollution. How effective, then, is the CleanSeaNet system, which was rolled out in 2007 with the aim of detecting marine pollution in order to prevent illegal dumping by certain shipowners? Were the French authorities notified within half an hour, as provided for by that system? Has the ship responsible been identified, as should be possible? Does the Commission think that this monitoring system is effective or does it plan to make it more effective? If so, how?

In view of the low level of compliance with rules on oil dumping, what does the Commission plan to do to strengthen current legislation? What does it plan to do subsequently to check such legislation is being implemented?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(15 October 2013)

Directive 2000/59/EC ([1]) requires Member States to provide adequate port reception facilities (PRF) to receive ship waste that may not be discharged into the sea. All ports are required to provide appropriate PRF infrastructure and services.

CleanSeanet is a near real time satellite based oil spill monitoring and vessel detection service. It does not provide continuous monitoring and depends on the constraints imposed by available satellite orbits. When a satellite passes over an area to monitor, the image is processed and coastal States are alerted in less than 30 minutes.

CleanSeaNet makes it more risky for ship masters to discharge illegally or not to report accidental spills they may have caused. Proof of its deterrent effect is that whilst in 2008 there were 11 detections for each area of 1000x1000 km this number decreased to 4.5 in 2012.

Further improvements to CleanSeaNet are planned, subject to budget availability:

— new observation capacities to increase the overall coverage via the Copernicus programme ([2]) through the launch of 2 additional satellite missions and providing information on sea currents.

— improving image processing capability to ensure better reliability of detection.

Directive 2005/35/EC ([3]) on ship-sourced pollution as amended by Directive 2009/123/EC ([4]) obliges Member States to introduce 'effective, proportionate and dissuasive sanctions'. The Commission is currently evaluating this legislation to determine whether further action is required.

In addition, the classification of oil spills as waste implies legal consequences, including the application of Directive 2008/98/EC ([5]) on waste.

([1]) Directive 2000/59/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 November 2000 on port reception facilities for ship-generated waste and cargo residues — Commission declaration, OJ L 332, 28.12.2000.
([2]) COM(2013) 312 final.
([3]) OJ L 255 of 30.9.2005.
([4]) OJ L 280 of 27.10.2009.
([5]) OJ L 312 of 22.11.2008.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-009927/13
aan de Commissie
Philip Claeys (NI)
(5 september 2013)

Betreft: Turkse premier zegt dat traangas in overeenstemming met het acquis communautaire is

De Turkse premier Erdogan haalde tijdens een Ombudsman-symposium op 3 september uit naar de Europese Unie, die volgens hem via desinformatie een „smear campaign" voert tegen de Turkse regering.

De heer Erdogan beweert dat de EU de publieke opinie misleidt over de situatie van de mensenrechten in zijn land, onder meer voor wat betreft het arresteren en veroordelen van journalisten. Tot tweemaal toe zei hij dat het gebruik van traangas tijdens de demonstraties in Gezi-park „in overeenstemming is met het acquis communautaire" en dat „traangas al bestaat in het acquis communautaire van de EU".

Wat is de reactie van de Commissie op deze uitspraken m.b.t. het acquis communautaire? De Commissie gaf geen specifiek antwoord op eerdere schriftelijke vragen over eerdere, gelijksoortige uitlatingen van de heer Erdogan (onder meer vraag E-007260/2013).

Ondanks het langdurige, buitensporige en extreme politiegeweld op Taksim en Gezi werd besloten om dit jaar nog nieuwe onderhandelingshoofdstukken te openen, zij het iets later dan voorzien. In plaats van daarvoor dankbaarheid te betonen, laat de Turkse premier zich gaan in anti-westerse en anti-EU-retoriek. Hoe interpreteert de Commissie deze in hevigheid en frequentie toenemende retoriek van de heer Erdogan en andere Turkse regeringsverantwoordelijken?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(23 oktober 2013)

De Commissie kan geen opmerkingen maken over elke verklaring die de pers aan leden van de Turkse regering toeschrijft.

Het Europees Hof voor de rechten van de mens lette in de zaak Abdullah Yaşa e.a. vs. Turkije op het feit dat de waarborgen voor het juiste gebruik van traangasgranaten moeten worden versterkt, teneinde het overlijdensrisico en letsels ten gevolge van het gebruik ervan te beperken. In juni heeft het ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken naar aanleiding van de betogingen in heel Turkije en beschuldigingen van buitensporig politiegeweld een circulaire doen uitgaan, waarin strenge regels voor het gebruik van traangas of pepperspray door de politie werden beschreven. Het wetgevende kader en de praktijk inzake de interventie voor rechtshandhavingsambtenaren moeten echter in overeenstemming met de Europese normen worden gebracht, teneinde te waarborgen dat in alle omstandigheden de mensenrechten, en met name het recht op vrijheid van vergadering, worden geëerbiedigd.

De Commissie is verheugd over het feit dat eerste minister Erdoğan bij de aankondiging op 30 september 2013 van een pakket van democratiseringsmaatregelen verwees naar de leidende rol van het EU-*acquis* in de hervormingen van Turkije.

De Commissie verstrekt in haar voortgangsverslag van 16 oktober 2013 een volledige evaluatie over de naleving door Turkije van de politieke criteria.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009927/13
to the Commission
Philip Claeys (NI)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: Turkish Prime Minister maintains that use of teargas is in line with the EU *acquis*

In a speech delivered during an Ombudsman Symposium on 3 September, Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan lashed out at the EU for what he described as a 'smear campaign' against the Turkish Government through misinformation.

He accused the EU of misleading the public regarding the human rights situation in Turkey, for example through allegations concerning the arrest and sentencing of journalists. On two occasions he indicated that the use of teargas to quell the protests in Gezi Park was in accordance with, or embodied in, basic EU tenets.

What view does the Commission take of these utterances, having failed to give specific replies to previous written questions prompted by similar statements issued by Mr Erdogan (for example, E-007260/2013)?

Notwithstanding the protracted, excessive and extremely violent police clampdown in Taksim and Gezi, it has been decided to open further negotiating chapters, albeit somewhat later than planned. Far from expressing any appreciation, the Turkish Prime Minister is now choosing to indulge in anti-western and anti-EU rhetoric. What view does the Commission take of such increasingly frequent and vituperative tirades by Mr Erdogan and other Turkish Government representatives?

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

The Commission is not in a position to comment on every statement attributed by the press to members of the Turkish Government.

The European Court of Human Rights in the case of Abdullah Yaşa and Others v. Turkey considered that the safeguards surrounding the proper use of tear-gas grenades need to be strengthened in order to minimise the risk of death and injury resulting from their use. In June, following the demonstrations across Turkey and accusations of excessive use of force by the police, the Ministry of the Interior issued a circular detailing stringent rules governing the use of teargas and pepper spray by the police. However, the legal framework and practice on the intervention of law enforcement officers should be brought in line with European standards so as to guarantee under all circumstances respect for human rights and, in particular, the right to freedom of assembly.

The Commission welcomes 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.

The Commission gives a full assessment on compliance by Turkey with the political criteria in its 2013 Progress Report, published on 16 October 2013.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-009928/13
aan de Commissie
Lucas Hartong (NI) en Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(5 september 2013)

Betreft: Vervolgvragen (3) subsidieverlening aan Egypte

Op 3 september 2013 heeft de heer Füle namens de Commissie antwoord gegeven op schriftelijke vraag E-007098/2013. Daarin schrijft hij: „De Commissie en de hoge vertegenwoordiger verwelkomen het toezicht van de Rekenkamer op de bijstandsprogramma's van de EU. […] De opmerkingen van de Rekenkamer en veel van haar aanbevelingen zijn door de Commissie en de hoge vertegenwoordiger aanvaard."

1. Indien de Commissie het toezicht van de Rekenkamer werkelijk verwelkomt en de opmerkingen/aanbevelingen van de Rekenkamer werkelijk aanvaardt, hoe reageert de Commissie dan op en welke consequenties vloeien voort uit de kritiek van de Rekenkamer dat men simpelweg niet weet „hoe het geld is besteed, dus ook niet hoe fout" ([1])?

Voorts schrijft de heer Füle: „De Commissie en de hoge vertegenwoordiger benadrukken dat de EU erin is geslaagd om in de loop der jaren met Egypte een dialoog en concrete samenwerking tot stand te brengen over gevoelige onderwerpen als bestuur, democratie en mensenrechten."

2. Welke concrete positieve resultaten hebben de door de Commissie genoemde dialoog en samenwerking met Egypte gehad? Welke concrete vooruitgang ziet de Commissie in Egypte wat betreft bestuur, democratie en mensenrechten?

3. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat de situatie in Egypte sinds het begin van de „islamitische winter" louter is verslechterd? Zo neen, waarop is de naïeve rozebrilvisie van de Commissie gestoeld?

Voorts schrijft de heer Füle: „De Commissie eist bij haar uitbetalingen dat vooruitgang is geboekt met de hervormingen en dat de voorwaarden strikt zijn nageleefd. Voor aanvullende steun via het Spring-programma zijn bovendien duidelijke voorwaarden gesteld met betrekking tot hervorming en democratie."

4. Is bij de tot dusverre uitbetaalde EU-gelden aan Egypte de vereiste vooruitgang wel of niet geboekt, en op welke meetbare resultaten baseert de Commissie zich daarbij?

5. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat — ten gevolge van de almaar verslechterende situatie in Egypte — de in het kader van zogenaamde „hervormingen" verstrekte EU-gelden illegitiem zijn? Zo neen, hoe serieus neemt de Commissie dan de door haarzelf geëiste vooruitgang? Zo ja, is de Commissie er aldus toe bereid de verstrekte EU-gelden direct terug te vorderen?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(24 oktober 2013)

1. De aangehaalde bewering is in het verslag van de Rekenkamer niet in dergelijke bewoordingen geformuleerd. In het verslag is er sprake van „tekortkomingen", die volgens de Commissie en de hoge vertegenwoordiger het gevolg waren van externe factoren waarop zij geen invloed hadden. De Rekenkamer erkende in haar verslag dat de EU-steun onder moeilijke omstandigheden is verleend, maar gaf geen concrete aanwijzingen dat efficiëntere alternatieven beschikbaar of mogelijk waren.

2. De meeste aanbevelingen van de Rekenkamer zijn sinds de verslagperiode reeds opgevolgd. Zo heeft de Commissie bijvoorbeeld haar interne regels voor de toekenning van begrotingssteun, die sinds januari 2013 van kracht zijn, aanzienlijk verscherpt.

Dank zij de aanhoudende druk van de Commissie en de hoge vertegenwoordiger werd bijvoorbeeld een subcomité mensenrechten opgericht en werd 10 % van de bilaterale begroting gereserveerd voor de ondersteuning van mensenrechten, goed bestuur en democratie, met inbegrip van steun voor kinder- en vrouwenrechten. Dit heeft concrete positieve en meetbare gevolgen gehad.

([1]) http://www.telegraaf.nl/binnenland/21658141/___EU-steun_in_zwart_gat___.html

3. De Raad Buitenlandse Zaken (RBZ) heeft op 21 augustus 2013 besloten de uitvoervergunningen voor uitrusting die voor binnenlandse repressie kan worden gebruikt, op te schorten, en de hoge vertegenwoordiger op te dragen om, samen met de Commissie, de bijstand van de EU aan Egypte in het kader van het Europees nabuurschapsbeleid te evalueren.

4. Sinds augustus 2011 werden geen nieuwe maatregelen voor begrotingssteun vastgesteld. Aanvullende steun in het kader van het SPRING-programma, waarvoor Egypte in beginsel in aanmerking komt, werd evenmin verleend aangezien deze steun sterk verbonden is met de vooruitgang op het gebied van democratische hervormingen.

5. De Commissie zal nauw toezicht houden op alle aspecten die verband houden met het beheer van de overheidsfinanciën. Bovendien zullen de voor 2013 vastgestelde programma's uitsluitend steun voor de sociaal-economische ontwikkeling en het maatschappelijk middenveld inhouden, overeenkomstig de conclusies van de Raad Buitenlandse Zaken.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009928/13
to the Commission
Lucas Hartong (NI) and Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: Follow-up questions concerning subsidies granted to Egypt (3)

On 3 September 2013, Mr Füle replied to Written Question E-007098/2013, on behalf of the Commission. In his reply Mr Füle writes 'The Commission and the High Representative welcome the European Court of Auditors' monitoring of the EU's assistance programmes. […] The Commission and the High Representative have accepted the Court of Auditors' observations and many of its recommendations.'

1. If the Commission really welcomes the European Court of Auditors' monitoring and really accepts its observations / recommendations, how is the Commission responding and what consequences are ensuing from the European Court of Auditors' criticism that it 'simply does not know how the money is being spent, so it does not know if it is being spent wrongly' ([1])?

Mr Füle also writes as follows: 'The Commission and the High Representative stress that the EU has succeeded over the years in establishing a dialogue and practical cooperation with Egypt on the difficult issues of governance, democracy and human rights.'

2. What specific positive results have the dialogue and cooperation with Egypt, specified by the Commission, had? What concrete progress does the Commission see in Egypt as regards governance, democracy and human rights?

3. Does the Commission share the view that the situation in Egypt has merely deteriorated since the beginning of the 'Islamist Winter'? If not, what is the basis for the Commission's naïve rose-tinted vision?

Mr Füle also writes as follows: 'The Commission makes the provision of assistance conditional on recording progress with reforms and strict compliance with the conditions. Clear requirements have also been set with regard to reform and democracy, for additional support via the SPRING programme.'

4. Has the required progress been recorded or not, for the EU funds paid to Egypt to date, and on what measurable results has the Commission based this conclusion?

5. Does the Commission share the view that, as a result of the ever-deteriorating situation in Egypt, the EU funds provided with respect to so-called 'reforms' are unlawful? If not, how seriously is the Commission taking the progress that the Commission itself has demanded? If so, is the Commission therefore prepared to demand the immediate return of the EU funds provided?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(24 October 2013)

1. The quoted allegation does not appear in this formulation in the Court of Auditors' (CoA) report. The CoA mentions 'shortcomings', which in the view of the Commission and the High Representative (HR) resulted from external factors outside their control. The CoA recognised in its report that EU support has been provided under difficult conditions, and did not provide concrete evidence that more effective alternatives were available or possible.

2. The majority of the CoA recommendations have already been acted upon since the reporting period. For example, the Commission has significantly strengthened its internal rules for granting Budget Support (BS), effective since January 2013.

The continuous pressure of the Commission and the HR has led e.g. to the establishment of a subcommittee on human rights, the earmarking of 10% of the bilateral budget to support human rights, good governance and democracy, including support for children's and women's rights, with concrete positive and measureable impact.

3. The Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) of 21 August 2013 decided to suspend export licences for any equipment which might be used for internal repression, and to task the HR, in cooperation with the Commission, to review EU assistance to Egypt under the European Neighbourhood Policy.

([1]) http://www.telegraaf.nl/binnenland/21658141/___EU-steun_in_zwart_gat___.html

4. No new BS operations have been decided since August 2011. Additional support under the SPRING programme, for which Egypt could in principle be eligible, is closely linked to progress in democratic reforms and has thus not been granted.

5. While the Commission will closely monitor all Public Finance Management related aspects, the programmes identified for 2013 will support solely socioeconomic development and civil society, as required by the FAC conclusions.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-009929/13
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(5 september 2013)

Betreft: Erdoğan kwaad op EU

De Turkse premier Erdoğan heeft alle 28 EU-lidstaten beschuldigd van een zogenaamde „lastercampagne tegen Turkije". Volgens Erdoğan zou de EU „valse informatie" over Turkije verstrekken, waardoor de publieke opinie zich tegen het land keert. Als voorbeeld noemde hij het in de EU sterk bekritiseerde gebruik van grote hoeveelheden traangas door de Turkse politie tegen de demonstranten afgelopen juni in Istanbul.

1. Is de Commissie bekend met de beschuldiging van Erdoğan jegens de EU ([1])? Hoe ervaart de Commissie deze?

2. Is de Commissie het wel/niet met Erdoğan eens dat alle 28 EU-lidstaten een zogenaamde „lastercampagne tegen Turkije" zouden voeren en daarbij „valse informatie" over Turkije zouden verstrekken? Waarom wel/niet?

3. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat de beschuldiging van Erdoğan jegens de EU vals is en slechts ertoe dient om — autoritair met zijn vinger naar anderen wijzend — zijn eigen verwerpelijke, EU-onwaardige schrikbewind te verdoezelen? Zo neen, impliceert de Commissie daarmee dat de beschuldiging van Erdoğan jegens de EU terecht is?

4. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat alle 28 EU-lidstaten Turkije — nota bene een kandidaat-EU-lidstaat! — vrijelijk moeten kunnen bekritiseren? Zo neen, waarom niet?

5. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat Erdoğan resp. Turkije met zijn beschuldiging jegens de EU aantoont onze westerse normen en waarden níet te onderschrijven en nóóit deel uit kan / wil maken van de EU? Zo neen, waarop baseert de Commissie dan het tegendeel?

6. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat het beter zou zijn te stoppen met eindeloos doormodderen en dat de toetredingsonderhandelingen met Turkije nu eindelijk dienen te worden beëindigd? Zo neen, waarom niet?

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

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.

Het voortgangsverslag van de Commissie van 16 oktober 2013 bevatte een volledige evaluatie over de naleving door Turkije van de politieke criteria ([2]).

([1]) De Telegraaf, 5-9-2013.
([2]) Http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2013/package/brochures/turkey_2013.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009929/13
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: Erdoğan angry with EU

The Turkish Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, has accused all 28 EU Member States of a 'smear campaign against Turkey'. According to Erdoğan, the EU has provided 'misleading information' about Turkey, which has turned public opinion against the country. As an example he mentioned the use of large quantities of tear gas, heavily criticised by the EU, by the Turkish police against demonstrators in Istanbul last June.

1. Is the Commission aware of Erdoğan's accusation against the EU ([1]) ? What is the Commission's reaction to this accusation?

2. Does the Commission agree / disagree with Erdoğan's claim that all 28 EU Member States are conducting a 'smear campaign against Turkey' and providing 'misleading information' about Turkey? If so, why? / If not, why not?

3. Does the Commission share the view that Erdoğan's accusation against the EU is false and is merely designed to cover up his own despicable reign of terror, unworthy of an EU candidate country, through pointing his authoritarian finger at others? If not, does the Commission therefore imply that Erdoğan's accusation against the EU is justified?

4. Does the Commission share the view that all 28 EU Member States should be able to level criticism freely at Turkey — N.B. an EU candidate country! If not, why not?

5. Does the Commission share the view that, through his accusation against the EU, Erdoğan, or Turkey, is demonstrating a refusal to sign up to our Western standards and values and is neither able nor willing to form part of the EU? If not, on what basis does the Commission conclude otherwise?

6. Does the Commission share the view that it would be better to draw a line under the endless muddling along and that accession negotiations with Turkey should now be finally terminated? If not, why not?

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

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.

The Commission gave a full assessment on compliance by Turkey with the political criteria in its 2013 Progress Report, published on 16 October 2013 ([2]).

([1]) *De Telegraaf*, 5 September 2013.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2013/package/brochures/turkey_2013.pdf

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-009930/13
aan de Commissie
Lucas Hartong (NI)
(5 september 2013)

Betreft: Steunverlening culturele commissie Cyprus

Vandaag maakte uw Commissie bekend 2 miljoen euro steun te verlenen aan de Technische Commissie inzake cultuureel erfgoed op Cyprus in het kader van het Hulpverleningsprogramma 2012 aan de Turks-Cypriotische gemeenschap. Uw Commissie meldt onder andere dat „many sites unfortunately have been allowed to fall into a poor state and need immediate action". In dat kader de volgende vragen:

1. Uit vele publicaties en eigen werkbezoek is gebleken dat de Turks-Cypriotische bezetter een actief beleid voert om Grieks-Cypriotisch cultureel erfgoed te vernietigen. Er kan gerust gesproken worden van een „culturele genocide". Waarom spreekt uw Commissie dan in zulke omfloerste termen als „have been allowed"? Waarom wordt de veroorzaker van de culturele afbraak op Cyprus niet duidelijk benoemd?

2. Waarom wordt wel EU-steun verleend aan de Turks-Cypriotische gemeenschap, maar niet aan de gemeenschap van de volledig democratische gelegitimeerde lidstaat Cyprus? Vanwaar deze ongelijkwaardige behandeling, nog even afgezien van de vraag of steunverlening überhaupt zinvol en effectief is?

Uw Commissie vermeldt verder dat de werkzaamheden zullen worden geïmplementeerd door de „United Nations Development Programme's Partnership for the Future".

3. Is de EU kennelijk niet in staat de door haar verleende steunverlening zelf te implementeren en controleren? Zo nee, hoe komt dat?

Het Speciaal Verslag van de Europese Rekenkamer inzake steunverlening aan de Turks-Cypriotische gemeenschap ([1]) gaf als specifieke aanbeveling „de toekomstige bijdrage in overeenkomsten met partnerorganisaties, met name met het UNDP, beter te beschrijven om een correcte financiële en operationele verslaglegging te waarborgen, inclusief meer relevante en actuele prestatie-indicatoren".

4. Kunt u gedetailleerd aangeven in hoeverre u gevolg heeft gegeven aan deze aanbeveling?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(22 oktober 2013)

De Commissie ondersteunt via haar steunprogramma voor de Turks-Cypriotische commissie de werkzaamheden van de technische commissie voor cultureel erfgoed van beide gemeenschappen, die onder auspiciën van de Verenigde Naties werkzaam is. Deze door beide gemeenschappen beheerde commissie is in april 2008 opgericht en is samengesteld uit leden van zowel de Grieks-Cypriotische als de Turks-Cypriotische gemeenschap. De commissie heeft een lijst opgesteld van 11 prioritaire monumenten op heel Cyprus waarvoor de EU dringende maatregelen voor monumentenzorg zou financieren. Het gaat om religieuze en niet-religieuze monumenten aan weerszijden van de groene lijn en deze monumenten maken deel uit van een langere lijst van 40 monumenten die door de leiders van beide gemeenschappen is overeengekomen ([2]).

Bij het uitvoeren van de steunregeling maakt de Commissie gebruik van een reeks „beheersvormen" die een maximale efficiëntie moeten bereiken, met inbegrip van „gedeeld beheer" met het ontwikkelingsprogramma van de VN (UNDP). Op het gebied van het cultureel erfgoed beschikt het UNDP reeds over ruime ervaring met de technische aspecten van restauratie van monumenten op Cyprus. De „bijdrageovereenkomst" tussen de commissie en het UNDP omvat controle- en sturingsregelingen en prestatie-indicatoren.

([1]) http://eca.europa.eu/portal/pls/portal/docs/1/15542767. PDF.
([2]) De lijst omvat 25 kerken, acht moskeeën, drie badhuizen, de Famagustacitadel/Othellotoren, één klooster, één madrasa en één aquaduct/molenhuis.

In haar controle stelde de Europese Rekenkamer in de eerste bijdrageovereenkomsten tussen de Commissie en het UNDP tekortkomingen vast op drie gebieden (Comité Vermiste Personen (CMP), lokale en stedelijke infrastructuur en ontmijningsoperaties). Alleen voor het CMP-programma zijn later nog bijdrageovereenkomsten gesloten, waarin een aantal verbeteringen is doorgevoerd, bv. een betere definitie van de indicatoren met betrekking tot EU-financiering, betere definities van het aantal opgegraven en geïdentificeerde vermisten en doorgaans een betere verhouding tussen output en input. Sinds de controle wordt de rapportage ook beter gecoördineerd met het UNDP.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009930/13
to the Commission
Lucas Hartong (NI)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: Providing assistance to the Committee on Cultural Heritage in Cyprus

Today your Commission announced a EUR 2 million contribution to the Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage in Cyprus, under the 2012 Aid Programme for the Turkish Cypriot community. Your Commission states, *inter alia*, that 'many sites unfortunately have been allowed to fall into a poor state and need immediate action'. Allow me to ask the following questions with regard thereto:

1. Numerous publications and my own working visit have revealed that the Turkish Cypriot occupying force is actively pursuing a policy designed to destroy Greek Cypriot cultural heritage. We can safely describe this as a 'cultural genocide'. Why then does your Commission speak in such veiled terms as 'have been allowed'? Why is the party that is responsible for the cultural destruction in Cyprus not being clearly identified?

2. Why is EU aid being granted to the Turkish Cypriot community, but not to the community belonging to the fully democratic, legitimate EU Member State, Cyprus? What is the reason for this unequal treatment, leaving aside the issue of whether the provision of assistance is remotely meaningful or effective?

Your Committee also states that the work is to be performed by the 'United Nations Development Programme's Partnership for the Future'.

3. Is it right to conclude that the EU is manifestly incapable of performing and monitoring the provision of assistance itself? If not, why is this the case?

One of the specific recommendations put forward by the European Court of Auditors in the Special Report on European Union Assistance to the Turkish Cypriot Community ([1]) was to 'better define future contribution agreements with partner organisations, notably the UNDP, in order to ensure proper financial and operational reporting, including more relevant and up-to-date performance indicators'.

4. Can you specify in detail the extent to which you have complied with this recommendation?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(22 October 2013)

The Commission supports, through its Aid Programme to the Turkish Cypriot committee, the work of the bi-communal Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage operating under United Nations auspices. This bi-communal committee was established in April 2008 and is composed of members of both the Greek Cypriot and the Turkish Cypriot communities. The committee has identified a list of 11 priority monuments, in the whole island of Cyprus, for which the EU would fund emergency conservation measures. These include religious and non-religious monuments on both sides of the Green Line and are part of a wider list of 40 monuments agreed by the leaders of the two communities ([2]).

In implementing the aid programme, the Commission uses a range of 'management modes' to achieve maximum efficiency, including 'joint management' with the UN Development Programme (UNDP). In the case of cultural heritage, UNDP already has a track record of experience with the technical aspects of restoration of monuments in Cyprus. The 'Contribution Agreement' between the Commission and UNDP includes monitoring, steering arrangements and performance indicators.

The European Court of Auditors' audit found weaknesses in early Contribution Agreements between the Commission and the UNDP in three fields (Committee on Missing Persons (CMP), Local and Urban Infrastructure and Demining Operations). Subsequent Contribution Agreements have only been made for the CMP programme, for which improvements include better definition of indicators related to EU funding, better definitions of numbers of missing persons exhumed and identified, better general output-input relation. Reporting coordination with UNDP has also been enhanced since the audit.

([1]) http://eca.europa.eu/portal/pls/portal/docs/1/15542767.PDF
([2]) The list includes 25 churches, eight mosques, three baths, the Famagusta citadel/Othello tower, one monastery, one madrasa, and one aqueduct/mill house.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-009931/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(5 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Wzmożona aktywność rosyjskiej armii

Od pewnego czasu daje się zaobserwować systematyczny wzrost aktywności rosyjskiego wojska. Jak podkreślają obserwatorzy, siły zbrojne Rosji nie wykazywały tak wysokiego stopnia zaangażowania od lat osiemdziesiątych. Moskwa dokonuje gigantycznych inwestycji w zbrojenia, regularnie przeprowadza również manewry. W opinii komentatorów rosyjska armia jest obecnie znacznie bardziej groźna niż się powszechnie przyjmuje.

Niepokój może wzbudzać zwłaszcza nasilenie niezapowiedzianych (obok rutynowych) ćwiczeń bojowych oraz nieustanna obecność rosyjskiej floty wojennej na Morzu Śródziemnym. W bieżącym okresie szkoleniowym (czerwiec-listopad 2013 r.) prawdopodobne jest przeprowadzenie ponad pięciuset ćwiczeń poligonowych (wobec 170 – co już jest znaczącą liczbą – zrealizowanych w minionym cyklu zimowym). Zdaniem ekspertów, tak wzmożona aktywność nie miała precedensu w najnowszej historii Rosji. Szereg z tych manewrów odbywa się ponadto na obszarach pozostających w bliskim sąsiedztwie państw Wspólnoty.

Mając na uwadze bezpieczeństwo Unii Europejskiej oraz mojego kraju zwracam się z prośbą o informacje:

1. Czy ESDZ monitoruje działania rosyjskiej armii pod kątem ewentualnego zagrożenia bezpieczeństwa UE?

2. Czy Wysoka Przedstawiciel dysponuje aktualnymi informacjami dotyczącymi liczby oraz trybu przeprowadzania rosyjskich manewrów wojskowych?

3. Jakie jest stanowisko Wysokiej Przedstawiciel wobec stałej już obecności rosyjskich okrętów wojskowych na Morzu Śródziemnym?

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

Dyrekcja ds. Wywiadu Sztabu Wojskowego UE obserwuje rozwój operacyjny organizacji wojskowych poza UE i NATO przede wszystkim na celu oceny wojskowych wydarzeń politycznych i rzeczywistego potencjału wojskowego różnych krajów, ale także z punktu widzenia potencjalnych zagrożeń.

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca ma zawsze prawo do zażądania wszelkich informacji od Dyrekcji ds. Wywiadu Sztabu Wojskowego UE, która dostarcza dane wywiadowcze w oparciu o własne źródła informacji i źródła wywiadowcze państw członkowskich.

Należy zauważyć, że chociaż od 2007 r. flota rosyjska jest stale obecna w basenie Morza Śródziemnego, jej wielkość jest mniejsza od poprzednio demonstrowanych zdolności, a powrót do poprzednich rozmiarów wymagałby dużych nakładów czasowych.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009931/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — increase in the activities of the Russian army

For some time now there has been a clear rise in the level of activity of the Russian armed forces, which according to observers have not been this active since the 1980s. Moscow is making massive investments in armaments, maneouvres are carried out regularly and commentators believe that the Russian army currently poses a significantly greater threat than is generally assumed.

The increase in unannounced (non-routine) military exercises and the continued presence of the Russian naval fleet in the Mediterranean are particularly alarming. It is likely that over 500 exercises will be carried out during the current training cycle (June-November 2013) compared to last winter's figure of 170, which in itself was a significant number. Experts believe that an increase in activity of this kind is unprecedented in recent Russian history. What is more, a number of these maneouvres are being carried out close to the borders of EU Member States.

In the interests of the security of the European Union and my country, I would like to ask the following questions:

1. Is the EEAS monitoring the activities of the Russian army with regard to the potential threat to the security of the EU?

2. Does the High Representative have access to up-to-date information on the number of Russian military manoeuvres being carried out or the details of these manoeuvres?

3. What is the High Representative's opinion regarding the now constant presence of Russian naval vessels in the Mediterranean?

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

The EU Military Staff Intelligence Directorate observes the operational development of military organisations outside EU and NATO, primarily with the goal to assess military political developments and actual military capabilities of different countries but also from a point of view of potential threats.

The HR/VP is always in a position to request any information from the EU Military Staff Intelligence Directorate which provides intelligence based on its own source information and member state intelligence support.

It should be noted that although Russia has established a permanent naval presence in the Mediterranean as of 2007 it is below the level of capability previously sustained, which it would take a considerable amount of time to re-establish.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-009932/13
do Komisji
Marek Józef Gróbarczyk (ECR)
(5 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Zapytanie do Komisji Europejskiej w sprawie realizacji nałożonego na nią obowiązku przedstawienia sprawozdania Parlamentowi i Radzie

W myśl art. 27 Rozporządzenia Rady (WE) nr 2187/2005 na Komisję Europejską został nałożony obowiązek zapewnienia w terminie do 1 stycznia 2008 r. przeprowadzenia naukowej oceny skutków używania w szczególności sieci skrzelowych, trójściennych i oplątujących dla waleni i przedstawienia jej wyników Parlamentowi Europejskiemu i Radzie. Komisja w wyznaczonym jej terminie nie wywiązała się z nałożonego na nią obowiązku. Jeden spośród polskich rybaków wystosował do Europejskiego Rzecznika Praw Obywatelskich skargę na niewłaściwe administrowanie Komisji Europejskiej (sygn. 427/2011/MHZ).

W trakcie dochodzenia Europejski Rzecznik Praw Obywatelskich ustalił, iż „Komisja nie udowodniła, że z przyczyn obiektywnych niemożliwe było wywiązanie się przez nią z obowiązku dopilnowania, aby ocena naukowa skutków korzystania z sieci skrzelowych, trójściennych i sieci oplątujących dla waleni została przeprowadzona w terminie do dnia 1 stycznia 2008 r." Ponadto Rzecznik zamykając dochodzenie w dniu 22 listopada 2011 r. w sprawie tej skargi stwierdził, iż „Komisja oświadczyła, że w 2011 r. przedstawi sprawozdanie w sprawie skutków stosowania pławnic dla waleni w komunikacie skierowanym do Parlamentu i Rady, Rzecznik Praw Obywatelskich nie uznaje za uzasadnione wypracowania rozwiązania polubownego lub sporządzenia projektu zalecenia w sprawie niniejszej skargi".

W związku z powyższym wnoszę o udzielenie informacji czy Komisja w ciągu 2011 r. wywiązała się z nałożonego na nią obowiązku przedstawienia tego sprawozdania Parlamentowi i Radzie?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Marię Damanaki w imieniu Komisji
(23 października 2013 r.)

Sprawozdanie, o które Szanowny Pan Poseł pyta, zostało przyjęte przez Komisję we wrześniu 2011 r. ([1]).

([1]) COM(2011) 578 Komunikat Komisji do Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady w sprawie wdrożenia niektórych przepisów rozporządzenia Rady (WE) nr 812/2004 ustanawiającego środki dotyczące przypadkowych odłowów waleni na łowiskach i zmieniającego rozporządzenie (WE) nr 88/98.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009932/13
to the Commission
Marek Józef Gróbarczyk (ECR)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: Question to the European Commission regarding the fulfilment of its obligation to report to Parliament and the Council

Article 27 of Council Regulation (EC) No 2187/2005 obliged the European Commission to ensure that a scientific assessment of the effects of using in particular gillnets, trammel nets and entangling nets on cetaceans was conducted and its findings presented to the European Parliament and the Council by 1 January 2008. The Commission did not fulfil this obligation within the deadline specified, and a Polish fisherman submitted a complaint to the European Ombudsman (427/2011/MHZ) accusing the European Commission of maladministration.

Following an inquiry, the Ombudsman concluded that, 'the Commission failed to demonstrate that it was objectively impossible for it to ensure that the scientific assessment of the effects of using in particular gillnets, trammel nets and entangling nets on cetaceans was carried out by 1 January 2008.' The Ombudsman closed his inquiry into the complaint on 22 November 2011, and stated that, 'Since, in a communication to Parliament and the Council, the Commission declared that in 2011 it would submit a report on the effects of using driftnets on cetaceans, the Ombudsman does not consider that either a proposal for a friendly solution, or a draft recommendation, would serve any useful purpose in the present case.'

I would therefore like to ask whether the Commission fulfilled its obligation to present such a report to Parliament and the Council in 2011.

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(23 October 2013)

The report referred to by the Honourable Member was adopted by the Commission in September 2011 ([1]).

([1]) COM(2011) 578 Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the implementation of certain provisions of Council Regulation (EC) No 812/2004 laying down measures concerning incidental catches of cetaceans in fisheries and amending Regulation (EC) No 88/98.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-009933/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(5 de setembro de 2013)

Assunto: Exclusão e discriminação dos sem-abrigo por parte da UE

De acordo com notícias recentes, a Federação Europeia de Organizações Nacionais para os Sem-abrigo (Feantsa, na sigla em inglês) acusou a União Europeia de discriminação e exclusão dos sem-abrigo da participação em determinadas iniciativas.

É sabido que, em virtude da aplicação das políticas da UE, particularmente nos países que são alvo de intervenções FMI-UE, a pobreza e a exclusão social dispararam, levando a um aumento muito substancial do número de sem-abrigo.

Apesar disto e de 2013 ter sido declarado «Ano Europeu dos Cidadãos» (iniciativa que tem sido pretexto para diversas ações de propaganda), de acordo com a Feantsa, a ausência de uma casa ou de uma morada fixa pode ser uma barreira no acesso a «vários conceitos básicos» de cidadania e participação na sociedade. A Feantsa avança alguns exemplos concretos desta discriminação por parte da Comissão Europeia.

Perguntamos à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento das críticas da Federação Europeia de Organizações Nacionais para os Sem-abrigo?

2. Quais as iniciativas da Comissão em que os sem-abrigo são excluídos da participação?

3. Tomou ou vai tomar alguma medida para corrigir esta situação?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(29 de outubro de 2013)

A Comissão não tem conhecimento de tal declaração por parte da Feantsa ([1]); não obstante, chama a atenção ([2]) para o facto de algumas normas nacionais dos Estados-Membros não permitirem que pessoas sem endereço e/ou sem bilhete de identidade votem e, consequentemente, participem na «Iniciativa de Cidadania Europeia» (ICE) ([3]). A Comissão incentivou os Estados-Membros a assegurar a todos os cidadãos uma participação plena na ICE. No âmbito do Ano Europeu dos Cidadãos de 2013, a aliança de organizações da sociedade civil apresentará, em dezembro de 2013, recomendações políticas sobre cidadania e participação cívica.

O artigo 21.° da Carta dos Direitos Fundamentais da União Europeia proíbe estritamente qualquer discriminação em razão da origem social, e a Comissão é obrigada a respeitar esse princípio.

Os Estados-Membros são os principais responsáveis pela existência de pessoas sem-abrigo; no entanto, a Comissão apoia a integração dessa questão no processo de governação da estratégia «Europa 2020», por meio de recomendações específicas por país centradas na pobreza e nos mercados de habitação, bem como a utilização dos fundos da UE nesse sentido. Além disso, o Pacote de Investimento Social ([4]) salienta que garantir uma participação dos sem-abrigo é uma característica essencial das estratégias integradas para combater o fenómeno dos sem-abrigo.

([1]) Federação Europeia de Associações Nacionais que Trabalham com os Sem-Abrigo.

([2]) «Homeless People Excluded from Citizenship, Not Allowed to Participate in European Citizens' Initiatives» («Sem Abrigo excluídos da Cidadania, Impedidos de Participar nas Iniciativas de Cidadania Europeia»),.
Comunicado de imprensa de 3 de setembro de 2013, disponível em:
http://www.feantsa.org/spip.php?article1368&lang=en

([3]) Iniciativa de Cidadania Europeia, ver Regulamento (UE) n.° 211/2011, de 16 de fevereiro de 2011, sobre a iniciativa de cidadania.

([4]) Informações suplementares sobre o Pacote de Investimento Social estão disponíveis em:
http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1044&langId=en&newsId=1807&moreDocuments=yes&tableName=news

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009933/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: Exclusion of homeless people and discrimination against them by the EU

According to recent reports, the European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless (FEANTSA) has accused the European Union of discriminating against homeless people and excluding them from participation in certain initiatives.

The implementation of EU policies, particularly in countries receiving bailouts from the International Monetary Fund and the EU, has caused soaring levels of poverty and social exclusion, resulting in a very significant increase in the number of homeless people.

In spite of this and despite 2013 being the European Year of Citizens (an initiative that has been an excuse for several propaganda exercises), according to FEANTSA, not having a home or a fixed address can be a barrier to accessing 'many basic concepts' of citizenship and participation in society. FEANTSA has posited several concrete examples of such discrimination on the part of the Commission.

1. Is the Commission aware of the criticisms made by the Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless?

2. Which Commission initiatives are the homeless excluded from participating in?

3. Has the Commission taken or will it take any action to remedy this situation?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(29 October 2013)

The Commission is not aware of such a claim by FEANTSA ([1]) however, it draws attention ([2]) to the fact that certain Member States' national rules do not allow persons with no address and/or no identity card to vote, consequently to take part in the ECI ([3]).The Commission has encouraged these Member States to ensure the full participation in the ECI for all citizens. In the framework of the European Year of Citizens 2013 the Alliance of civil society organisations will present policy recommendations on citizenship and civic participation in December 2013.

Article 21 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union strictly prohibits discrimination based on social origin and the Commission is bound to respect that principle.

The Member States have primary responsibility for homelessness, however, the Commission supports integrating homelessness into the Europe 2020 governance process through country specific recommendations with a focus on poverty and housing markets, and use of EU Funds for that. Furthermore, the Social Investment Package ([4]) stresses that ensuring homeless people's participation is vital features of integrated homelessness strategies.

([1]) European Federation of National Organisations working with the Homeless.
([2]) 'Homeless People Excluded from Citizenship, Not Allowed to Participate in European Citizens' Initiatives'. Press release of 3 September 2013, available at: http://www.feantsa.org/spip.php?article1368&lang=en
([3]) European Citizens' Initiative, Regulation No 211/2011 of 16 February 2011 on the citizens' initiative.
([4]) More information on the Social Investment Package is available at: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1044&langId=en&newsId=1807&moreDocuments=yes&tableName=news

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-009934/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(5 de setembro de 2013)

Assunto: Financiamento pela UE de projetos internacionais para construção de gasodutos

Relativamente a projetos de gasodutos transcontinentais, solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Que projetos foram ou vão ser financiados pela UE? Quais os projetos em causa e quais os montantes envolvidos?

2. Concretamente no que diz respeito ao projeto «Nabucco», qual a participação da UE?

Resposta dada por Günther Oettinger em nome da Comissão
(5 de novembro de 2013)

1. Os apoios financeiros da UE para gasodutos transcontinentais têm sido concedidos através da política das redes transeuropeias (Decisão n.° 1364/2006/CE — RTE-E) e do Programa Energético Europeu para o Relançamento da Economia (Regulamento (CE) n.° 663/2009, Regulamento EEPR, na sigla inglesa). Todas as informações sobre os projetos, o financiamento, as subvenções concedidas e os pagamentos efetivos estão disponíveis no seguinte sítio Web:

— EEPR: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/eepr/

— RTE-E: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/infrastructure/tent_e/financial_aid_en.htm

Nos termos do novo regulamento relativo às orientações para as infraestruturas energéticas transeuropeias, adotado em 2013, e do Mecanismo Interligar a Europa, os projetos definidos como projetos de interesse comum (PIC) podem, potencialmente, beneficiar de apoio financeiro da UE. A Comissão adotou a primeira lista de projetos de interesse comum em 14 de outubro de 2013.

2. Ao *Nabucco Gas Pipeline International GmbH* foi atribuído um montante de 4,8 milhões de euros em 2005 e de 3 milhões de euros em 2009, no âmbito do apoio financeiro a projetos de interesse comum da rede transeuropeia de energia (RTE-E). Além disso, no quadro do programa EEPR, foram inicialmente reservados para o gasoduto Nabucco 200 milhões de euros. No entanto, esta verba não foi mobilizada dado que o promotor não tomou a decisão final de investimento.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009934/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: EU funding of international gas pipeline construction projects

With regard to transcontinental gas pipeline projects:

1. Which projects have been or will be funded by the EU? What are the projects in question and what are the sums involved?

2. How much is the EU contributing to the 'Nabucco' project in particular?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(5 November 2013)

1. Financial supports for trans-continental gas pipelines have been granted by the EU through the Trans-European network policy (Decision 1364/2006/EC — TEN-E) and the European Energy Programme for Recovery (Regulation 663/2009 — EEPR). All details about the projects, the scope of financing, the grants awarded and the actual payments are available on the following webpages:

— EEPR: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/eepr/

— TEN-E: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/infrastructure/tent_e/financial_aid_en.htm

Under the new Regulation on guidelines for trans-European energy infrastructure adopted in 2013 and the Connecting Europe Facility, trans-continental projects identified as Projects of Common Interest (PCIs) can potentially benefit from EU financial assistance. The first list of PCIs was adopted by the Commission on 14 October 2013.

2. Nabucco Gas Pipeline International GmbH has been awarded EUR 4.8 million in 2005 and EUR 3 million in 2009 under the financial support for projects of common interest in the Trans-European Energy Network (TEN-E). In addition, EUR 200 million have been initially provisioned for Nabucco under the EEPR programme. However, this grant has not been drawn as the promoter did not take the final investment decision.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-009936/13
do Komisji
Paweł Robert Kowal (ECR)
(5 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Problemy polskich pracowników w Holandii

Pracować i mieszkać w UE to podstawowe prawo obywatela każdego z 28 krajów Unii. Artykuł 45 Traktatu o funkcjonowaniu Unii Europejskiej (TFUE) ustanawia prawo obywateli UE do przemieszczania się do innego państwa Unii także w celu podjęcia pracy. Prawo to obejmuje w szczególności prawo nie bycia dyskryminowanym ze względu na narodowość w zakresie dostępu do zatrudnienia oraz wynagrodzenia.

Od 1 maja 2007 r. Polacy dostali możliwość pracy w Holandii bez konieczności uzyskania pozwolenia na pracę. Holandia zawsze była uważana za kraj otwarty i tolerancyjny. Jednak, obywatele polscy nadal napotykają na problemy dyskryminacji w tym kraju np. nie tak dawno, holenderska Partia Wolności domagała się surowszej polityki wobec bezrobotnych imigrantów, którzy otrzymują pomoc społeczną.

Jakie działania zamierza podjąć Komisja, żeby zagwarantować bardziej skuteczne i jednolite stosowanie prawa UE we wszystkich krajach unijnych dotyczące swobodnego przemieszczania się pracowników?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza László Andora w imieniu Komisji
(21 października 2013 r.)

Komisja jest świadoma, że pracownicy migrujący potrzebują lepszej informacji i większego wsparcia w kontekście krajowym. Z tego względu przedstawiła wniosek ([1]) w sprawie dyrektywy mającej poprawić na szczeblu krajowym egzekwowanie praw związanych ze swobodnym przepływem pracowników. Wniosek przewiduje zaangażowanie wszystkich zainteresowanych stron (partnerów społecznych, administracji krajowych, organizacji pozarządowych i służb wspierających na szczeblu UE) na rzecz skuteczniejszego informowania i wspierania obywateli UE poszukujących pracy, pracowników mobilnych i członków ich rodzin. W szczególności, państwa członkowskie zostałyby zobowiązane do powołania organu krajowego lub punktu kontaktowego, który byłby odpowiedzialny za informowanie i doradztwo na rzecz pracowników w UE oraz pomógłby dopilnować, by ich prawa były przestrzegane. Organy takie byłyby zobowiązane m.in. do przedstawiania opracowań i wydawania zaleceń krajowych dotyczących likwidacji zjawiska dyskryminacji w rozumieniu art. 45 TFUE.

Ponadto Komisja nadal monitoruje zmiany lub proponowane zmiany w ustawodawstwie krajowym, które mogą mieć wpływ na prawa obywateli UE przemieszczających się z jednego państwa członkowskiego do drugiego. Komisja pozostaje w kontakcie z władzami niderlandzkimi w sprawie nowych propozycji mających na celu ograniczenie dostępu do pomocy społecznej w przypadku obywateli UE poszukujących pracy i nieaktywnych zawodowo. Jak zawsze, celem Komisji jest zapewnienie, by przestrzegano dorobku prawnego UE.

([1]) Wniosek dotyczący dyrektywy Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady w sprawie środków ułatwiających korzystanie z praw przyznanych pracownikom w kontekście swobodnego przepływu pracowników (COM(2013) 236 z dnia 26 kwietnia 2013 r.).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009936/13
to the Commission
Paweł Robert Kowal (ECR)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: Problems encountered by Polish citizens working in the Netherlands

The right to work and live in the EU is one of the fundamental rights granted to the citizens of each of the 28 Member States. The right of EU citizens to move to another Member State, *inter alia* for work purposes, is enshrined in Article 45 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), and means in particular that discrimination on the grounds of nationality is prohibited in the context of employment and salaries.

On 1 May 2007 the work permit requirement was abolished for Polish citizens wishing to work in the Netherlands, which has always enjoyed a reputation as an open and tolerant country. Yet the Polish citizens living there continue to experience discrimination-related problems; for example, the Dutch Freedom Party recently called for more stringent policies on social benefits for unemployed immigrants.

What measures does the Commission intend to take to guarantee a more effective and uniform application of EU legislation on the free movement of workers in all of the Member States?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(21 October 2013)

The Commission is very aware of EU migrant workers' need for better information and support in a national context. It has accordingly put forward a proposal ([1]) for a directive to improve the enforcement at national level of existing EU rights concerning the free movement of workers. The proposal provides for the involvement of all stakeholders (the social partners, national administrations, NGOs and assistance services at EU level) with a view to improving information and assistance for EU jobseekers, EU mobile workers and their family members. In particular, Member States would be required to ensure the existence of a national body or contact point to inform and advise EU workers and to help ensure their rights are respected. Such bodies would be required, among other things, to produce studies and make recommendations at national level concerning the elimination of discrimination within the meaning of Article 45 TFEU.

The Commission also continues to monitor changes or proposed changes to national legislation which may have an impact on the rights of EU citizens moving from one Member State to the other. The Commission is in contact with the Dutch authorities concerning nascent proposals to restrict access to social assistance for EU jobseekers and non-active EU citizens. The Commission's aim, as always, is to ensure the EU *acquis* is respected.

([1]) Proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and the Council on measures facilitating the exercise of rights conferred on workers in the context of freedom of movement of workers (COM(2013) 236 of 26 April 2013).

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-009937/13
an die Kommission
Hermann Winkler (PPE)
(6. September 2013)

Betrifft: Mehrwertsteuer bei Personenbeförderung

In einer Anfrage vom 4. Februar 2013 wurden ich der EU-Kommission die Probleme für deutsche Taxifahrer im deutsch-polnischen Grenzraum aufgrund einer nichtvorhandenen Ausnahmeregelung im polnischen Mehrwertsteuerrecht für Personenbeförderung für Fahrten nach Polen geschildert. Nach der Rechtslage in Polen müssen sich deutsche Taxifahrer selbst für kurze Strecken nach Polen zur Erfüllung ihrer mehrwertsteuerlichen Pflichten in Polen mit einem komplizierten Verfahren anmelden. Für polnische Taxifahrer in Deutschland greifen hingegen Ausnahmeregelungen.

Die EU-Kommission verwies in ihrer Antwort E-001400/2013 auf die Mitteilung KOM(2011)0851, in der ein Vorschlag über einfachere Mehrwertsteuerbestimmungen im Bereich der Personenbeförderung angekündigt wurde.

Wann plant die Kommission den genannten Vorschlag vorzulegen?

Was sind die geplanten Inhalte des Vorschlags?

Könnten diese Inhalte gegebenenfalls bei oben genanntem Problem Abhilfe schaffen?

Kommissionsmitglied Šemeta antwortete, Polen könne selbst entscheiden, ob bestimmte durch die MwSt.-Richtlinie auferlegte Pflichten zweckmäßig seien und könne entsprechend diese Pflichten in den durch die aktuelle Richtlinie auferlegten Grenzen gegebenenfalls lockern.

Hat die Kommission Kenntnis davon, ob in Polen möglicherweise mittlerweile Bewegung in dieser Frage entstanden ist und eine Ausnahme von der Steueranmeldepflicht für Fahrten von deutschen Personenbeförderern in einem geringen Radius wie beispielsweise 10 km auf polnischem Gebiet angestrebt wird?

Antwort von Herrn Šemeta im Namen der Kommission
(4. Oktober 2013)

In ihrer Mitteilung ([1]) hat die Kommission keinen Termin für die Vorlage eines Vorschlags zur Mehrwertsteuer auf Personenbeförderungsdienstleistungen festgelegt. Die zeitliche Planung hängt von der laufenden Studie zur Ermittlung und Quantifizierung der Probleme im Zusammenhang mit den MwSt.-Vorschriften für den Personenverkehr und den sich möglicherweise daran anschließenden, für eine Folgenabschätzung erforderlichen Arbeiten ab.

Der Anwendungsbereich eines möglichen künftigen Vorschlags würde natürlich von den Ergebnissen einer Folgenabschätzung abhängen, und daher ist zum jetzigen Zeitpunkt noch nicht bekannt, ob Taxidienstleistungen in diesen Anwendungsbereich fallen würden.

Die Ausnahmeregelung für polnische Taxifahrer im deutschen Grenzgebiet wird derzeit von den Kommissionsdienststellen geprüft. Solange das Ergebnis dieser Analyse noch aussteht, sollte nach Ansicht der Kommission eine ähnliche spezifische Ausnahmeregelung, nach der Polen von deutschen Taxifahrern im polnischen Grenzgebiet erbrachte Beförderungsdienstleistungen nicht besteuern muss, nicht in Betracht gezogen werden.

([1]) KOM(2011)851 endg.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009937/13
to the Commission
Hermann Winkler (PPE)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: VAT on passenger transport

In a question of 4 February 2013 (E-001400/2013) I described to the Commission the problems for German taxi drivers in the German-Polish border area owing to the absence of a derogation under Polish VAT law for passenger transport into Poland. Under Polish law, German taxi drivers have to go through a complicated registration procedure to comply with their VAT requirements, even for short journeys into Poland. On the other hand, there is a derogation scheme in place for Polish taxi drivers in Germany.

In its answer to my question the Commission referred to its communication COM(2011) 851 in which it stated its intention of proposing a simpler VAT framework for passenger transport activities.

When does the Commission propose to submit the proposal referred to?

What provisions is the proposal due to contain?

Might these provisions help alleviate the problem I have described?

Commissioner Šemeta said that it is for Poland to decide whether and how, where appropriate, to adapt certain obligations laid down by the VAT Directive, within the limits provided for by the current directive.

Does the Commission know whether there has since been any movement in Poland on this issue, towards a derogation from the VAT registration requirement for German passenger transport service providers in respect of journeys within a limited distance of, say, 10 km from the Polish border?

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

The Commission has set no date for presenting a VAT proposal on passenger transport services in its communication ([1]). The timing will depend on the ongoing study to identify and quantify any problems related to the VAT rules on passenger transport and thereafter any subsequent work required for an impact assessment.

The scope of any future proposal would obviously depend on the results of an impact assessment and therefore it is unknown at this stage whether taxi services would be covered.

The derogation scheme in place for Polish taxi drivers in Germany in the border area is currently being examined by the Commission services. Pending the outcome of this analysis, the Commission considers that a similar specific derogation allowing Poland not to tax transport supplies carried out by German taxi drivers in the border area should not be envisaged.

([1]) COM(2011) 851 final.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-009938/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(6 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Εφαρμογή στην Ελλάδα νομοθεσίας για πώληση τροφίμων περασμένης ημερομηνίας λήξης

Από την 1η Σεπτεμβρίου τέθηκε σε εφαρμογή το μέτρο στην Ελλάδα για τη διάθεση προϊόντων «περιορισμένης διατηρησιμότητας» στα ράφια των σούπερ μάρκετ και των καταστημάτων τροφίμων σε τιμές χαμηλότερες από τις κανονικές. Παράλληλα, σε πρόσφατη ανακοίνωσή της η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή αναφέρει ότι τα τρόφιμα μπορούν να καταναλωθούν με ασφάλεια ακόμα και μετά την αναγραφόμενη ημερομηνία «κατά προτίμηση μέχρι» υπό τον όρο ότι έχουν τηρηθεί οι οδηγίες αποθήκευσης και δεν έχει φθαρεί η συσκευασία, ενδεχομένως όμως το προϊόν να έχει αρχίσει να χάνει τη γεύση και την υφή του.

Με αφορμή τα παραπάνω και την απάντηση της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής σε προηγούμενη ερώτηση με αριθμό: E-009356/2012 και τίτλο «Πώληση τροφίμων με περασμένη ημερομηνία λήξης σε φθηνότερη τιμή», ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Έχει συγκεντρώσει τα στοιχεία για την ύπαρξη παρόμοιου νομοθετικού πλαισίου σε άλλα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ; Αν ναι, με ποιό τρόπο διασφαλίζεται η προστασία της υγείας των καταναλωτών;

2. Πώς επιτρέπεται η πώληση προϊόντων περασμένης ημερομηνίας λήξης με την ένδειξη «ανάλωση κατά προτίμηση πριν από» από τη στιγμή που υπάρχει το ενδεχόμενο το προϊόν να έχει χάσει τη γεύση του και την υφή του; Δεν υπάρχει κίνδυνος για την υγεία των καταναλωτών από την κατανάλωση ληγμένων χημικών συντηρητικών στα εν λόγω προϊόντα;

3. Ποιό είναι το νόημα της ύπαρξης ημερομηνίας ή έτους λήξης στα προϊόντα με αναγραφή «ανάλωση κατά προτίμηση πριν από» από τη στιγμή που αυτό με την εν λόγω νομοθεσία παρακάμπτεται;

4. Σκοπεύει η Επιτροπή να προβεί σε συστάσεις προς τα κράτη μέλη, έτσι ώστε τέτοιου είδους προϊόντα να μην καταναλώνονται από συγκεκριμένες ομάδες πληθυσμού (όπως παιδιά, εγκύους, ηλικιωμένους με προβλήματα υγείας), δεδομένου ότι τα εν λόγω προϊόντα έχουν χάσει την θρεπτική τους αξία;

5. Με γνώμονα το γεγονός ότι επίσημοι έλεγχοι από τα κράτη μέλη πρέπει να διεξάγονται τακτικά, σύμφωνα με τα στοιχεία που διαθέτει η Επιτροπή, ο Ενιαίος Φορέας Ελέγχου Τροφίμων στην Ελλάδα θα μπορέσει να ανταπεξέλθει στους πρόσθετους ελέγχους που πρόκειται να προκύψουν με τη νέα αυτή νομοθεσία, στο μέτρο που, σύμφωνα με τα υπάρχοντα σχέδια, θα τεθεί σε διαθεσιμότητα μεγάλο μέρος των εργαζομένων του εν λόγω οργανισμού;

Απάντηση του κ. Borg εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(15 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Τα προσυσκευασμένα τρόφιμα, εκτός από λίγες εξαιρέσεις, πρέπει να φέρουν την ημερομηνία ελάχιστης διάρκειας (ημερομηνία «ανάλωση κατά προτίμηση πριν από») ή την ημερομηνία «ανάλωση έως». Η «ημερομηνία ανάλωσης κατά προτίμηση πριν από» δείχνει την ημερομηνία μέχρι την οποία το φαγητό διατηρεί την προσδοκώμενη ποιότητα του. Η υπάρχουσα ευρωπαϊκή νομοθεσία ([1]) διευκρινίζει ότι η ημερομηνία «ανάλωση κατά προτίμηση πρίν από» πρέπει να αντικατασταθεί από την ημερομηνία «ανάλωση έως» όταν, μικροβιολογικώς, κάποιο τρόφιμο είναι εξαιρετικά αλλοιώσιμο και ενδέχεται επομένως μετά από ένα σύντομο χρονικό διάστημα να αποτελέσει άμεσο κίνδυνο για την ανθρώπινη υγεία. Εναπόκειται στην ευθύνη του υπεύθυνου της επιχείρησης τροφίμων να αποφασίσει αν ένα προϊόν πρέπει να φέρει την ετικέτα για ημερομηνία «ανάλωση έως». Ο νέο κανονισμός σχετικά με την παροχή πληροφοριών για τα τρόφιμα στους καταναλωτές ([2]) διατηρεί τους υπάρχοντες κανόνες ([3]).

([1]) Οδηγία 2000/13/ΕΚ του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου της 20ής Μαρτίου 2000 για προσέγγιση των νομοθεσιών των κρατών μελών σχετικά με την σήμανση, την παρουσίαση και τη διαφήμιση των τροφίμων (ΕΕ L 109 της 6.5.2000, σ. 29).

([2]) Κανονισμός (ΕΕ) αριθ. 1169/2011 του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου της 25ης Οκτωβρίου 2011 σχετικά με την παροχή πληροφοριών για τα τρόφιμα στους καταναλωτές, την τροποποίηση των κανονισμών (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1924/2006 και (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1925/2006 του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου και την κατάργηση της οδηγίας 87/250/ΕΟΚ της Επιτροπής, της οδηγίας 90/496/ΕΟΚ του Συμβουλίου, της οδηγίας 1999/10/ΕΚ της Επιτροπής, της οδηγίας 2000/13/ΕΚ του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, των οδηγιών 2002/67/ΕΚ και 2008/5/ΕΚ της Επιτροπής και του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 608/2004 της Επιτροπής (ΕΕ L 304 της 22.11.2011, σ. 18-63). Ο κανονισμός (ΕΕ) αριθ. 1169/2011 θα καταργήσει και θα αντικαταστήσει την οδηγία 2000/13/ΕΚ της 13ης Δεκεμβρίου 2014.

([3]) Επιπρόσθετα, το άρθρο 24 του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1169/2011 προβλέπει ότι μετά το πέρας της ημερομηνίας «ανάλωση έως» ένα τρόφιμο θεωρείται ότι δεν είναι ασφαλές σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 14(2) με (5) του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 178/2002 του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου της 28ης Ιανουαρίου 2002 για τον καθορισμό των γενικών αρχών και απαιτήσεων της νομοθεσίας για τα τρόφιμα, για την ίδρυση της Ευρωπαϊκής Αρχής Ασφάλειας των Τροφίμων και τον καθορισμό διαδικασιών σε θέματα ασφάλειας τροφίμων, (ΕΕ L 31 της 1.2.2012, σ. 1).

Τα ελληνικά μέτρα στο επίμαχο θέμα αφορούν τρόφιμα πέραν της ημερομηνίας «ανάλωση κατά προτίμηση πριν από» και όχι τρόφιμα με ημερομηνία λήξης «ανάλωση έως». Σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 17(1) και το άρθρο 19 του κανονισμού 178/2002, οι υπεύθυνοι επιχείρησης τροφίμων πρέπει να διασφαλίσουν ότι η προμήθεια τροφίμων είναι ασφαλής. Πέραν των ειδικών νομοθετικών διατάξεων, όπως για τα αυγά, η εμπορία των τροφίμων μετά τη λήξη της ημερομηνίας ελάχιστης διατηρησιμότητας επιτρέπεται βάσει της νομοθεσίας της Ένωσης, υπό την προϋπόθεση ότι τα εν λόγω τρόφιμα εξακολουθούν να είναι ασφαλή και η παρουσίασή τους δεν είναι παραπλανητική. Αυτό θα μπορούσε να δικαιολογήσει τη ξεχωριστή τοποθέτηση τους σε επίπεδο λιανικής πώλησης και σε χαμηλότερη τιμή, γεγονός που προβλέπεται από το ελληνικό μέτρο. Η Επιτροπή δεν γνωρίζει την ύπαρξη παρόμοιου ρυθμιστικού πλαισίου σε άλλα κράτη μέλη. Δεν προτίθεται να υποβάλλει συστάσεις προς τα κράτη μέλη σχετικά με την κατανάλωση τροφίμων πέραν των ημερομηνιών «ανάλωση κατά προτίμηση πριν από» από ειδικές ομάδες του πληθυσμού. Η Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει πληροφορίες που να οδηγούν στο συμπέρασμα ότι οι αρμόδιες ελληνικές αρχές δεν θα είναι σε θέση να εξασφαλίσουν το κατάλληλο επίπεδο επίσημων ελέγχων για την εξακρίβωση της συμμόρφωσης με τους νέους κανόνες.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009938/13
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Implementation in Greece of legislation regarding the sale of food past its expiration date

1 September saw the entry into force in Greece of measures for placing 'limited durability' products on the shelves of supermarkets and food stores at prices lower than normal. Furthermore, in a recent communication, the Commission has stated that food may be consumed safely even after the 'best before' date, provided that the storage guidelines have been complied with and the packaging has not been damaged, but that the product may have begun to lose its flavour and texture.

In view of the above and the Commission's answer to a previous question, E-009356/2012 entitled 'Sale of food at reduced prices after expiry date', will the Commission state:

1. Has it gathered information about the existence of a legislative framework of this kind in other EU Member States? If so, how will it ensure that consumers' health is protected?

2. How can the sale of products past their expiration date labelled 'best before' be permitted since there is the possibility that the product may have lost its flavour and texture? Is there no risk to consumer health from the consumption of chemical preservatives in these products which are also past their expiration date?

3. What is the point of labelling a product 'best before' a given date or year, since that date is being circumvented through this legislation?

4. Does the Commission intend to make recommendations to Member States so that such products are not consumed by specific population groups (such as children, pregnant women, elderly people with health problems), since these products will have lost their nutritional value?

5. In the light of the fact that Member States should conduct official inspections on a regular basis, according to information available to the Commission, will the Single Food Inspection Agency in Greece be able to cope with the additional controls that will arise from this new legislation, given that it is planned to make a large number of employees of this Agency redundant?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(15 October 2013)

Pre-packed foods, with few exceptions, must bear a date of minimum durability ('best before' date) or a 'use by' date. The 'best before' date indicates the date until which the food retains its expected qualities. The existing EU legislation ([1]) specifies that the 'best before' date should be replaced by a 'use by' date when, from a microbiological point of view, a food is highly perishable and is therefore likely after a short period to constitute an immediate danger to human health. It is the responsibility of the food business operator to determine when a product should be labelled with a use by date. The new Regulation on the provision of food information to consumers ([2]) maintains the existing rules. ([3])

([1]) Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 March 2000 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the labelling, presentation and advertising of foodstuffs (OJ L 109, 6.5.2000, p. 29).

([2]) Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2011 on the provision of food information to consumers, amending Regulations (EC) No 1924/2006 and (EC) No 1925/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council, and repealing Commission Directive 87/250/EEC, Council Directive 90/496/EEC, Commission Directive 1999/10/EC, Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, Commission Directives 2002/67/EC and 2008/5/EC and Commission Regulation (EC) No 608/2004, (OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p. 18). Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 will repeal and replace Directive 2000/13/EC as of 13 December 2014.

([3]) Furthermore, Article 24 of Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 provides that after the 'use by' date a food shall be deemed to be unsafe in accordance with Article 14(2) to (5) of Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety, (OJ L 31, 1.2.2002, p.1).

The Greek measure at issue concerns foods beyond their 'best before' date and not foods with expired 'use by' dates. According to Article 17(1) and Article 19 of Regulation 178/2002 food business operators have to ensure that the food supply is safe. Apart from specific legislation, such as for eggs, the marketing of foods after expiry of their date of minimum durability is allowed under Union law, provided that the foods concerned are still safe and their presentation is not misleading. This could justify their separate placement at retail level and lower pricing, foreseen by the Greek measure. The Commission is not aware of the existence of similar framework rules in other Member States. It does not intend to make recommendations to Member States regarding the consumption of foods beyond their 'best before' dates by specific population groups. The Commission has no information that would lead to conclude that the Greek competent authorities will not be able to ensure the appropriate level of official controls to verify compliance with the new rules.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-009939/13
aan de Commissie
Corien Wortmann-Kool (PPE)
(6 september 2013)

Betreft: Stakingen Duitse sluizen

Op 31 juli heeft KSV „Schuttevaer" een klacht bij de Commissie van de EU ingediend wegens niet-naleving van het Gemeenschapsrecht, met name het beginsel van vrij verkeer van goederen door de Bondsrepubliek Duitsland (art. 34, 35, 36 VWEU juncto art. 4 lid 3 VEU).

De reeds weken durende stakingen zorgen voor een enorme economische en imagoschade voor de binnenvaart in Europa, brengen de betrouwbaarheid van de dienstverlening in gevaar en dreigen ook op langere termijn schade te veroorzaken. De stakingen zijn niet proportioneel, reden waarom KSV „Schuttevaer" een klacht heeft ingediend die ik als lid van het Europees Parlement graag ondersteun.

Ik roep u op de klacht met grote spoed te behandelen en in dat verband stel ik u de volgende vragen.

1. Heeft u deze klacht ontvangen?

2. Bent u zich bewust van de urgentie van deze zaak?

3. Bent u bereid met spoed uitsluitsel te verstrekken over de ontvankelijkheid van de klacht en verdere maatregelen?

Antwoord van de heer Tajani namens de Commissie
(7 oktober 2013)

1. De Commissie heeft de klacht van de Nederlandse redersvereniging ontvangen en deze formeel geregistreerd. Op 22 augustus 2013 is een ontvangstbevestiging naar de klagers gestuurd. De klacht zal zo spoedig mogelijk worden behandeld.

2. De Commissie volgt de beschreven situatie op de voet gezien het risico van ernstige verstoring van het vrije verkeer van goederen en derhalve van schending van de desbetreffende verdragsbepalingen (de artikelen 34-36) en Verordening (EG) nr. 2679/98.

De lidstaten hebben de verantwoordelijkheid alle noodzakelijke adequate maatregelen te nemen teneinde het vrije verkeer van goederen te waarborgen en te verhinderen dat acties van particulieren dit vrije verkeer belemmeren ([1]).

Hiertoe is bij Verordening (EG) nr. 2679/98 een mechanisme voor de uitwisseling van informatie bij belemmeringen van het vrije verkeer van goederen ingesteld, en bepaalt deze verordening dat een lidstaat „zo spoedig mogelijk [reageert] op verzoeken om informatie van de Commissie en van andere lidstaten over de aard van de belemmering of dreigende belemmering, en over de actie die hij heeft ondernomen of voornemens is te ondernemen". De Commissie heeft op 22 augustus 2013 contact met de Duitse autoriteiten opgenomen en blijft de situatie op de voet volgen.

3. Gezien de informatie waarover de Commissie beschikt, lijken de Duitse autoriteiten de passende maatregelen te hebben genomen om aan hun verplichtingen uit hoofde van zowel de verordening als de artikelen 34 tot en met 36 van het VWEU te voldoen.

In dit verband zij erop gewezen dat de lidstaten weliswaar de noodzakelijke adequate maatregelen moeten treffen teneinde het vrije verkeer van goederen op hun grondgebied te waarborgen, maar dat zij daarbij ook rekening moeten houden met andere beschermde rechten en vrijheden, zoals het stakingsrecht.

([1]) Arrest van 9 december 1997 in zaak C-265/95, Commissie/Frankrijk, Jurispr. 1997, blz. I-6959.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009939/13
to the Commission
Corien Wortmann-Kool (PPE)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Strike by German lock-keepers

On 31 July 2013 the Dutch inland shipping association KSV Schuttevaer lodged a complaint with the Commission against the Federal Republic of Germany for failure to comply with EC law, and specifically with the principle of free movement of goods (Articles 34, 35 and 36 TFEU in conjunction with Article 4(3) TEU).

The strikes which have been going on for several weeks now are causing terrible economic damage to inland waterways transport, as well as to its image, are jeopardising the reliability of the service and threatening to cause longer-term damage. The strikes are disproportionate: this is why KSV Schuttevaer has lodged a complaint which I as an MEP am happy to support.

I call on the Commission to deal with this complaint as speedily as possible, and in this connection I have the following questions:

1. Has the Commission received the complaint?

2. Is it aware of the urgency of the matter?

3. Is it prepared to give a definitive ruling without delay on the admissibility of the complaint and on further measures to be taken?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(7 October 2013)

1. The Commission has received and formally registered the complaint of the Dutch shipping association. An acknowledgement of receipt was sent to the complainants on 22 August 2013. The complaint will be handled as quickly as possible.

2. The situation described is being surveyed by the Commission due to the possible risk of seriously disrupting the free movement of goods and thus violating the related Treaty provisions (Articles 34-36) and Reg. (EC) 2679/98.

Member States have the responsibility to take all necessary and proportionate measures in order to ensure the free movement of goods and to prevent it from being obstructed by actions of private individuals ([1]) .

To that effect Reg. (EC) 2679/98 has established a mechanism for the exchange of information when obstacles to the free movement of goods occur and it provides that Member States should '(…) respond as soon as possible to requests for information from the Commission and from other Member States concerning the nature of the obstacle or threat and the action which it has taken or proposes to take'. The Commission undertook the necessary contacts with the German authorities on 22 August 2013 and continues to closely follow the situation.

3. In the light of the information available to the Commission, the German authorities seem to have taken appropriate measures to fulfil their obligations both under the regulation and under Art.34-36 TFEU.

In this respect it must be highlighted that while Member States must take necessary and proportionate measures in order to ensure the free movement of goods in their territory, they also have to take into account other protected rights and freedoms, such as the right to strike.

([1]) Case C 265/95 Commission vs French Republic, ECR 1997 p. I 06959.

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-009940/13
до Комисията
Mariya Gabriel (PPE)
(6 септември 2013 г.)

Относно: Неусвояване на средства по Програмата за развитие на селските райони в Република България

ЕС е на финалната права в оформянето на Обща селскостопанска политика (ОСП) за следващия програмен период 2014—2020 г. В рамките на ОСП, освен на директни плащания, българското земеделие разчита и на Програмата за развитие на селските райони, като за настоящия период 2007—2013 г. средствата по нея са 2, 609 млрд. евро от ЕС и 632 млн. евро от държавния бюджет.

По информация на българските медии съществува реална опасност ситуацията в България и промените във фонд „Земеделие“ да доведат до забавяне на проекти по програмата, което ще лиши България от европейско финансиране. Според медиите има вероятност България да загуби до 300 млн. евро по Програмата за развитие на селските райони до края на тази година.

В тази връзка може ли Комисията да предостави повече информация и в частност относно това:

Има ли опасност от подобни загуби и какъв е техният размер?

Разполага ли Комисията с информация на какво се дължат забавянията по проекти?

Какви са договорените и усвоени средства по програмата от месец февруари 2013 г. насам?

Съществува ли опасност ниската усвояемост да се отрази върху средствата, които България ще получи по програмата за 2014—2020 г?

Отговор, даден от от г-н Cioloş от името на Комисията
(9 октомври 2013 г.)

От началото на програмния период 2007—2013 г. до и включително второто тримесечие на 2013 г. Комисията е изплатила на България 1,42 млрд. евро, което представлява 55 % от общия пакет по Програмата за развитие на селските райони.

Едва в началото на следващата година ще стане ясно дали България ще загуби част от средствата по Европейския земеделски фонд за развитие на селските райони (ЕЗФРСР) за 2013 г. Крайният срок за подаване на последните искания за плащане за 2013 г. е до края на януари 2014 г. За първите две тримесечия на 2013 г. България е представила искания за възстановяване на разходи в размер на 60 млн. евро, които са ѝ били изплатени. Още 338 млн. евро ще трябва да бъдат изразходвани и декларирани през 2013 г. с цел да се избегне отмяна на бюджетни кредити в резултат от прилагането на правилото „година n + 2“.

Българските власти изготвиха план за действие, чиято цел е да се ускори изпълнението на програмата до края на годината и да се намали рискът от отмяна на бюджетни кредити. Очаква се плащанията също да се извършват с по-бързи темпове поради нарасналия през 2013 г. интерес към акроекологичната мярка.

Що се отнася до забавянето по проектите, Комисията продължава да следи съвместно с българските власти темпото, с което се изпълнява Програмата за развитие на селските райони. Общото впечатление е, че наблюдаваното в миналото забавяне при обработката на проектите е до голяма степен преодоляно. При все това е необходимо да се ускори изпълнението на отделни проекти, за да се генерират разходи и да се повиши усвояването на средства.

По отношение на размера на финансирането на страната за периода 2014—2020 г. то се определя на базата на обективни критерии и предходно финансиране, а не въз основа на изпълнението на програмата за предишен период.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009940/13
to the Commission
Mariya Gabriel (PPE)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Non-absorption of Rural Development Programme funds in Bulgaria

The EU is in the home straight in terms of drafting the common agricultural policy (CAP) for the forthcoming 2014-2020 programming period. As part of the CAP, apart from receiving direct payments, Bulgarian agriculture is also counting on the Rural Development Programme, with the funds allocated under it for the current 2007-2013 period amounting to EUR 2.609 billion from the EU and EUR 632 million from the State budget.

According to reports in the Bulgarian media, there is a real danger that the situation in Bulgaria and the changes to the 'Agriculture' fund in Bulgaria will delay projects under the programme, which will leave Bulgaria without any European funding. According to the media, Bulgaria is likely to lose as much as EUR 300 million under the Rural Development Programme by the end of this year.

In regard to this, can the Commission provide any further information and, in particular, about the following matters?

Is there a risk that such losses might occur and how large will they be?

Does the Commission have any information about what the project delays are attributable to?

What funds have been agreed and absorbed under the programme since February 2013?

Is there a risk of the low absorption rate having an impact on the funds which Bulgaria will receive under the 2014-2020 programme?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(9 October 2013)

From the beginning of the 2007-2013 programming period up to and including the second quarter of 2013, the Commission has paid to Bulgaria EUR 1.42 billion, equal to 55% of the total Rural Development programme (RDP) envelope. 7% of this was paid as an advance at the beginning of the programming period.

Whether Bulgaria will lose EAFRD funding in 2013 will only become clear at the beginning of next year. The deadline for submitting the last payment claims for 2013 is the end of January 2014. For the first two quarters of 2013 the level of expenditure claimed by Bulgaria and reimbursed equals EUR 60 million. A further EUR 338 million would need to be spent and declared in 2013 in order to avoid de-commitment as a result of applying the n+2 rule.

The Bulgarian authorities have elaborated an Action Plan aiming to speed up programme implementation by the end of the year and reduce the de-commitment risk. An acceleration of payments is also expected as a result of increased interest in the agri-environmental measure in 2013.

With respect to project delays, the Commission continues to monitor the pace of RDP implementation with the Bulgarian authorities. The general impression is that past delays in processing projects have been overcome to a large extent. However, an acceleration in the implementation of individual projects is necessary in order to generate expenditure and increase financial absorption.

With respect to Member State financial envelopes for 2014-2020, these are determined on the basis of objective criteria and past financial envelopes, and not on past programme execution.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009942/13
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(6 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Drones y legislación europea

Los pequeños vehículos aéreos sin piloto llamados drones son conocidos en la sociedad, sobre todo, por su uso en operaciones militares. Sin embargo, el posible uso de este tipo de vehículos supera ampliamente ese uso y se pueden prever múltiples posibilidades como, por ejemplo, el control de las cosechas, el control del tráfico, tareas de rescate, etc.

Ese tipo de uso puede considerarse beneficioso, pero rápidamente se nos pueden ocurrir otros más maliciosos, como controlar las personas, espiar al vecino o perseguir a personas famosas por *paparazzis* y similares.

Estos vehículos pueden ser muy pequeños, muy precisos y muy baratos, con lo que podrían utilizarse de manera masiva y sin ser apenas percibidos.

El uso de ese tipo de vehículos tanto por las administraciones públicas como por entes privados puede conllevar una invasión de la privacidad de las personas, que pueden ser espiadas con impunidad.

El uso de estos vehículos por usuarios privados no está regulado en la mayoría de los países, aunque se suele autorizar su uso por las administraciones. Por ejemplo, en España, estos aparatos no podrían legalmente volar por falta de marco regulatorio específico sobre su certificación de aeronavegabilidad.

1. ¿Es consciente la Comisión de esa situación?

2. ¿Considera la Comisión que el uso indiscriminado de drones puede ser un riesgo para la privacidad de la ciudadanía de la Unión?

3. ¿Está la Comisión considerando el desarrollo de algún tipo de marco legal sobre los diferentes aspectos concernidos por el uso de drones (técnicos, sociales, etc.), incluida la salvaguarda de la privacidad de la ciudadanía?

Respuesta del Sr. Tajani en nombre de la Comisión
(30 de octubre de 2013)

La Comisión es consciente de los problemas de privacidad y de protección de datos que podrían derivarse de la futura utilización de los drones en lo que respecta, fundamentalmente, a la vigilancia por vídeo y a la divulgación de datos personales.

Europa tiene un marco jurídico global sobre privacidad y protección de datos ([1]) que deben respetar los operadores de los drones. Garantizar el cumplimiento de estas normas es fundamentalmente responsabilidad de los Estados miembros. Las autoridades competentes deben supervisar continuamente la evolución de las aplicaciones de los drones para que los ciudadanos estén plenamente protegidos contra usos abusivos de esta nueva tecnología tan prometedora.

La Comisión está estudiando actualmente la preparación de un marco de medidas que posibiliten y favorezcan el uso civil de los drones, también denominados sistemas de aeronaves dirigidas por control remoto. El marco político puede incluir normas de seguridad y otros temas de interés, como la privacidad y la protección de datos. En general, el marco debe garantizar al mismo tiempo la promoción de nuevas tecnologías para permitir el despegue de este sector tan prometedor y la protección de los ciudadanos con los niveles más altos de seguridad, protección y privacidad. Especialmente en lo referente a la protección de datos, la Comisión llevará a cabo un estudio para identificar posibles fallos en el actual marco regulador y para buscar el modo de garantizar que los drones cumplan con las normas de protección de datos y los derechos fundamentales de la protección de la intimidad de las personas. La Comisión también fomentará la adopción de medidas pertinentes en ámbitos de competencia nacional y velará por un seguimiento permanente de las cuestiones de privacidad y protección de datos.

([1]) La Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales de la UE establece, en particular, el derecho al respeto de la vida privada y familiar, del domicilio y de las comunicaciones de los ciudadanos (artículo 7) y se refiere a la protección de los datos de carácter personal (artículo 8). Estos derechos se plasman en disposiciones y actos específicos de la UE y de las legislaciones nacionales (el artículo 16 del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea, la Directiva 95/46/CE, relativa a la protección de las personas físicas en lo que respecta al tratamiento de datos personales y a la libre circulación de estos datos, la Decisión Marco 2008/977/JAI, relativa a la protección de datos personales tratados en el marco de la cooperación policial y judicial en materia penal, así como legislación nacional sobre protección de datos, vigilancia por vídeo, etc.).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009942/13
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Drones and EU legislation

People are aware of the small unmanned aerial vehicles known as drones, largely as a result of their use in military operations. However, the potential uses for these vehicles far exceed this application and numerous possibilities can be envisaged, such as monitoring crops, monitoring traffic and rescue operations.

These uses can be considered beneficial; however, other, more malicious uses for them may soon be found, such as monitoring people, spying on neighbours and enabling paparazzi and the like to hound celebrities.

Drones can be very small, very accurate and very cheap, and could be used on a massive scale, going largely unnoticed.

The use of such vehicles by both public authorities and private entities may lead to an invasion of personal privacy, as people could be spied on with impunity.

The use of drones by private users is unregulated in most countries, although their use by the authorities is often authorised. For example, in Spain these devices could not legally fly as there is no specific regulatory framework for their airworthiness certification.

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation?

2. Does it believe that the indiscriminate use of drones may pose a risk to EU citizens' privacy?

3. Is it considering developing some kind of legal framework for the different aspects of drone use (technical, social, etc.) including the protection of citizens' privacy?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(30 October 2013)

The Commission is aware of the privacy and data protection concerns that might result from the future use of drones which are mainly linked to video surveillance and disclosure of personal information.

Europe has a comprehensive framework of privacy and data protection legislation ([1]) with which operators of drones must comply. Ensuring compliance with these rules is primarily a responsibility of the Member States. The evolution of drones' applications needs continuous monitoring by the competent authorities so that citizens are fully protected against misuse of this new and promising technology.

The Commission is currently considering the preparation of a supportive and enabling policy framework for the civilian use of drones, also known under the term Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS). The policy framework may include safety regulation and other relevant topics like security, privacy and data protection. In all, the framework should ensure at the same time the promotion of new technologies to let this promising industry take off and the protection of citizens with the highest levels of safety, security and privacy. With regard to data protection in particular, the Commission will conduct a study to identify potential shortfalls in the current regulatory framework and ways to ensure drones comply with data protection rules and fundamental rights to privacy. The Commission will also promote the adoption of relevant measures under national competence and ensure continuous monitoring of privacy and data protection issues.

([1]) The Charter for Fundamental Rights of the EU establishes, in particular, the rights to respect private and family life, home and communications (Article 7) and addresses the protection of personal data (Article 8). These rights are implemented through specific EU and national regulations (Article 16 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, Directive 95/46/EC on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, Framework Decision 2008/977/JHA on the protection of personal data processed in the framework of police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters.as well as national laws on data protection, video surveillance etc.).

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009943/13
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(6 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Presa en la cuenca del río Bergantes

La Confederación Hidrográfica del Ebro ha presentado un proyecto para construir una presa en la cuenca del río Bergantes, en Aragón, en el término municipal de Aiguaviva. Para el mismo se ha abierto un periodo de información pública al que se están presentando numerosas alegaciones, ya que existe una fuerte oposición popular a dicho proyecto en la zona afectada. Las autoridades presentan esta obra como una mera presa de laminación de avenidas para aumentar la seguridad de la presa de Calanda, pero todo indica que no es sino un nuevo embalse de agua, pues su capacidad (60,87 hm^3) y superficie (402,69 ha) superan los del propio embalse de Calanda (54,25 hm^3 y 312 ha). La oposición al proyecto se basa en que la mejora de la seguridad de la presa de Calanda se lograría satisfactoriamente con la construcción de un nuevo aliviadero (proyectado desde hace años y nunca ejecutado), en la inexistencia de demanda de abastecimiento para usos agrarios, industriales o urbanos en ese sector de la cuenca del Ebro y en la destrucción de un espacio que forma parte de la Red Natura 2000, al encontrarse allí el Lugar de Interés Comunitarío (LIC) «Río Bergantes». Dicho LIC está destinado a proteger una especie endémica de esa zona, la petrocoptis pardoi, que se encuentra amenazada, así como especies como la madrilla, el barbo, la nutria, el martín pescador, el alimoche común, el águila azor perdicera o el *thymus serpyllum*.

1. ¿Conoce la Comisión la existencia de este proyecto?

2. ¿Cree la Comisión que la construcción de este gran embalse es compatible con la existencia del LIC «Río Bergantes» y con la legislación de la Unión Europea, especialmente la 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?

3. ¿Va a tomar la Comisión alguna medida al respecto?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(15 de octubre de 2013)

La Comisión no tiene conocimiento de los detalles de este proyecto.

De conformidad con el artículo 6, apartado 3, de la Directiva sobre hábitats ([1]), cualquier plan o proyecto que pueda tener un impacto significativo en un espacio de la Red Natura 2000 se someterá a una adecuada evaluación teniendo en cuenta los objetivos de conservación de dicho espacio, y las autoridades nacionales sólo se declararán de acuerdo con dicho plan o proyecto tras haberse asegurado de que no causará perjuicio a la integridad del espacio en cuestión.

El artículo 4, apartado 7, de la Directiva marco del agua (DMA ([2])) dispone que cualquier proyecto, por ejemplo una presa de gran tamaño, que pueda impedir la consecución de un buen estado ecológico o provoque un deterioro del estado de las masas de agua sólo podrá llevarse a cabo si se cumplen las condiciones establecidas en dicho artículo. Corresponde a las autoridades nacionales velar por el respeto de estas obligaciones.

De la información proporcionada por Su Señoría, parece desprenderse que el proyecto de construcción de una presa en el Río Bergantes no ha sido autorizado, dado que todavía hay un periodo de información pública en curso. Por consiguiente, no se ha podido constatar infracción alguna de la Directiva sobre hábitats ni de otros actos legislativos de la UE en este momento, y la Comisión no tiene previsto adoptar ninguna otra medida al respecto.

([1]) Directiva 92/43/CEE del Consejo, de 21 de mayo de 1992, relativa a la conservación de los hábitats naturales y de la fauna y flora silvestres (DO L 206 de 22.7.1992).

([2]) Directiva 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-009943/13
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Dam in the Bergantes River basin

The Ebro Hydrographic Confederation has presented a plan to build a dam in the Bergantes River basin, in Aragon, in the municipality of Aiguaviva. A public information period for the project has been opened and numerous claims are being made, as there is strong public opposition to it in the affected area. The authorities are presenting the project as a simple flood control dam designed to enhance the safety of the Calanda dam. However, all indications suggest that it is nothing more than a new reservoir, as its capacity (60.87 hm^3) and area (402.69 ha) exceed those of the Calanda reservoir itself (54.25 hm^3 and 312 ha). Opposition to the project is based on the fact that the Calanda dam's safety would be adequately enhanced by constructing a new spillway (planned for years and never built), that there is no demand for water for agricultural, industrial or urban uses in that area of the Ebro basin, and that it would destroy an area that forms part of the Natura 2000 network, namely the 'Río Bergantes' Site of Community Interest (SCI). This SCI is intended to protect a species endemic to the area, Petrocoptis pardoi, which is under threat, as well as species such as the nase, barbel, otter, kingfisher, Egyptian vulture, Bonelli's eagle and *Thymus serpyllum*.

1. Is the Commission aware of this project?

2. Does it believe that the construction of this large reservoir is compatible with the existence of the 'Río Bergantes' SCI and with EU legislation, in particular Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora?

3. Will the Commission take any action in this regard?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(15 October 2013)

The Commission is not aware of the details of this project.

In accordance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive ([1]) any plan or project likely to have a significant impact on a Natura 2000 site must be subject to an appropriate assessment in view of the site's conservation objectives, and the national authorities shall only agree to the plan or project after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned.

Article 4(7) of the Water Framework Directive (WFD ([2])) establishes that any project, such as a large dam, that is liable to cause failure to achieve good ecological status or deterioration of status of water bodies can only be implemented if the conditions set out in that article are fulfilled. It is for the national authorities to ensure that these obligations are respected.

According to the information provided by the Honourable Member, it appears that the project of a dam in the Bergantes River has not been authorised, as a public information period is still ongoing. Therefore, it has not been possible to identify any breach of the Habitats Directive or other EU legislation at this stage, and the Commission does not intend to take any further action in this regard.

([1]) Council Directive 92/43/EEC, of 21 May 1992, on the protection of natural habitats and wild fauna and flora (OJ L 206 of 22.7.1992).
([2]) 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.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-009944/13
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(6 septembrie 2013)

Subiect: Directiva privind consolidarea echilibrului de gen în rândul administratorilor neexecutivi ai societăților cotate la bursă și măsuri conexe

Comisia Europeană a adoptat la 14 noiembrie 2012 propunerea de Directivă privind consolidarea echilibrului de gen în rândul administratorilor neexecutivi ai societăților cotate la bursă și măsuri conexe.

Acest act legislativ stabilește obiectivul ca un procent de 40%, în rândul administratorilor neexecutivi ai societăților cotate la bursă, să fie ocupat de membrii sexului subreprezentat.

Statele membre ar trebui să se asigure că, la selectarea administratorilor neexecutivi în cadrul unei companii cotate la bursă, se va acorda prioritate candidatului aparținând sexului subreprezentat, dacă respectivul candidat are aceleași calificări precum candidatul de sex opus.

În cazul în care la termenul-limită pentru atingerea obiectivului (2018 pentru întreprinderile publice și 2020 pentru cele private) anumite societăți pot face dovada faptului că au respectat toate condițiile prevăzute în directivă, fără însă a atinge procentul de 40%, din motive obiective (spre exemplu, lipsa candidaților din categoria sexului subreprezentat), în ce temei pot fi acestea sancționate? Care este poziția Comisiei în această ipoteză?

Dată fiind amploarea sferei de aplicare a directivei (5000 de societăți din UE) și termenul relativ scurt de implementare, are în vedere Comisia elaborarea unor orientări menite să faciliteze, dar și să catalizeze întregul proces în statele membre?

Care sunt criteriile pe baza cărora a fost decis termenul de expirare al directivei — anul 2028? În opinia Comisiei, acest termen este de natură să asigure ireversibilitatea echilibrului de gen care se va crea în urma implementării directivei?

Răspuns dat de dna Reding în numele Comisiei
(16 octombrie 2013)

În temeiul directivei propuse, societățile nu vor fi sancționate pentru faptul că nu au atins obiectivul de 40 % dacă dispun de proceduri corespunzătoare aplicabile selecționării candidaților care vor fi numiți în funcții de conducere.

Inițiativa Comisiei a sensibilizat deja opinia publică în privința problemei reprezentării insuficiente a femeilor în organele de conducere ale societăților cotate la bursă și a dat un impuls îmbunătățirii echilibrului de gen în cadrul acestor organe. Acest lucru este reflectat de progresele accelerate înregistrate la nivelul UE din momentul lansării discuțiilor, după cum demonstrează rapoartele publicate de Comisie cu privire la acest subiect ([1]). Comunicarea Comisiei care însoțește propunerea de directivă ([2]) cuprinde măsuri de politică complementare care ar putea ajuta societățile și statele membre să atingă obiectivele directivei.

În conformitate cu principiul proporționalității, directiva ar trebui să rămână în vigoare până la asigurarea unui echilibru durabil în structura de gen a organelor de conducere ale întreprinderilor. Progresele rapide înregistrate de statele membre care au introdus acte legislative privind echilibrul de gen în organele de conducere sugerează faptul că directiva își poate atinge obiectivul până în 2028. În temeiul directivei propuse, Comisia va analiza, până cel târziu la 31 decembrie 2021, dacă progresele înregistrare sunt durabile, dacă este necesar să se prelungească durata de aplicare a directivei sau dacă aceasta trebuie modificată. În orice caz, statele membre vor fi libere să mențină actele legislative naționale care transpun directiva dincolo de această dată.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/gender-decision-making/index_en.htm
([2]) COM(2012) 615.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009944/13
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Directive on improving the gender balance among non-executive directors of companies listed on stock exchanges and related measures

The Commission adopted the proposal for a directive on improving the gender balance among non-executive directors of companies listed on stock exchanges and related measures on 14 November 2012.

The purpose of this piece of legislation is to ensure that 40% of posts among non-executive directors of companies listed on stock exchanges are held by members of the under-represented sex.

Member States should ensure, when selecting non-executive directors in a company listed on a stock exchange, that priority will be given to the candidate of the under-represented sex if that candidate is equally qualified as the candidate of the other sex.

If, by the deadline for achieving the target (2018 for public companies and 2020 for private companies), some companies can prove that they have met all the conditions stipulated in the directive, but without reaching the 40% target, for objective reasons (for instance, due to a lack of relevant candidates from the other sex), on what basis can they be penalised? What stance does the Commission take on this hypothetical situation?

Given the directive's extensive scope of application (5 000 companies in the EU) and the relatively short period for implementation, does the Commission intend to draft a set of guidelines designed not only to facilitate, but also to give some impetus to the whole process in Member States?

What criteria were used as the basis for deciding on 2028 as the year for the directive's expiry? Does the Commission believe that this deadline can ensure that the gender balance which will be created following the directive's implementation will be irreversible?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(16 October 2013)

Under the proposed Directive companies would not face sanctions for failing to reach the 40% objective if they have in place appropriate procedures applying to the selection of candidates for board appointments.

The Commission initiative has already raised the awareness of the problem of underrepresentation of women on boards of listed companies and given impetus to the process of improving gender balance on boards. This is reflected in the accelerated progress on the EU level since the discussions were launched as demonstrated by the reports published by the Commission on the topic ([1]). The Commission Communication accompanying the proposed directive ([2]) proposes complementary policy measures which can help companies and Member States to achieve the aims of the directive.

In line with the principle of proportionality, the directive should only stay in force until a sustainable balance in the gender composition of company boards is ensured. The quick progress achieved by Member States which introduced legislation concerning gender balance on boards suggests that the directive can achieve its aim by 2028. Under the proposed directive, the Commission will review by 31 December 2021 at the latest, whether the progress is sustainable or whether there is a need to extend its duration or to amend it otherwise. In any event Member States will be free to maintain national legislation transposing the directive beyond that date.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/gender-decision-making/index_en.htm
([2]) COM(2012) 615.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009945/13
a la Comisión
José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE)
(6 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Acuerdo de asociación UE-Mercosur

La última Reunión Ministerial entre la UE y el Mercosur tuvo lugar el pasado 26 de enero de este mismo año en el marco de la Cumbre UE-CELAC que se celebró en Santiago de Chile. En ella, ambas partes acordaron que el intercambio de ofertas concretas en lo relativo a las obligaciones aduaneras y las cuotas tendría lugar en el último cuatrimestre del año 2013.

Los últimos acontecimientos muestran una serie de cambios significativos que han tenido lugar a nivel interno dentro del Mercosur: especialmente, la voluntad del bloque de levantar la suspensión a Paraguay como miembro tras su normalización institucional con la toma de posesión del presidente Cartes el pasado 15 de agosto.

Por ello, y dado que nos encontramos ya en el último cuatrimestre del año 2013, pregunto a la Comisión:

¿Cuál es el estado actual de las negociaciones y en qué punto preciso se encuentran las mismas?

¿Cuándo se espera que se produzca el intercambio de ofertas concretas?

¿Cuándo prevé la Comisión que podrán concluir con éxito estas negociaciones?

¿Sigue existiendo voluntad política por parte de los países del Mercosur de concluir este acuerdo?

Respuesta del Sr. De Gucht en nombre de la Comisión
(25 de octubre de 2013)

Después de haber sido suspendidas en 2004, las negociaciones de un Acuerdo de Asociación UE-Mercosur se reanudaron en 2010. Desde entonces se han celebrado nueve rondas de negociación, que se han centrado en la parte «normativa» (normas) sobre comercio e inversiones en el futuro acuerdo.

En la última reunión ministerial EU-Mercosur, que se celebró el 26 de enero de 2013 en Santiago de Chile, se acordó el intercambio de ofertas de acceso al mercado de bienes, servicios y contratos públicos «a más tardar en el último trimestre de 2013».

Ambas partes están trabajando en ello. Al parecer, los distintos países de Mercosur han preparado sus proyectos de oferta, pero todavía tienen que acordar una oferta conjunta. La Comisión se está preparando también activamente para un posible intercambio de ofertas.

Resulta, por lo tanto, difícil fijar plazos concretos para concluir dichas negociaciones. Sin embargo, el intercambio de ofertas de acceso al mercado bastante ambiciosas constituiría un avance importante. El claro compromiso de intercambiar pronto ofertas que contrajeron los miembros de Mercosur en Santiago y el ulterior trabajo preparatorio de cada una de las partes refleja el nivel de compromiso de Mercosur en estas negociaciones.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009945/13
to the Commission
José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: EU-Mercosur Association Agreement

The last EU-Mercosur ministerial meeting took place on 26 January 2013 as part of the EU-CELAC Summit held in Santiago de Chile. At the meeting, both parties agreed that the exchange of specific offers regarding customs duties and quotas would take place in the last quarter of 2013.

Recent events reveal a number of significant changes that have taken place internally within Mercosur: in particular, the bloc's willingness to lift Paraguay's suspension as a member following its institutional normalisation with the inauguration of President Cartes on 15 August 2013.

Therefore, and as we are already in the last quarter of 2013:

What is the current state of negotiations and precisely what stage are they at?

When does the Commission expect specific offers to be exchanged?

When does it expect these negotiations to be successfully concluded?

Do the Mercosur countries still have the political will to conclude these negotiations?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(25 October 2013)

After being suspended in 2004, negotiations of an EU-Mercosur Association agreement resumed in 2010. Since then, there have been nine negotiating rounds, which have focused on the 'normative' part (rules) on trade and investment in the future agreement.

The last EU-Mercosur ministerial meeting on 26 January 2013 in Santiago de Chile agreed on the exchange of market access offers on goods, services and government procurement 'not later than the last quarter of 2013'.

Follow-up on both sides is ongoing. Reportedly, individual Mercosur countries have been preparing their draft offers but would still have to agree on a joint offer. The Commission is also actively preparing for a possible exchange of offers.

It is therefore difficult to set concrete timelines to conclude these negotiations. However, the exchange of sufficiently ambitious market access offers would be an important step forward.

The clear commitment made by Mercosur members in Santiago to exchange offers soon, and their internal preparatory work thereafter, reflects the level of engagement of Mercosur in these negotiations.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009946/13
an die Kommission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(6. September 2013)

Betrifft: Aufwand und Kosten durch die Verwaltung der Tabakabkommen

Seit 2004 hat die Kommission Kooperationsabkommen mit vier großen Tabakherstellern (Philip Morris International, Japan Tobacco International, Imperial Tobacco Limited und British American Tobacco) abgeschlossen. Insgesamt geht es um mehr als 1,7 Mrd. EUR an regelmäßigen Zahlungen bis 2029 auf ein verzinstes Konto außerhalb des Haushaltsplans der EU.

Anwaltskosten innerhalb des Haushaltsplans der EU

1. Wie viel Vollzeitäquivalente (FTE = full time equivalents) wendete der Juristische Dienst der Kommission im Jahr 2010, 2011 und 2012 auf, um diese Tabakabkommen zu verwalten?

2. Welche sonstigen Kosten entstanden in den jeweiligen Jahren beim Juristischen Dienst? Wofür?

3. Wie hoch waren die Anwaltskosten für die Betreuung/Verwaltung/Beratung dieser Tabakabkommen?

4. Wofür fielen diese Anwaltskosten genau an? Und wie wurden diese Kosten ermittelt?

5. Von welcher Haushaltslinie wurden diese Anwaltskosten gedeckt?

6. Welche Anwaltskanzleien wurden im Rahmen dieser Tabakabkommen für die Europäische Union aktiv?

Anwaltskosten außerhalb des Haushaltsplans der EU

7. Im Zuge der Tabakabkommen wurden 268 Mio. USD für Anwälte außerhalb des Haushaltsplans der EU gezahlt?

8. Wofür fielen diese Kosten an?

9. Wie wurden diese Kosten ermittelt?

10. Welche Anwaltskanzleien wurden von diesen Geldern bezahlt?

11. Welche weiteren Kosten wurden von diesem Konto beglichen? In welcher Höhe?

Antwort von Herrn Šemeta im Namen der Kommission
(30. Oktober 2013)

Die Verwaltung der mit Zigarettenherstellern geschlossenen Kooperationsabkommen über die Bekämpfung von Schmuggel und Betrug im Zollbereich liegt in erster Linie in der Verantwortung des OLAF. Der Juristische Dienst der Kommission leistet in diesem Zusammenhang Rechtsberatung und vertritt die Kommission vor Gericht.

Was die internen juristischen Kosten anbelangt, so sind alle Bediensteten des Juristischen Dienstes mit mehreren Themen und Rechtssachen befasst. Es ist daher nicht möglich, zuverlässig anzugeben, wie viele Vollzeitäquivalente zur Behandlung von Fragen im Zusammenhang mit den Abkommen mit Zigarettenherstellern aufgewendet wurden.

Bezüglich der Vereinbarungen mit Rechtsanwälten ist anzumerken, dass solche Vereinbarungen sich teilweise auf Rechtsstreitigkeiten beziehen, die noch bei Gericht anhängig ist. Darüber hinaus enthalten diese Vereinbarungen vertrauliche Geschäftsinformationen über die beteiligten Anwaltskanzleien. Derartige Informationen können daher nicht in einer Antwort auf eine parlamentarische Anfrage offengelegt werden.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009946/13
to the Commission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Work and costs involved in administering the tobacco agreements

Since 2004, the Commission has signed Cooperation Agreements with four large tobacco manufacturers (Philip Morris International, Japan Tobacco International, Imperial Tobacco Group and British American Tobacco). Regular payments amounting in total to more than EUR 1.7 billion will be made in the period up to 2029 to an interest-bearing account outside the EU budget.

Lawyers' costs within the EU budget

1. How many full-time equivalents (FTEs) were needed by the Commission's Legal Service in 2010, 2011 and 2012 to administer these tobacco agreements?

2. Which other costs were incurred during this period by the Legal Service? What for?

3. How much was spent on lawyers' costs for supporting, administering and advising on these tobacco agreements?

4. What exactly were these lawyers' costs incurred for? How were these costs identified?

5. Which budget line covered these lawyers' costs?

6. Which law firms worked on these tobacco agreements on behalf of the European Union?

Lawyers' costs outside the EU budget

7. As part of the tobacco agreements, was USD 268 million spent on lawyers outside the EU budget?

8. What were these costs incurred for?

9. How were these costs identified?

10. Which law firms was this money paid to?

11. Which other costs were settled from this account? What were the amounts?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(30 October 2013)

The administration of the cooperation agreements with cigarette manufacturers, with the purpose of combatting smuggling and customs fraud, is primarily the responsibility of OLAF. The Commission's Legal Service provides legal advice in this context, and is in charge of representing the Commission in court.

As regards in-house legal costs, all Members of the Legal Service work on multiple issues and cases. It is therefore not possible to indicate reliably how many FTEs have been dedicated to issues relating to the agreements with cigarette manufacturers.

As regards arrangements with lawyers, it should be noted that such arrangements relate partially to litigation which is still pending in court. Moreover, these arrangements contain business confidential information relating to the law firms involved. Such information can therefore not be divulged in a reply to a parliamentary question.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-009947/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Maria Eleni Koppa (S&D)
(6 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Εθνικές εντάσεις στην Κροατία

Την Δευτέρα, 2 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013, στην πόλη Βούκοβαρ της Κροατίας, πάνω από 50 διαδηλωτές, τόσο πολίτες του Βούκοβαρ όσο και μέλη της οργάνωσης «Επιτελείο για την Άμυνα του Κροατικού Βούκοβαρ», σε μια κίνηση βαθύτατα πολιτικού περιεχομένου, κατέστρεψαν επιγραφές διοικητικών κτηρίων, επειδή αυτές ήταν γραμμένες όχι μόνο με το λατινικό αλλά και με το κυριλλικό αλφάβητο. Την ίδια ημέρα συνελήφθησαν διάφορα άτομα, με την υποψία εγκληματικής δράσης κατά τη διάρκεια της διαδήλωσης.

Την Τρίτη, 3 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013, στο κλίμα των διαδηλώσεων στο Βούκοβαρ, εμφανίστηκαν γκράφιτι στο Ντουμπρόβνικ με σοβινιστικό και αντι-σερβικό περιεχόμενο, εκ των οποίων ένα στον τοίχο ορθόδοξης σέρβικης εκκλησίας. Οι διαδηλώσεις συνεχίστηκαν και την Τετάρτη, χωρίς όμως κανένα σοβαρό επεισόδιο, ενώ την Πέμπτη, 5 Σεπτεμβρίου, πραγματοποιήθηκε συγκέντρωση οργανώσεων θυμάτων του πολέμου από όλη την Κροατία, προκειμένου να διατυπώσουν ένα περαιτέρω σχέδιο δράσης σε συνεργασία με το «Επιτελείο για την Άμυνα του Κροατικού Βούκοβαρ». Επιπλέον αξίζει αναφοράς το εθνικιστικό περιεχόμενο των δηλώσεων του ηγέτη της οργάνωσης αυτής, Τόμισλαβ Γιόσιτς.

Σύμφωνα με το Σύνταγμα της Κροατίας, μια εθνική μειονότητα, που αποτελεί τουλάχιστον το εν τρίτο της εκάστοτε τοπικής κοινότητας, δικαιούται να ζητήσει την αναγραφή των διοικητικών επιγραφών και στην γλώσσα της.

Στο πλαίσιο αυτό και βάσει του άρθρου 2 της Συνθήκης της ΕΕ περί σεβασμού των μειονοτήτων, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Καταδικάζει τα συμβάντα που έλαβαν μέρος την τελευταία εβδομάδα, μόλις δύο μήνες μετά την ένταξη της Κροατίας στην ΕΕ;

2. Προτίθεται να προβεί σε συστάσεις προς τις κροατικές αρχές, σχετικά με την προώθηση κάποιου είδους εκστρατείας για «εθνική συμφιλίωση»;

Απάντηση της κ. Reding εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(7 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 2 της Συνθήκης για την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση, ο σεβασμός των δικαιωμάτων των προσώπων που ανήκουν σε μειονότητες αποτελεί μία από τις βασικές αρχές της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης. Επιπροσθέτως, τα άρθρα 21 και 22 του Χάρτη των Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης απαγορεύουν τις διακρίσεις βάσει της ιδιότητας μέλους εθνικής μειονότητας και ζητούν από την Ένωση να σεβασθεί την πολιτιστική, θρησκευτική και γλωσσική πολυμορφία.

Η Επιτροπή καταδικάζει οποιαδήποτε μορφή βίας κατά των μειονοτήτων ή οποιασδήποτε άλλης ομάδας. Ωστόσο, όπως διευκρίνισε π.χ. στην απάντησή της στη γραπτή ερώτηση E-006204/2013, η Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει γενικές αρμοδιότητες σε ό,τι αφορά τις μειονότητες. Ειδικότερα, η Επιτροπή δεν έχει αρμοδιότητα όσον αφορά τον ορισμό και την αναγνώριση των εθνικών μειονοτήτων, τον αυτοπροσδιορισμό και την αυτονομία τους ή τη χρήση των περιφερειακών ή μειονοτικών γλωσσών, ζητήματα που εμπίπτουν στην αρμοδιότητα των κρατών μελών. Σε τέτοιες περιπτώσεις η Επιτροπή δεν απευθύνει συστάσεις στα κράτη μέλη. Ταυτοχρόνως, η Επιτροπή έχει επίγνωση των συνεχών προσπαθειών που καταβάλλει η Κροατία με στόχο αφενός την προστασία των δικαιωμάτων των ατόμων που ανήκουν σε μειονότητες και αφετέρου την ευαισθητοποίηση του πληθυσμού για τα άτομα αυτά ώστε να διασφαλίζεται η άσκηση των δικαιωμάτων τους. Σύμφωνα με τις δεσμεύσεις που ανέλαβε η Κροατία κατά τη διάρκεια της διαδικασίας προσχώρησης, η εφαρμογή του κροατικού συνταγματικού νόμου για τα δικαιώματα των εθνικών μειονοτήτων συνεχίζεται με σταθερούς ρυθμούς.

Στο πλαίσιο του πεδίου εφαρμογής της νομοθεσίας της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, η Επιτροπή διασφαλίζει ότι τα κράτη μέλη, κατά την εφαρμογή της νομοθεσίας αυτής, σέβονται τα θεμελιώδη δικαιώματα που ορίζει ο Χάρτης. Επίσης, τα νομοθετικά και χρηματοδοτικά προγράμματα της ΕΕ αντιμετωπίζουν τις διακρίσεις και την παρακίνηση σε βία ή μίσος λόγω φυλής ή εθνικής ή εθνοτικής καταγωγής που ενδέχεται να έχουν αρνητικές συνέπειες για άτομα που ανήκουν σε μειονότητες.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009947/13
to the Commission
Maria Eleni Koppa (S&D)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: National tensions in Croatia

On Monday, 2 September 2013, during a highly political demonstration in the town of Vukovar in Croatia, over 50 demonstrators, both citizens of Vukovar and members of the Headquarters for the Defence of Croatian Vukovar, tore down signs on State buildings because they were written in both the Latin and Cyrillic alphabets. On the same day, various people were arrested on suspicion of criminal activity during the demonstration.

On Tuesday, 3 September 2013, and in the same vein as the demonstrations in Vukovar, chauvinist and anti-Serbian graffiti appeared in Dubrovnik, including on the wall of an Orthodox Serbian church. The demonstrations continued on Wednesday, without any serious incident, but on Thursday, 5 September, war veteran organisations rallied from throughout Croatia in order to form another action plan, in cooperation with the Headquarters for the Defence of Croatian Vukovar. The ethnic content of the statements by Tomislav Josic, leader of that organisation, should also be mentioned.

Under the Croatian Constitution, an ethnic minority comprising at least one-third of a local community is entitled to request that signs on State buildings be written in their language.

In view of the above, and in light of Article 2 of the EU Treaty on respect for minorities, will the Commission say:

1. Does it condemn the events which took place last week, just two months after the accession of Croatia to the EU?

2. Does it intend to make recommendations to the Croatian authorities in order to promote some sort of national reconciliation campaign?

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

According to Article 2 of the Treaty on the European Union, the respect for the rights of persons belonging to minorities constitutes one of the founding values of the European Union. Furthermore, Articles 21 and 22 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union prohibit discrimination based on membership of a national minority and provide for the respect by the Union of cultural, religious and linguistic diversity.

The Commission condemns any form of violence against minorities or against any other group. However, as explained e.g. in its reply to Written Question E-006204/2013, the Commission has no general powers as regards minorities. In particular, the Commission has no competence over the definition and recognition of national minorities, their self-determination and autonomy or the use of regional or minority languages, which fall under the responsibility of the Member States. In such cases the Commission does not make recommendations to Member States. At the same time the Commission is aware of the continued efforts of Croatia aimed at protecting the rights of and raising awareness for persons belonging to minorities in order to ensure the exercise of their rights. In line with the commitments made during the accession process, the implementation of the Croatian Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities has continued at a steady pace.

Within the scope of European Union law, the Commission ensures that Member States, when implementing this law, respect fundamental rights laid down in the Charter. Furthermore, EU legislation and financing programmes address discrimination and incitement to violence or hatred based on race or national or ethnic origin which may affect persons belonging to minorities.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-009948/13
till kommissionen
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(6 september 2013)

Angående: Viljeöverensstämmelse bland företag som begränsar konkurrensen för strömningstjänster

I sitt svar på skriftlig fråga E-005128/2013 förklarar kommissionen kortfattat hur den ser på processen med att fastställa standarder enligt artikel 101 i EUF-fördraget i förhållande till den europeiska konkurrensramen. Syftet med frågan var dock inte att få en redogörelse för kommissionens inställning till standardiseringsprocessen, utan att kommissionen skulle förklara standardernas inverkan på marknaden när de väl införts.

Det torde vara uppenbart att de aktörer som deltar i diskussionerna om standarder i World Wide Web-konsortiet (W3C) är företag i den mening som avses i konkurrenslagstiftningen. Företag får normalt sett inte ingå en viljeöverensstämmelse eller sluta ett avtal som skulle begränsa konkurrensen på den inre marknaden.

När det gäller den viljeöverensstämmelse som för närvarande diskuteras inom W3C verkar det troligt att resultatet kommer att bli en begränsning av affärsmodellerna till ett särskilt användningsfall som just nu förs fram av ett fåtal stora icke-europeiska aktörer på EU:s marknad. Det användningsfall som förespråkas kommer högst sannolikt att avskräcka från användning av alla andra affärsmodeller, och den standardiseringsprocess som används för att driva igenom det kommer nästan helt säkert att antas av alla större webbläsarleverantörer, något som påverkar i princip alla europeiska aktörer uppströms och nedströms på marknaderna för innehållsdistribution, inklusive slutkonsumenterna.

Vilka verktyg står till kommissionens förfogande för att se till att viljeöverensstämmelsen bland de deltagande företagen i den standardiseringsprocess som avses i skriftlig fråga E-005128/2013 inte medför ett befästande av en konkurrensbegränsning på marknaden för strömningstjänster riktade till slutkonsumenterna?

Svar från Joaquín Almunia på kommissionens vägnar
(5 november 2013)

Det stämmer att företag enligt artikel 101 i EUF-fördraget inte får ingå ”viljeöverensstämmelse” eller sluta konkurrenshämmande avtal. Det är emellertid omöjligt att fastställa branschstandarder utan att företag kommer överens om vilka tekniska lösningar som ska ingå. När man väljer en viss teknik är det en naturlig följd att andra tekniker utesluts. Även om sådana uteslutningar är en naturlig del av standardiseringsprocesser, är det möjligt att det kan ge upphov till konkurrenshämmande effekter.

Som framgår av svaret på den skriftliga frågan E-005128/2013 strävar kommissionen efter att utnyttja standardiseringsprocessens positiva effekter och samtidigt hämma de konkurrensbegränsande effekterna genom att föreskriva vissa villkor (som att standarden ska vara utan begränsningar, öppen för insyn och att det finns tillgång till standardiserad teknik) som måste uppfyllas för att ett standardiseringsavtal ska falla utanför tillämpningsområdet för artikel 101.1 i EUF-fördraget.

Kommissionen har inte fått någon information som tyder på att fastställandet av standarder inom W3C inte skulle uppfylla ett eller flera av dessa villkor. W3C har mycket skiftande medlemmar, bland annat universitet och icke-vinstdrivande organisationer som Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF), och frågan huruvida förvaltningen av digitala rättigheter i HTML 5 ska inkluderas eller ej har varit och är fortfarande öppen för diskussion inom och utanför den relevanta arbetsgruppen för W3C.

Inte desto mindre kommer kommissionen att fortsätta följa standardiseringsprocessen av HTML 5 och se till att EU:s konkurrensregler efterlevs till fullo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009948/13
to the Commission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: 'Meeting of minds' of undertakings restrict competition of streaming services

In its reply to Written Question E-005128/2013, the Commission explains in a concise way how it views the process of setting standards under Article 101 TFEU as it pertains to the European competition framework. However, the purpose of the Written Question was to invite the Commission to clarify the effects of the standards on the market once they are in place, not to explain its approach to the standardisation process.

It should be self-evident that the entities involved in the standards discussions at the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) are undertakings in the meaning of competition law. Undertakings cannot normally engage in a 'meeting of minds', or enter into an agreement, that would restrict competition on the internal market.

In the case of the 'meeting of minds' currently being pursued within the W3C, it seems likely that the outcome will be a restriction of business models to a specific use case currently being advanced by a few, large non-European actors on the European market. The use case in question is highly likely to discourage other business models, and the standardisation process used to push it will almost certainly be adopted by all major browser vendors, thereby affecting virtually all European actors on the content distribution markets, upstream as well as downstream, including the end-consumers.

What tools does the Commission have at its disposal to ensure that the 'meeting of minds' of undertakings participating in the standardisation process referred to in Written Question E-005128/2013 does not entail the codification of a restriction of competition on the market for streaming services targeting end-consumers?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(5 November 2013)

It is correct that undertakings are not allowed to engage in a 'meeting of minds' or to enter into agreements that restrict competition in contravention of Article 101 TFEU. However, industry standardisation is not possible without undertakings agreeing on which technological solutions to include in a standard. The corollary of choosing a certain technology is the exclusion of other technologies. Whilst this exclusion is an inherent feature of standardisation, it does not come without potential risks for competition.

As explained in the reply to Written Question E-005128/2013, the Commission's approach consists of seeking to harness the significant positive effects of standardisation, while reducing the possibility of restrictive effects on competition by laying out certain conditions, such as unrestricted participation, transparency and access to the standardised technology, under which a standardisation agreement would normally fall outside the scope of Article 101(1) TFEU.

The Commission does not have any information at its disposal suggesting that the standard-setting within W3C does not fulfil one or more of these conditions. W3C has a diverse membership including universities and non-profit organisations, such as the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF), and the question whether or not to include digital rights management in HTML 5 was, and continues to be, openly debated within and outside of the relevant W3C working group.

The Commission will nevertheless continue to follow the standardisation process with respect to HTML 5 so as to ensure that the EU competition rules are fully complied with.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009949/13
to the Commission
Brian Simpson (S&D)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Animal welfare — exemption from cross-compliance rules

Council Directive 98/58/EC establishes general rules concerning the protection of farmed animals, irrespective of species. It requires farmers to guarantee *inter alia* that their animals have freedom of movement, an appropriate environment and suitable accommodation, equipment, feed, water and other necessities, and that artificial breeding that may cause suffering or injury is avoided. However, it refers only to animals kept for farming purposes, excluding from its scope animals intended for use in competitions, shows or cultural or sporting events or activities, e.g. bulls reared for bullfighting.

The directive is listed as one of the Statutory Management Requirements under cross-compliance rules in the Common Agriculture Policy (CAP). It means that farmers must protect the welfare of their animals in order to receive EU CAP subsidies. With regard to animal welfare standards, currently only this general farm directive and the directives on the welfare of pigs and calves are included in cross-compliance.

Under the current CAP rules farmers rearing bulls for bullfighting are entitled to receive direct payments. This is already unacceptable for millions of taxpayers who are strongly against this barbaric sport. The exemption from the scope of Directive 98/58/EC moreover means that these farmers receive EU subsidies without needing to comply with any EU animal welfare rules.

Does the Commission not agree that all farmers in receipt of EU agricultural subsidies must guarantee the welfare of their farmed animals?

Does the Commission intend to revise the directive in order to guarantee the welfare of all farmed animals, not only those kept for farming purposes? If not, what will the Commission do to ensure the welfare of the animals excluded from the directive's scope?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(22 October 2013)

Article 13 on the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union places a legal duty on the European Commission to pay full regard to the welfare of animals when formulating and implementing, amongst others, agriculture policy, while respecting provisions and customs of the Member States relating in particular to religious rites, cultural traditions and regional heritage. It needs to be noted, however, that the European Union operates under the principles of conferred competences and subsidiarity. Competences not conferred upon the Union in the Treaties remain with the Member States under the principle of subsidiarity. In areas that do not fall within its exclusive competence, the Union shall act only if, and in so far as, the objectives cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Member States (Articles 1, 4 and 5 of the EU Treaty).

As a consequence, certain topics related to animal protection remain under the responsibility of the Member States (e.g. the use of animals in competitions, shows, cultural or sporting events).

There is no specific EU financial aid designed to support the breeding of bulls for fighting, under either pillar of the common agricultural policy (CAP).

Direct support to farmers is mostly paid irrespective of the crops they grow or the animals they breed (decoupling) and no specific payments are made for the breeding of bulls. EU second pillar support through rural development measures can be granted to holdings for several purposes independently from the final use of the agricultural production of the farm.

The Commission is currently not proposing to alter the scope of Directive 98/58 ([1]) to include animals used in competitions, shows or cultural events.

([1]) Council Directive 98/58/EC of 20 July 1998 concerning the protection of animals kept for farming purposes; OJ L 221, 8.8.1998, p. 23.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009950/13
a la Comisión
Romana Jordan (PPE), Ivo Belet (PPE) y Pilar del Castillo Vera (PPE)
(6 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Financiación de patentes en la Unión Europea

El año pasado, la gran mayoría de los Estados miembros de la UE acordaron el establecimiento de una patente unitaria. Pese a que actualmente los innovadores europeos pueden proteger sus inventos mediante un único procedimiento, los costes económicos del proceso aún podrían suponer un obstáculo para las empresas europeas. Además, el documento de la Comisión sobre el Estado de la Unión por la innovación 2012 señala que el potencial innovador de Europa puede liberarse, entre otros, abaratando el coste de la protección por patente ([1]).

En las páginas web de la Comisión ([2]) se informa de que se está llevando a cabo un proceso tras el cual un grupo de expertos presentará un informe sobre la posibilidad de crear un fondo de patentes de la UE.

En consecuencia, se ruega a la Comisión que responda a las siguientes preguntas:

1. ¿Cuándo se prevé la publicación del informe previamente mencionado?

2. ¿Cómo se utilizarán los resultados del informe del grupo de expertos?

3. ¿Qué medidas contempla la Comisión para apoyar a las empresas europeas en la adquisición de protección por patente?

Respuesta de la Sra. Geoghegan-Quinn en nombre de la Comisión
(4 de noviembre de 2013)

1. La Comisión espera que la entrega, en mayo de 2014, del informe de un grupo de expertos sobre las opciones de actuación de la UE o de la actuación apoyada por la UE, en su caso, fomente el mercado de las patentes. Con ello se podría impulsar la agregación de patentes mediante un fondo, el corretaje de patentes, los consorcios de patentes u otras formas de agregación. Este grupo se va a reunir para abordar algunos de los problemas señalados en un documento de trabajo de los servicios de la Comisión (DSC) ([3]), que representa una contribución a la realización del compromiso n° 22 de la Unión por la innovación sobre el desarrollo de un mercado de patentes y licencias. El DSC agrupó estos elementos bajo el paraguas de la agregación de patentes. El grupo de expertos tendrá en cuenta las iniciativas existentes y propondrá medidas en caso de señalarse claramente un fallo del mercado que podría solucionarse de forma eficaz mediante la intervención de la UE.

2. La Comisión tendrá en cuenta el informe del grupo de expertos en sus deliberaciones sobre la decisión de financiar o apoyar financieramente la actuación de terceros en este ámbito, o de introducir medidas reglamentarias encaminadas a promover el mercado de patentes y licencias.

3. La Comisión dirige varios servicios de asistencia sobre derechos de propiedad intelectual (DPI) en Europa, China y la región de la ASEAN ([4]) para apoyar a las empresas europeas y, en particular, a las PYME, para que protejan sus DPI. Ello incluye la protección y la observancia de las patentes. Actualmente se está creando otro servicio de asistencia sobre derechos de propiedad intelectual de las PYME para el Mercosur. Además, la patente europea de efecto unitario se ha concebido para reducir los costes de protección de las patentes en Europa.

([1]) Comisión Europea, Estado de la «Unión por la innovación» 2012 — Acelerar el cambio, COM(2013) 149 final, 21.3.2013, Bruselas. Disponible en: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0149:FIN:es:PDF

([2]) Comisión Europea, Empresa e Industria, Derechos de propiedad intelectual. Disponible en versión inglesa: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/innovation/policy/intellectual-property/index_en.htm

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/innovation/files/swd-2012-458_en.pdf

([4]) www.iprhelpdesk.eu, www.china-iprhelpdesk.eu, www.asean-iprhelpdesk.eu

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-009950/13
aan de Commissie
Romana Jordan (PPE), Ivo Belet (PPE) en Pilar del Castillo Vera (PPE)
(6 september 2013)

Betreft: Financiering van octrooien in de Europese Unie

Vorig jaar heeft een ruime meerderheid van de EU-lidstaten overeenstemming bereikt over de invoering van een unitair octrooi. Hoewel Europese innoverende bedrijven hun uitvindingen nu in een enkele procedure kunnen beschermen, vormen de kosten hiervan nog steeds een mogelijke belemmering voor Europese ondernemingen. Ook wordt in het document van de Commissie over de „Stand van zaken rond de Innovatie-Unie 2012" verklaard dat het innovatieve potentieel van Europa kan worden vrijgegeven door o.a. een goedkopere verwerving van patentbescherming ([1]).

Op de website van de Commissie ([2]) wordt medegedeeld dat er momenteel een proces aan de gang is, in het kader waarvan een deskundigengroep een rapport zal uitbrengen over de mogelijkheid van een EU-patentfonds.

Daarom vragen wij de Commissie het volgende:

1. Wanneer kan bovengenoemd rapport worden verwacht?

2. Wat wordt er gedaan met de resultaten van het rapport van de deskundigengroep?

3. Welke maatregelen voorziet de Commissie om Europese ondernemingen te ondersteunen bij de verwerving van patentbescherming?

Antwoord van mevrouw Geoghegan-Quinn namens de Commissie
(4 november 2013)

1. De Commissie verwacht dat de deskundigengroep in mei 2014 een verslag zal indienen over eventuele EU-maatregelen of door de EU ondersteunde maatregelen ter bevordering van de octrooienmarkt. Overwogen zou kunnen worden de samenvoeging van octrooien te bevorderen via een octrooifonds, octrooimakelaardijen, octrooipools of andere vormen van samenvoeging. De deskundigengroep moet een aantal van de in een werkdocument van de diensten van de Commissie vermelde kwesties aanpakken ([3]) en zo agendapunt 22 van de Innovatie-Unie inzake de ontwikkeling van een markt voor octrooien en vergunningen helpen verwezenlijken. In het werkdocument worden deze kwesties gegroepeerd onder het algemene concept „samenvoeging van octrooien". De deskundigengroep zal bestaande initiatieven in overweging nemen en maatregelen voorstellen als een marktfalen wordt vastgesteld dat met behulp van EU-maatregelen doeltreffend kan worden verholpen.

2. De Commissie zal met het verslag van de deskundigengroep rekening houden bij haar overleg over de vraag of de maatregelen van derde partijen op dit gebied gefinancierd of financieel ondersteund moeten worden, of voor regelgeving ter bevordering van de markt voor octrooien en vergunningen moet worden gezorgd.

3. De Commissie beheert verschillende IPR Helpdesks in Europa, China en de ASEAN-regio ([4]) om Europese bedrijven — en vooral kmo's — te helpen hun intellectuele-eigendomsrechten te beschermen. Daarbij wordt ook aandacht geschonken aan octrooibescherming. Momenteel wordt ook een Mercosur IPR SME Helpdesk opgezet. Bovendien wordt een Europees octrooi met eenheidswerking ontwikkeld om de kosten van octrooibescherming in Europa te verminderen.

([1]) Europese Commissie, „Stand van zaken rond de Innovatie-Unie 2012 — Verandering versnellen", COM(2013) 149 final, 21.3.2013, Brussel. Beschikbaar op: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0149:FIN:nl:PDF.
([2]) Europese Commissie, Ondernemingen en industrie, Intellectuele eigendomsrechten. Beschikbaar op: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/innovation/policy/intellectual-property/index_en.htm.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/innovation/files/swd-2012-458_en.pdf
([4]) www.iprhelpdesk.eu, www.china-iprhelpdesk.eu, www.asean-iprhelpdesk.eu.

(Slovenska različica)

Vprašanje za pisni odgovor E-009950/13
za Komisijo
Romana Jordan (PPE), Ivo Belet (PPE) in Pilar del Castillo Vera (PPE)
(6. september 2013)

Zadeva: Financiranje patentov v Evropski uniji

Lani je velika večina držav članic dosegla sporazum o uvedbi enotnega patenta. Zdaj lahko evropski inovatorji svoje izume zaščitijo po enotnem postopku, vendar finančni stroški tega postopka za evropska podjetja še vedno pomenijo oviro. Poleg tega je v poročilu Komisije z naslovom „Stanje Unije inovacij 2012“ navedeno, da bi bilo mogoče inovativni potencial Evrope med drugim sprostiti s pocenitvijo postopka za pridobitev patentnega varstva ([1]).

Na spletnih straneh Komisije ([2]) smo izvedeli, da poteka postopek, ki se bo končal s poročilom skupine strokovnjakov o možnosti sklada EU za patente.

Zato Komisiji zastavljamo naslednja vprašanja:

1. Kdaj lahko pričakujemo omenjeno poročilo?

2. Kako se bodo uporabili rezultati poročila skupine strokovnjakov?

3. Katere ukrepe namerava Komisija sprejeti za podporo evropskim podjetjem pri pridobivanju patentnega varstva?

Odgovor komisarke Geoghegan-Quinn v imenu Komisije
(4. november 2013)

1. Komisija maja 2014 pričakuje poročilo strokovne skupine o morebitnih možnostih za ukrepanje EU ali ukrepanje, ki ga podpira EU, za spodbujanje trga za patente, in sicer v obliki spodbujanja agregacije patentov v okviru sklada za patente, posredniških družb za patente, združevanja patentov v skupine ali drugih oblik agregacije. Ta skupina se skliče za obravnavo nekaterih vprašanj, opredeljenih v delovnem dokumentu služb Komisije ([3]), ki prispeva k uresničitvi zaveze Unije inovacij št. 22 o razvoju trga za patente in licence. Delovni dokument služb Komisije te elemente združuje v okviru agregacije patentov. Strokovna skupina bo preučila obstoječe pobude in predlagala ukrepe, če bo jasno opredeljeno nedelovanje trga, ki bi se lahko učinkovito odpravilo s posredovanjem EU.

2. Komisija bo poročilo strokovne skupine obravnavala med svojim razmislekom, ali bo financirala ali finančno podprla ukrepe tretjih oseb na tem področju ali uvedla regulativne ukrepe za spodbujanje trga za patente in licence.

3. Komisija upravlja več služb za pomoč uporabnikom pravic intelektualne lastnine v Evropi, na Kitajskem in v regiji ASEAN ([4]) v podporo evropskim podjetjem in zlasti MSP pri zaščiti njihovih pravic intelektualne lastnine. To vključuje patentno varstvo in uveljavljanje patentov. Trenutno se vzpostavlja dodatna služba za pomoč uporabnikom pravic intelektualne lastnine Mercosur za MSP. Poleg tega se oblikuje evropski patent z enotnim učinkom za zmanjšanje stroškov patentnega varstva v Evropi.

([1]) Evropska komisija, Stanje Unije inovacij 2012 – pospeševanje sprememb, COM(2013)0149, 21. marec 2013, Bruselj. Dostopno na: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0149:FIN:SL:HTML

([2]) Evropska komisija, podjetništvo in industrija, pravice intelektualne lastnine. Dostopno na: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/innovation/policy/intellectual–property/index_en.htm

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/innovation/files/swd-2012-458_en.pdf

([4]) www.iprhelpdesk.eu, www.china-iprhelpdesk.eu, www.asean-iprhelpdesk.eu

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009950/13
to the Commission
Romana Jordan (PPE), Ivo Belet (PPE) and Pilar del Castillo Vera (PPE)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Financing of patents in the European Union

Last year, an overwhelming majority of Member States reached an agreement on the establishment of a unitary patent. While it is now possible for European innovators to protect their inventions under a single procedure, the financial costs of this process can still represent an obstacle for European businesses. In addition, the Commission's report 'State of the Innovation Union 2012' states that Europe's innovative potential can be unleashed, inter alia, by making it less expensive to obtain patent protection. ([1])

From the web pages of the Commission ([2]) we have learned that a process is currently under way which will lead to a report from an expert group on the possibility of an EU patent fund.

We therefore ask the Commission:

1. When can the abovementioned report be expected?

2. How will the outcomes of the expert group report be used?

3. What measures does the Commission envisage for supporting European businesses in acquiring patent protection?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(4 November 2013)

1. The Commission expects delivery of the report by an expert group in May 2014 on the options for EU action or EU supported action, if any, to promote the market in patents. This could take the form of fostering of aggregation of patents via a patent fund, patent brokerages, patent pools or other forms of aggregation. This group is being convened to address some of the issues identified in a Commission Staff Working Document (SWD) ([3]) which represents a contribution to the realisation of Innovation Union commitment 22 on the development of a market for patenting and licencing. The SWD grouped these items under the umbrella of patent aggregation. The expert group will consider existing initiatives and propose action if a market failure that could be addressed effectively by EU intervention has been clearly identified.

2. The report of the expert group will thus be considered by the Commission in its deliberation on the decision on whether to finance or financially support action by third parties in this area or to introduce regulatory measures to promote the market for patents and licencing.

3. The Commission is running several IPR Helpdesks in Europe, China and the ASEAN region ([4]) to support European businesses and in particular SMEs in protecting their IPR. This includes patent protection and enforcement. An additional Mercosur IPR SME Helpdesk is currently being set up. In addition, the European patent with unitary effect is designed to reduce patent protection costs in Europe.

([1]) European Commission, State of the Innovation Union 2012 — Accelerating change, COM(2013)0149, 21 March 2013, Brussels. Accessible at: http://eur-lex.europa.eu//LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0149:FIN:en:PDF

([2]) European Commission, Enterprise and Industry, Intellectual property rights. Accessible at: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/innovation/policy/intellectual-property/index_en.htm

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/innovation/files/swd-2012-458_en.pdf

([4]) www.iprhelpdesk.eu, www.china-iprhelpdesk.eu, www.asean-iprhelpdesk.eu

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009951/13
to the Council
Catherine Stihler (S&D)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Syria

What action is being taken to help Syrian refugees in neighbouring countries and what action is being taken to address this humanitarian crisis?

Reply
(16 December 2013)

In addition to over EUR 1 billion of humanitarian assistance provided by Member States, since the end of 2011 and in direct response to the crisis, the EU budget has mobilised EUR 927 million (humanitarian aid: EUR 515 million; economic, development and stabilisation assistance: EUR 412 million) of total support for activities inside Syria and in neighbouring countries. 56% of the Commission's humanitarian assistance caters for the needs of Syrian refugees and host-communities in the neighbouring countries of Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Turkey. The remainder of the allocation is spent on assisting beneficiaries inside Syria.

The Commission has also set in train initiatives at political level in order to: 1) Improve humanitarian access in Syria and ensure respect of International Humanitarian Law; 2) Elaborate a regional gaps analysis and strategy in order to bring all instruments at its and other donors' disposal to bear. This includes humanitarian aid, development and macro-financial assistance needed to tackle the protracted crisis.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009952/13
to the Commission
Catherine Stihler (S&D)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Syria

What action is being taken to help Syrian refugees in neighbouring countries and what action is being taken to address this humanitarian crisis?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(30 October 2013)

In addition to over EUR 1 billion of humanitarian assistance provided by Member States, the EU budget has, since the end of 2011 and in direct response to the crises, mobilised EUR 943 million (humanitarian aid: EUR 515 million; economic, development and stabilisation assistance: EUR 428 million) of total support for activities inside Syria and in neighbouring countries. 68% of the assistance provided by the Commission to date responds to needs of Syrian refugees and host-communities in the neighbouring countries of Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Turkey. The remaining allocation is spent to assist beneficiaries inside Syria. Supporting neighbouring countries and communities that are now hosting more than 2 million Syrian refugees is a particular focus of our assistance, to avoid destabilisation of the region and mitigate growing tensions between refugees and host communities.

The Commission has also set in train initiatives at political level in order to: 1) Improve humanitarian access in Syria and ensure respect of International Humanitarian Law; 2) Elaborate a regional gaps analysis and strategy in order to bring all instruments at our and other donors' disposal to bear. This includes humanitarian aid, development and macro-financial assistance needed to tackle the protracted crisis.

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees has called on the international community for resettlement of 2 000 most vulnerable Syrians from the region and humanitarian admission of 10 000 Syrians in 2013, and to submit up to 30 000 Syrian refugees for resettlement on humanitarian admission by the end of 2014. The Commission supports this call. So far, several Member States have responded by offering resettlement and humanitarian admission places.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009953/13
to the Commission
Catherine Stihler (S&D)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Gibraltar

Can the Commission update Parliament on what action is being taken to help to resolve the situation in Gibraltar?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(8 October 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to Written Question E- 009281/2013 by Mr Daniel Hannan, E-009591/2013 by Ms Diane Dodds.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009954/13
to the Commission
Catherine Stihler (S&D)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Neonicotinoids

As Member States begin implementing new rules on the restriction of plant treatments containing certain neonicotinoids, which should come into effect by December 2013, what guidance is being given to those who have to find alternative treatments?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(14 October 2013)

Advice on best alternatives to combat pests in a specific crop is preferably given at the local level. Directive 2009/128/EC ([1]) on the sustainable use of pesticides requires Member States to ensure that professional users have at their disposal information and tools for pest monitoring and decision making, as well as advisory services on integrated pest management.

A plant protection product shall not be used unless it has been authorised in the Member State concerned according to Article 28 of Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 ([2]). Hence, the available alternatives to the restricted neonicotinoids depend on the authorisations for use in place in each Member State. Authorisations are based on applications for plant protection products containing active substances that have been approved at EU level. Besides plant protection products for seed treatment, also granular formulations and products for foliar application require Member State approval. Thus, specific guidance can only be given at national level.

For approved active substances the EU Pesticide database can be consulted via the link below ([3]).

([1]) OJ L 309, 24.11.2009, p. 71.
([2]) OJ L 309, 24.11.2009, p. 1.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/plant/plant_protection_products/pesticides_database/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009955/13
to the Commission
Catherine Stihler (S&D)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Toddler milk

Following the changes to the rules on follow-on formula milk, can the Commission state what action will be taken to address the serious concerns around the marketing and promotion of toddler milk? The recent report on toddler milk by the consumer group *Which?* states that the market for these products is increasing, but they contain more sugar and less calcium than cow's milk and government advice is that they are not needed.

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(21 October 2013)

Regulation (EU) No 609/2013 ([1]) revises the framework applicable to 'foods for particular nutritional uses' and requires the Commission to adopt specific rules for, among others, infant formulae and follow-on formulae by 20 July 2015. The regulation also requires the Commission to present by the same date to the European Parliament and to the Council, after consulting the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), a report on the necessity, if any, of special provisions for milk-based drinks and similar products intended for young children (so-called 'growing up milks' or 'toddlers' milks') regarding compositional and labelling requirements and, if appropriate, other types of requirements.

The Commission has given a mandate ([2]) to EFSA to provide a scientific opinion on milk-based drinks and similar products intended for infants and young children. After having received EFSA's advice, the Commission will finalise the report requested by the regulation and will submit it to the European Parliament and to the Council.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:181:0035:0056:EN:PDF
([2]) Nr M-2013-0088, accessible at http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionsListLoader?panel=ALL

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009958/13
à la Commission (Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante)
Michel Dantin (PPE)
(6 septembre 2013)

Objet: VP/HR — Élections démocratiques en Haïti

L'Union européenne apporte depuis de longues années un soutien actif à Haïti, l'un des pays les plus pauvres du monde. Ce soutien est relayé sur le terrain dans l'Union européenne par de nombreuses structures locales (collectivités, associations, fondations, etc.).

Celles-ci s'inquiètent aujourd'hui du recul de la démocratie en Haïti. Ainsi, les élections municipales prévues en mai 2011 n'ont toujours pas été organisées et le gouvernement procède depuis l'automne 2011 à la nomination « d'agents intérimaires».

L'expert indépendant de l'ONU, démissionnaire, a critiqué dans un rapport les ingérences du gouvernement dans diverses affaires.

La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante de l'Union européenne pour les affaires étrangères Catherine Ashton peut-elle indiquer les mesures mises en œuvre par l'Union européenne pour obtenir du Président de la République et du gouvernement haïtiens le rétablissement sans délai d'un fonctionnement démocratique du pays?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(22 octobre 2013)

L'UE est pleinement consciente de la préoccupation croissante d'organisations de surveillance et de défenseurs des Droits de l'homme, au sujet de l'évolution récente de la situation des Droits de l'homme, de la démocratie et de l'État de droit, en Haïti. Faire avancer ces questions n'est pas chose aisée en Haïti, compte tenu de l'histoire difficile et de la fragilité des institutions démocratiques du pays et des défis socio-économiques de taille auxquels il se trouve toujours confronté. L'important retard pris dans la tenue des élections sénatoriales partielles et communales constitue, du reste, une source profonde d'inquiétude. La question a été soulevée à plusieurs reprises avec le gouvernement haïtien et, plus récemment, avec le Premier ministre Laurent Lamothe lors de sa venue dans l'Union les 12 et 13 septembre 2013. Afin de favoriser le processus électoral, l'UE a débloqué 6 millions d'euros au titre de l'instrument de stabilité: 4 millions contribueront au fonds fiduciaire du PNUD pour l'organisation des élections et 2 millions permettront de soutenir le conseil électoral permanent, dès que celui-ci sera institué. L'UE continuera de soulever des questions liées aux Droits de l'homme, à la démocratie et à l'État de droit dans le cadre de son dialogue politique constant et de ses programmes de coopération au développement avec Haïti, sur la base d'éléments positifs tels que l'existence de mécanismes démocratiques et d'une grande liberté d'expression et la présence d'une société civile dynamique. Enfin, l'UE soutient cette dernière à hauteur de 7,8 millions d'euros à travers un programme spécifique financé au titre du 10^e^ FED ([1]).

([1]) Consulter le site du programme PARSCH: http://www.parsch-haiti.org/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009958/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michel Dantin (PPE)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Democratic elections in Haiti

For many years, the EU has actively supported Haiti, one of the poorest countries in the world. This support is taken up on the ground in the EU by many local organisations (including local government, charities, foundations, etc.).

The latter are today concerned about the decline of democracy in Haiti. In particular, the municipal elections scheduled for May 2011 have still not been held and, since the autumn of 2011, the Government has been appointing 'temporary agents'.

A report from the UN's outgoing independent expert has criticised government interference in various matters.

Can Catherine Ashton, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, indicate what measures the EU has implemented to get Haiti's President and Government to restore the country to democracy immediately?

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

The EU is fully aware of the growing concern of some HR watchdog organisations and HR defenders as regards recent developments on human rights, democracy and the rule of law in Haiti. Advancing these domains in Haiti is a complex endeavour, affected by the country's difficult past, the fragility of its democratic institutions and the enormous socioeconomic challenges that it is still confronted with. The long delays in holding local and partial senatorial elections are indeed a source of grave concern that the EU has raised on several occasions with the Haitian government, most recently with Prime Minister Lamothe during his visit to the EU on 12/13 September 2013. In order to assist the electoral process, the EU has made EUR 6 million available from the Instrument for Stability, out of which EUR 4 million for contributing to the PNUD-led trust fund for the organisation of the elections and EUR 2 million for supporting the Permanent Electoral Council, once is formally established. The EU will continue to raise human rights/rule of law/democracy issues in the framework of its continued political dialogue and development cooperation programmes with Haiti, building on positive elements such as the existence of democratic mechanisms, substantial freedom of expression and presence of a lively civil society. Last but not least, this latter is being supported by the EU through a specific EUR 7.8 million programme funded under the 10th EDF ([1]).

([1]) PARSCH: http://www.parsch-haiti.org/

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009959/13
à la Commission
Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(6 septembre 2013)

Objet: Pilule contraceptive Diane 35®

Le 30 juillet 2013, la Commission européenne a confirmé sa décision concernant le caractère inoffensif de la pilule anti-acnéique et contraceptive Diane 35®. Cette décision va contraindre la France à remettre ce médicament en vente sur le marché, en dépit de l'interdiction de ce traitement et de ses génériques par l'Agence nationale de sécurité du médicament (ANSM).

En effet, l'ANSM a fait part de ses craintes concernant des risques de thrombose et d'embolies pulmonaires liés à la prise de cette pilule. Conformément au principe de précaution, et à la suite de la plainte de plusieurs patientes victimes d'un accident vasculaire cérébral dû à la prise de ce médicament, la France avait souhaité son interdiction. Le 17 mai dernier, l'Agence européenne du médicament (EMA) a jugé que les bénéfices de Diane 35® étaient toujours supérieurs aux risques, du moins pour «certaines populations de patientes». Cet avis a été suivi par la Commission européenne, qui a cependant imposé des restrictions sur la prescription de ce médicament.

Compte tenu de ces éléments, la Commission ne considère-t-elle pas qu'il serait nécessaire de mener des études scientifiques afin de savoir quels sont les risques liés à ce traitement?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(9 octobre 2013)

L'Honorable Parlementaire est invité à se référer à la réponse donnée à la question précédente E-006231/2013 ([1]).

La procédure de saisine engagée par les autorités françaises a permis la réévaluation des risques/bénéfices de Diane 35 et de ses génériques (médicaments contenant de l'acétate de cyprotérone/éthinylestradiol). La décision de la Commission est fondée sur la recommandation scientifique du 16 mai 2013 du comité pour l'évaluation des risques en matière de pharmacovigilance de l'Agence européenne des médicaments, qui a procédé à cette réévaluation.

Le comité a conclu que les bénéfices de Diane 35 et de ses génériques étaient supérieurs aux risques encourus, pourvu que certaines mesures soient prises pour réduire au minimimum le risque de thromboembolie (formation de caillots de sang dans les veines et les artères). Il a recommandé en particulier des activités spécifiques de pharmacovigilance, comportant des études prospectives sur l'utilisation du médicament visant à évaluer les futures habitudes de prescription à la suite des modifications des informations sur le produit, ainsi qu'une étude de sécurité post-autorisation pour évaluer l'efficacité des mesures de réduction des risques.

Compte tenu de cette dernière étude, Diane 35 et ses génériques ont été ajoutés à la liste de médicaments soumis à une surveillance supplémentaire. Cela signifie que l'avertissement «ce médicament est soumis à une surveillance supplémentaire» ainsi que le «symbole noir» consistant en un triangle noir inversé figureront sur la notice de ces médicaments. Ces avertissements encourageront les patients à signaler tout effet indésirable suspecté du médicament à leur médecin, leur pharmacien, tout autre professionnel de santé ou leur système national de notification (les détails sont indiqués sur la notice).

Compte tenu de ces éléments, la Commission n'envisage pas pour le moment de réaliser des études supplémentaires.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009959/13
to the Commission
Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Diane 35® contraceptive pill

On 30 July 2013, the Commission confirmed its decision that the Diane 35® acne treatment and contraceptive pill is harmless. This decision will force France to put this drug back onto the market, despite it and its generics being prohibited by the French National Agency for Medicines (ANSM).

ANSM has made known its fears of the risks of thrombosis and pulmonary embolisms linked to the taking of this pill. In accordance with the precaution principle, and following complaints from several patients who suffered strokes after taking this medicine, France wanted to see it banned. On 17 May, the European Medicines Agency (EMA) determined that the benefits of Diane 35® always outweigh the risks, at least in 'certain patient groups'. This view was supported by the Commission, although it imposed restrictions on the prescription of this drug.

Accordingly, does the Commission not consider it necessary to carry out scientific studies to identify what risks are related to this treatment?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(9 October 2013)

The Honourable Member is referred to the answer given to the previous Question E-006231/2013 ([1]).

The referral procedure initiated by the French authorities allowed the re-evaluation of the risk benefit of Diane 35 and its generics (medicinal products containing cyproterone acetate/ethinylestradiol). The scientific recommendation of 16 May 2013 of the European Medicines Agency's Pharmacovigilance Risk Assessment Committee (PRAC), which performed this re-evaluation, is the grounds for the Commission decision.

The committee concluded that the benefits of Diane 35 and its generics outweigh the risks, provided that certain measures are taken to minimise the risk of thromboembolism (formation of blood clots in the veins and arteries). In particular, the PRAC recommended specific pharmacovigilance activities, including prospective drug utilisation studies to assess future prescription patterns following the changes to the product information, as well as a post authorisation safety study to assess the effectiveness of the risk minimisation measures.

In view of the latter study, Diane 35 and its generics have been added to the list of medicinal products subject to additional monitoring. This means that the statement 'this medicinal product is subject to additional monitoring' and the 'black symbol' which is an inverted black triangle will be included on the package leaflet of these medicinal products. This is to encourage patients to report suspected adverse reaction to the medicine to their doctor, pharmacists, other healthcare professionals or their national reporting systems (details are provided in the package leaflets).

In view of these elements, the Commission does not consider at this stage to conduct further studies.

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

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009960/13
à la Commission
Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D) et Gilles Pargneaux (S&D)
(6 septembre 2013)

Objet: Contamination de la chaîne alimentaire maritime japonaise

Depuis la catastrophe de la centrale nucléaire de Fukushima en mars 2011, les fonds marins proches de la zone accidentée n'ont pas échappé aux fuites radioactives des réacteurs endommagés. De nombreuses études japonaises révèlent d'ailleurs des taux anormalement élevés de césium 134 et 137 (particules radioactives) dans les entrailles de vertébrés à branchies, algues et crustacés. Même à faible taux de radiations, c'est-à-dire celui qui est autorisé par le gouvernement japonais, les particules de césium se fixent sur le foie, l'estomac, les organes et peuvent provoquer en quelques années des dégâts importants.

De plus, le 21 août 2013, TEPCO, le gérant de la centrale, a reconnu publiquement que 300 tonnes d'eaux hautement radioactives étaient en train de fuir d'un réservoir accidenté. Il s'agissait d'une eau contaminée, qui se mêlait aux liquides radioactifs qui se déversaient déjà quotidiennement dans l'océan via des voies souterraines.

1. Compte tenu de ces éléments, la Commission ne considère-t-elle pas qu'il serait nécessaire de mener des études/recherches pour garantir aux citoyens européens que les poissons consommés en provenance du Japon ne mettent pas en danger leur santé?

2. Quels sont les dispositifs que la Commission a mis en place afin de s'assurer que les produits en provenance du Japon font l'objet de contrôles renforcés dans l'Union européenne?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(17 octobre 2013)

Le règlement d'exécution (UE) n° 996/2012 de la Commission du 26 octobre 2012 ([1]) impose des conditions particulières à l'importation de certains aliments pour animaux et denrées alimentaires, y compris les poissons, originaires ou en provenance de régions du Japon touchées par l'accident survenu à la centrale nucléaire de Fukushima.

Les mesures prévues exigent que les poissons provenant d'origines déterminées au Japon soient soumis à un test de radioactivité par les autorités japonaises avant d'être exportés vers l'Union européenne (UE) et chaque lot de poisson doit être accompagné par une déclaration et par le rapport d'analyse. Il est prévu qu'à l'arrivée dans l'UE, 5 % des envois en provenance du Japon soient échantillonnés et analysés pour détecter la présence de radioactivité. Tous les résultats des contrôles effectués sur les poissons à l'importation sont favorables et aucun manquement n'a été constaté.

Les mesures restrictives en place en ce qui concerne l'importation de certains aliments pour animaux et denrées alimentaires du Japon garantissent un haut niveau de protection de la santé à la population de l'UE.

La Commission surveille en permanence les résultats des contrôles à l'importation et des contrôles effectués par les autorités japonaises. Au cas où un accroissement de la radioactivité dans certains aliments, y compris le poisson, serait constaté, la Commission prendrait immédiatement les mesures supplémentaires appropriées pour garantir la sécurité des aliments pour animaux et denrées alimentaires, y compris le poisson et les produits de la pêche provenant du Japon et de la région du Pacifique et mis sur le marché de l'UE.

([1]) Règlement d'exécution (UE) n° 996/2012 de la Commission du 26 octobre 2012 imposant des conditions particulières à l'importation de denrées alimentaires et d'aliments pour animaux originaires ou en provenance du Japon à la suite de l'accident survenu à la centrale nucléaire de Fukushima (JO L 299 du 27.10.2012, p. 31), tel que modifié par le règlement d'exécution (UE) n° 495/2013 du 29 mai 2013 (JO L 143 du 30.5.2013, p. 3).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009960/13
to the Commission
Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D) and Gilles Pargneaux (S&D)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Contamination of the Japanese marine food chain

Since the disaster at the Fukushima nuclear power station in March 2011, the seabed close to the accident has been affected by the radioactive leaks from the damaged reactors. Many Japanese studies have revealed the presence of abnormally high levels of caesium-134 and 137 (radioactive particles) in the guts of aquatic vertebrates, in algae and in crustaceans. Even at low radiation levels, in other words those permitted by the Japanese Government, caesium particles become attached to the liver, stomach and other organs and can cause major damage within a few years.

Furthermore, on 21 August 2013, TEPCO, which manages the power station, publicly admitted that 300 tonnes of highly radioactive water were leaking from a damaged tank. This was contaminated water that was mixing with the radioactive liquids that were already running into the sea on a daily basis via underground channels.

1. Accordingly, does the Commission not consider that it will be necessary to carry out studies/research to guarantee to EU citizens that eating fish from Japan will pose no risks to health?

2. What measures has the Commission introduced to ensure that products from Japan will be subject to increased controls in the European Union?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(17 October 2013)

Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 996/2012 of 26 October ([1]) imposes special conditions governing the import of certain feed and food, including fish, originating in or consigned from affected regions in Japan following the accident at the Fukushima nuclear power station.

The measures require that fish from defined origins in Japan have to be tested on radioactivity by the Japanese authorities before export to the EU and each consignment of fish has to be accompanied by a declaration and the analytical report. At import in the EU it is provided that 5% of the consignments from Japan have to be sampled and analysed for the presence of radioactivity. All results of the controls performed on fish at import are favourable and no non-compliances have been observed.

The current restrictive measures in place as regards the import of feed and food from Japan provide a high level of human health protection for the EU population.

The Commission is continuously monitoring the results from import controls and controls performed by the Japanese authorities. In case an increase of radioactivity in certain foods, including fish, would be observed, the Commission would take immediately appropriate additional measures to ensure the safety of feed and food, including fish and fishery products from Japan and the Pacific region, placed on the EU market.

([1]) Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 996/2012 imposing special conditions governing the import of feed and food originating in or consigned from Japan following the accident at the Fukushima nuclear power station (OJ L 299, 27.10.2012, p. 31), as amended by Implementing Regulation (EU) No 495/2013 of 29 May 2013 (OJ L 143, 30.5.2013, p. 3).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009961/13
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(6 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Progettazione di opere di messa in sicurezza e nuova viabilità lungo l'intero corso del fiume Entella e realizzazione di un'area di colmata lungo la sua foce

Le amministrazioni della Regione Liguria, della ex Provincia di Genova e dei Comuni di Lavagna, Chiavari, Cogorno, Carasco e Sestri Levante hanno progettato di realizzare opere di messa in sicurezza e nuova viabilità lungo l'intero corso del fiume Entella. Tali progetti prevedono un'area di colmata nella foce del fiume per l'installazione di un impianto di depurazione delle acque fognarie dei distinti bacini imbriferi di Lavagna, Sestri Levante e rispettivi entroterra.

La costituzione della nuova colmata rappresenterebbe un vero e proprio «tappo» che determinerà, secondo le dichiarazioni pubbliche rese dall'Iren, la società incaricata dell'esecuzione del progetto, un innalzamento del livello delle acque di circa 20 centimetri, cui le Amministrazioni prevedono di porre rimedio con nuove arginature sulle rive del fiume, volte anche ad un nuovo sviluppo di strade a lato delle stesse ([1]).

Tale pretesa messa in sicurezza, considerata la relativa mitigazione del rischio idrogeologico, risulterebbe invece aggravata dalle predette opere che non tengono alcun conto del bacino imbrifero del fiume Entella. Al riguardo manca uno studio puntuale, che giustifichi la riclassificazione di aree golenali del fiume e dei suoi affluenti dall'attuale zona rossa consentendo, quindi, nuove edificazioni. Ne risulta la completa artificializzazione del corso d'acqua, costretto in una sorta di imbuto insieme ai rii che sfociano in esso.

L'intervento progettato, inoltre, non terrebbe conto del fatto che la zona è un SIC IT 1332717 e che la canalizzazione del fiume danneggerebbe la naturalità delle sponde nonché l'oasi faunistica, contraddicendo di fatto gli impegni assunti dalla Regione Liguria di fronte all'UE in materia di protezione della biodiversità con l'istituzione della «Rete Natura 2000». Un simile intervento si porrebbe, inoltre, in contrasto con i principi stabiliti dalla direttiva 2000/60/CE sulla tutela dei corpi idrici. Il quadro è aggravato dal fatto che la Regione Liguria ha adottato il regolamento n. 3 del 14.7.2011 che introduce deroghe alle norme che contemplano il divieto di copertura e di edificazione in prossimità degli argini.

È la Commissione a conoscenza del citato progetto e delle gravi problematiche in termini di sicurezza idrogeologica e di peggioramento ambientale e paesaggistico che la realizzazione dello stesso comporterebbe in contrasto con le norme comunitarie poste a tutela dei corpi idrici? Ritiene di dover intervenire in attuazione dei propri poteri/doveri di vigilanza riguardanti il rispetto della normativa comunitaria da parte degli Stati membri?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(29 ottobre 2013)

In base alle informazioni fornite dall'onorevole deputato sembrerebbe che il progetto possa rientrare nel campo di applicazione della direttiva quadro sulle acque ([2]) a titolo di «nuova modifica» delle caratteristiche fisiche dei corpi idrici interessati. Il progetto sarebbe pertanto soggetto alle condizioni di cui all'articolo 4, paragrafo 7, della direttiva.

Inoltre, tenuto conto della posizione e degli impatti potenziali sulla zona Natura 2000 SIC IT1332717, è necessario sottoporre tale progetto a un'adeguata valutazione a norma dell'articolo 6 della direttiva 92/43/CE ([3]) (direttiva Habitat).

La Commissione si metterà in contatto con le autorità italiane per ottenere informazioni sulle modalità con cui sono stati rispettati i requisiti sopra esposti nel caso in oggetto.

([1]) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YW5pgwfnSvl.
([2]) GU L 327 del 22.12.2000, pag. 1.
([3]) GU L 206 del 22.12.2000, pag. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009961/13
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Planning of safety works and a new road system along the length of the River Entella and reclamation of an area of land along the river mouth

The authorities of the Liguria Region, the former Province of Genoa and the municipalities of Lavagna, Chiavari, Cogorno, Carasco and Sestri Levante are planning to carry out safety works and to create a new road system along the length of the River Entella. The plans include reclaiming an area of land at the river mouth for the construction of a plant to treat sewage from the separate catchment areas of Lavagna, Sestri Levante and their hinterlands.

The new area of reclaimed land will literally act as a 'plug' which, according to the public statements made by Iren, the company in charge of carrying out the project, will cause the water level to rise by some 20 centimetres. The authorities plan to remedy this by building new embankments along the banks of the river, and to use these for a new road development adjacent to them ([1]).

These apparent efforts to make the river safe, taking into account their mitigation of the hydrogeological risk, would be adversely affected by the aforesaid works, which completely disregard the River Entella's catchment area. There is no specific study on this issue that justifies reclassifying floodplain areas of the river and its tributaries from the current red zone so as to allow for new construction to take place. The result is a completely artificial river that is forced into a kind of bottleneck along with the streams that flow into it.

Furthermore, the planned measure overlooks the fact that the zone is an SCI IT1332717 site and that canalising the river would harm the natural character of its banks and wildlife sanctuary, *de facto* undermining the commitments made by the Liguria Region to the EU with regard to the protection of biodiversity through the establishment of the Natura 2000 network. Such a measure would also be contrary to the principles laid down by Directive 2000/60/EC on water protection. The situation is aggravated by the fact that the Liguria Region has adopted Regulation No 3 of 14 July 2011, which provides for exemptions from the rules prohibiting covering and building near banks.

Is the Commission aware of the aforesaid project and of the serious problems in terms of hydrogeological safety and deterioration of the environment and landscape that its implementation would cause, in contravention of EU water protection rules? Does it believe it should intervene, exercising its supervisory powers/duties regarding compliance with EU legislation by Member States?

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

Based on the information provided by the Honourable Member, it appears that the project may qualify under the Water Framework Directive (WFD) ([2]) as a 'new modification' that changes the physical characteristics of the affected water bodies. This would be subject to the conditions laid down in Article 4(7) of the WFD.

Moreover, considering the location and the potential impacts on Natura 2000 area SCI IT1332717, there is a need for an appropriate assessment under Art. 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EC ([3]).

The Commission will contact the Italian authorities requesting information on how the abovementioned requirements have been respected in this case.

([1]) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YW5pgwfnSvl
([2]) OJ L 327, 22.12.2000.
([3]) OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009962/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(6 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Genitore 1 e Genitore 2 nei moduli scolastici italiani — Politiche di uguaglianza di genere e politiche comunitarie

In Svezia, nel 2010 è stato aperto il primo asilo «gender free» d'Europa caratterizzato da un approccio educativo basato sull'abolizione delle differenze di sesso tra maschi e femmine: stessi giochi per tutti, cancellati pronomi maschili o femminili. In Francia il governo si prepara ad introdurre un nuovo corso di educazione sessuale finalizzato a sostituire categorie mentali come quella di «sesso» con il concetto di «genere» per dimostrare che le differenze tra uomo e donna non sono basate sulla natura, ma prodotte e replicate dalle condizioni sociali. In Italia è stata avanzata la proposta di togliere dai moduli d'iscrizione ad asili e scuole la denominazione «padre» e «madre» per lasciare invece spazio a «genitore 1» e «genitore 2.»

Secondo i risultati della ricerca svolta nel 2009 dall'agenzia esecutiva Eurydice su «Differenze di genere nei risultati educativi: Studio sulle misure adottate e sulla situazione attuale in Europa», la percezione degli insegnanti sulle peculiarità maschili e femminili sono fondamentali per i loro rapporti con gli allievi e possono rappresentare un fattore importante per promuovere l'equità tra i generi nella scuola.

Nelle conclusioni del Consiglio «Investire nell'istruzione e nella formazione in risposta a Ripensare l'istruzione: investire nelle abilità in vista di migliori risultati socioeconomici» e nell'analisi annuale della crescita per il 2013, il Consiglio riconosce il ruolo centrale assegnato all'istruzione e alla formazione quali forze trainanti per la crescita e la competitività e per prevenire la disoccupazione.

Sebbene l'organizzazione e i contenuti dei sistemi d'istruzione e di formazione siano di competenza dei singoli Stati membri, la cooperazione a livello europeo insieme al ricorso a programmi dell'UE, può contribuire allo sviluppo di un'istruzione e una formazione di qualità sostenendo e integrando le misure prese a livello nazionale e assistendo gli Stati membri a fronteggiare le sfide comuni.

Può la Commissione precisare come intende affrontare la tematica delle politiche di genere nei propri programmi e nelle prossime comunicazioni che avranno ad oggetto istruzione e formazione?

Risposta di Androulla Vassiliou a nome della Commissione
(15 ottobre 2013)

La tematica della parità di genere è presente in tutte le politiche e in tutti i programmi della Comunità, compreso il programma per l'apprendimento permanente (2007-2013) che ha sostenuto numerosi progetti imperniati sulle tematiche del genere e ha promosso la mobilità sensibile alle specificità di genere. Il nuovo programma Erasmus+ per l'istruzione, la formazione, la gioventù e lo sport (2014-2020) continuerà a promuovere la parità di genere e le azioni contro la discriminazione di genere.

Annualmente, la Commissione pubblica il documento «Education and Training Monitor» che fornisce, tra l'altro, raffronti tra paesi per quanto concerne le questioni di genere e informazioni sulle tendenze educative. La pubblicazione del prossimo Monitor è prevista per l'ottobre di quest'anno.

Per quanto concerne le attività in corso che affrontano le questioni del genere nell'ambito dell'istruzione e della formazione, i lavori che la Commissione porta avanti con gli Stati membri per attuare la propria comunicazione «Ripensare l'istruzione» ribadiscono la necessità di rendere più interessante per le donne l'acquisizione di abilità nell'area STEM (scienza, tecnologia, ingegneria e matematica). Uno dei documenti di lavoro dei servizi della Commissione che corredano la comunicazione evidenzia lo squilibrio di genere tra i docenti e i dirigenti scolastici e sollecita gli Stati membri a procedere a interventi correttivi.

Analogamente, il progetto per la modernizzazione dei sistemi di istruzione superiore ([1]) dell'UE indica che l'eliminazione degli stereotipi e degli ostacoli contro cui si scontrano le donne nell'istruzione post-laurea e nella ricerca presenta valide potenzialità per valorizzare talenti altrimenti inutilizzati.

([1]) COM(2011)567 definitivo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009962/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Parent 1 and Parent 2 on Italian school forms — Gender equality policies and Community policies

In 2010 Europe's first 'gender-free' nursery school was opened in Sweden. It is characterised by an educational approach based on the elimination of gender differences between males and females: everyone plays the same games and masculine and feminine pronouns are dispensed with. In France, the government is preparing to introduce a new sex education course aimed at replacing mental categories such as 'sex' with the concept of 'gender' to demonstrate that the differences between men and women are not caused by nature, but are produced and reproduced as a result of social conditions. In Italy a proposal has been made to remove the names 'father' and 'mother' from nursery and school registration forms and to replace them with 'parent 1' and 'parent 2' instead.

According to the results of the research carried out in 2009 by the Eurydice executive agency on 'Gender Differences in Educational Outcomes: Study on the Measures Taken and the Current Situation in Europe', teachers' perceptions of male- and femaleness are crucial for their relations with pupils and can be an important factor in generating gender equity in schools.

In the Council Conclusions on investing in education and training — a response to 'Rethinking Education: Investing in skills for better socioeconomic outcomes' and the '2013 Annual Growth Survey', the Council recognises the central role assigned to education and training as a key driver for growth and competitiveness and for preventing unemployment.

While each Member State is responsible for the organisation and content of its education and training systems, European cooperation, together with recourse to EU programmes, can contribute to the development of quality education and training by supporting and supplementing national measures and helping Member States to address common challenges.

Can the Commission say how it intends to approach the subject of gender policies in its programmes and in future communications on education and training?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(15 October 2013)

Gender equality is mainstreamed in all Community policies and programmes, including in the Lifelong Learning programme (2007-2013) which has supported a large number of projects on gender issues and has enabled gender-sensitive mobility. The new Erasmus+ programme for education, training, youth and sport (2014-2020) will continue to promote gender equality and actions against gender discrimination.

Every year, the Commission publishes the 'Education and Training Monitor' which provides, inter alia, gender-related cross-country comparisons and information on educational trends. The next Monitor is due in October this year.

Among current activities which address issues of gender in education and training, the Commission's work with Member States to implement its communication 'Rethinking Education' stresses the need to make STEM-related skills more attractive to women. One of the staff working documents accompanying the communication underlines the gender imbalance among teachers and school-leaders and urges Member States to take action.

Similarly, the EU Agenda for modernising higher education systems ([1]) shows that tackling stereotyping and dismantling barriers faced by women in postgraduate education and research carries the potential to liberate untapped talent.

([1]) COM(2011) 567 final.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009963/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(6 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Richiesta di intervento dell'Europa e del FEG a sostegno dei lavoratori dei cementifici della Provincia di Padova

Il Veneto, e in particolare la Provincia di Padova, già pesantemente colpiti dalla crisi economica e occupazionale internazionale, vengono oggi messi in ulteriore difficoltà dal crollo del settore edilizio e conseguentemente di quello della produzione del cemento.

Almeno 900 persone, impiegate o legate alla filiera produttiva di tre cementifici (l'Italcementi di Monselice e la Cementizillo di Este e Monselice) rischiano di perdere il loro posto di lavoro. Il 99 % dei lavoratori della Cementizillo di Este e il 67 % dei lavoratori dell'Italcementi di Monselice sono in cassa integrazione. Recentemente, inoltre, il cementificio di Monselice che sarebbe dovuto restare in attività, anche se ridotta, fino al 2015, ha definitivamente programmato la chiusura per il prossimo 31 dicembre 2013. L'Italcementi invece ha ufficialmente comunicato ai sindacati l'intenzione di chiudere lo stabilimento monselicense entro il prossimo gennaio 2014, anticipando di un anno quanto previsto dal piano industriale.

Può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se è a conoscenza di queste circostanze;

2. se ha intenzione, considerata la gravità della situazione e al fine di ridurre la perdita di posti di lavoro e consentire la continuazione dell'attività dei tre cementifici, di concedere al Veneto una particolare deroga alla disciplina degli aiuti di Stato, così come previsto dal regolamento (CE) n. 2204/2002 della Commissione, del 12 dicembre 2002, relativo all'applicazione degli articoli 87 e 88 del trattato CE agli aiuti di Stato a favore dell'occupazione;

3. se non ritiene indispensabile una revisione del meccanismo di funzionamento del Fondo europeo di adeguamento alla globalizzazione (FEG) affinché, nel caso dei cementifici della Provincia di Padova come in tutti gli altri casi di licenziamento selvaggio, tale meccanismo possa essere attivato in modo rapido e diretto dalla stessa Commissione e possa diventare uno strumento di sostegno alle emergenze occupazionali e sociali sempre più frequenti negli Stati membri;

4. se intende attivare il Fondo europeo di adeguamento alla globalizzazione (FEG) a favore dei lavoratori coinvolti nella vicenda?

Risposta di Laszlo Andor a nome della Commissione
(29 ottobre 2013)

1. La Commissione è a conoscenza delle circostanze cui fa riferimento l'onorevole deputata.

2. Per quanto concerne il riferimento alle regole sugli aiuti di Stato si noti che il regolamento (CE) n. 2204/2002 della Commissione ([1]) è stato sostituito dal regolamento generale di esenzione per categoria (RGEC) ([2]), che stabilisce le condizioni alle quali certe categorie di aiuti sono compatibili con il mercato comune e non sono soggette al requisito di notifica di cui all'articolo 88, paragrafo 3, del trattato, compresi gli aiuti per l'occupazione. Tuttavia, sia il regolamento n. 2204/2002 della Commissione, sia il RGEC fanno riferimento ad aiuti per la creazione di posti di lavoro. Di converso, le possibilità per gli Stati membri di concedere aiuti alle imprese in difficoltà per il mantenimento dell'occupazione sono estremamente restrittive e, in linea di principio, accessibili soltanto nel contesto di piani di ristrutturazione che devono essere notificati alla Commissione ([3]).

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 2204/2002 della Commissione, del 12 dicembre 2002, relativo all'applicazione degli articoli 87 e 88 del trattato CE agli aiuti di Stato a favore dell'occupazione.
([2]) Regolamento (CE) n. 800/2008 della Commissione, del 6 agosto 2008, che dichiara alcune categorie di aiuti compatibili con il mercato comune in applicazione degli articoli 87 e 88 del trattato (regolamento generale di esenzione per categoria), considerando 4.
([3]) Comunicazione della Commissione — Orientamenti comunitari sugli aiuti di Stato per il salvataggio e la ristrutturazione di imprese in difficoltà, GU C 244 dell'1.10.2004.

3. Sono attualmente in corso negoziati tra il Parlamento e il Consiglio in merito alla proposta della Commissione ([4]) di regolamento sul FEG ([5]) per il periodo 2014 — 2020 al fine della sua implementazione a decorrere dal 1º gennaio 2014. Sin d'ora gli Stati membri richiedenti possono attivare in modo celere e diretto il meccanismo del FEG. Le misure ammissibili possono essere attivate prima che venga presentata la domanda di cofinanziamento del FEG. La Commissione fa anche tutto il possibile per ridurre i tempi richiesti dalle procedure di cui al regolamento FEG in modo da far sì che il contributo del FEG sia versato quanto più celermente possibile. Essa plaude al fatto che il Parlamento proponga di ridurre i tempi necessari per approvare le richieste.

4. A tutt'oggi l'Italia non ha informato la Commissione se intende chiedere un contributo del FEG per i lavoratori menzionati in questa interrogazione. L'onorevole deputata può verificare la situazione rivolgendosi alla persona di contatto del FEG responsabile per l'Italia ([6]).

([4]) Proposta di regolamento del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio sul Fondo europeo di adeguamento alla globalizzazione 2014 — 2020 [COM(2011)608 definitivo, del 6 ottobre 2011].

([5]) Fondo europeo di adeguamento alla globalizzazione.

([6]) Cfr. i contatti menzionati all'indirizzo: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=581&langId=en.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009963/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Request for EU and EGF intervention to support cement company workers in the Province of Padua

The Veneto Region, and in particular the Province of Padua, which have already been severely affected by the global economic and employment crisis, are today facing further difficulties due to the collapse of the construction industry and of the cement production industry along with it.

At least 900 people employed in, or linked to, the production chain of three cement plants (Italcementi in Monselice and Cementizillo in Este and Monselice) are in danger of losing their jobs. Ninety-nine per cent of the workers at Cementizillo's Este plant and 67% of the workers at Italcementi's Monselice plant have been temporarily laid off. Furthermore, the Monselice plant, which was due to continue production — albeit on a reduced scale — until 2015, recently finalised plans for its closure on 31 December 2013. Italcementi, however, has officially informed the trade unions that it plans to close the Monselice plant by January 2014, one year earlier than the date set in its business plan.

1. Is the Commission aware of these circumstances?

2. Given the seriousness of the situation, and in order to reduce the number of job losses and enable the three cement plants to carry on operating, will the Commission grant the Veneto Region a special exemption from the framework on state aid, as provided for by Commission Regulation (EC) No 2204/2002 of 12 December 2002 on the application of Articles 87 and 88 of the EC Treaty to state aid for employment?

3. Does it not consider it essential to review the mechanism for operating the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF) so that, in the case of the cement plants in the Province of Padua and in all other cases of brutal job cuts, the mechanism can be activated quickly and directly by the Commission and can be a support instrument for use in the employment and social crises that are becoming increasingly common in the Member States?

4. Does it intend to activate the EGF to support the workers affected in this case?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(29 October 2013)

1. The Commission is aware of the circumstances to which the Honourable Member refers.

2. As regards the reference to state aid rules, please note that the Commission Regulation (EC) No 2204/2002 ([1]) has been replaced by the General Block Exemption Regulation (GBER) ([2]), which lays down the conditions under which certain categories of aid are compatible with the common market and not subject to the notification requirement of Article 88(3) of the Treaty, including aid for employment. However, both the Commission Regulation No 2204/2002 and the GBER refer to aid measures for the creation of employment. On the contrary, the possibilities for Member States of granting aid to undertaking in difficulties for the maintenance of employment are very restrictive and in principle only accessible in the context of restructuring plans that must be notified to the Commission ([3]).

3. Negotiations are currently under way between Parliament and the Council on the Commission proposal ([4]) for a regulation on the EGF ([5]) for 2014 to 2020 with a view to its implementation from 1 January 2014. As of now applicant Member States can activate the EGF mechanism quickly and directly. Eligible measures may be set in motion before applications for EGF co-funding are presented. The Commission is also doing its utmost to reduce the time required for the procedures laid down in the EGF Regulation so that the EGF contribution can be paid as quickly as possible. It welcomes the fact that Parliament is proposing to reduce the time it requires to approve applications.

([1]) Commission Regulation (EC) No 2204/2002 of 12 December 2002 on the application of Articles 87 and 88 of the EC Treaty to state aid for employment.
([2]) Commission Regulation (EC) No 800/2008 of 6 August 2008 declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the common market in application of Article 87 and 88 of the Treaty (General block exemption Regulation), Recital 4.
([3]) Communication from the Commission — Community guidelines on state aid for rescuing and restructuring firms in difficulty, OJ C 244, 1.10.2004.
([4]) Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (2014 — 2020) (COM(2011) 608 final of 6 October 2011).
([5]) European Globalisation Adjustment Fund.

4. To date Italy has not informed the Commission of whether it intends to apply for an EGF contribution for the workers concerned in this case. The Honourable Member may wish to check this with the EGF Contact Person for Italy ([6]).

([6]) See contact details at: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=581&langId=en

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009964/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(6 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Antidumping China

La investigación antidumping en relación con la fabricación de paneles fotovoltaicos por parte de China culminó el 6 de junio con la aplicación de cargas provisionales a las importaciones por la UE de paneles chinos. Las cargas debían imponerse en dos momentos: el primero, el 6 de junio, con un 11,8 %,y el segundo, el 6 de agosto, con un 47,6 %.

El 3 de agosto, sin embargo, la Comisión llegó a un acuerdo con la Cámara de Comercio de China para adoptar una posición de consenso, fijando unos precios mínimos para ciertas cuotas. Según parece, el acuerdo permitirá dejar inalterado el 60 % de la exportación de paneles fotovoltaicos de China a la UE. Entre las condiciones fijadas para aceptar el acuerdo, además del precio mínimo, se encuentran:

— un seguimiento por parte de la Comisión para asegurarse de que el daño causado por las políticas chinas desaparece;

— las consideraciones de política general pueden influir en la modificación de las mismas, incluyendo la estabilidad de los suministros.

Pro Sun, que motivó la investigación por parte de la Comisión, ha mostrado su desacuerdo con al acuerdo al que han llegado la UE y China, pues considera que la situación de dumping se mantiene.

Los datos de la Comisión indican que todas las investigaciones llevadas a cabo este año han sido en relación a China. Sin embargo, es preocupante que en 2012 se iniciasen 19 investigaciones, y que en junio de este año solo se hubiesen abierto 4. De no abrirse más investigaciones, nos encontraríamos con un descenso de alrededor de un 475 % respecto al año anterior.

¿Qué opina la Comisión de la oposición de Pro Sun a la medida acordada entre la UE y el Gobierno chino? ¿Investiga también la Comisión los casos de dumping social? ¿Cuál es la razón del elevado descenso en los casos de investigación de casos de violación del derecho de la competencia?

Respuesta del Sr. De Gucht en nombre de la Comisión
(12 de noviembre de 2013)

En su Reglamento por el que se establecen medidas provisionales el 5 de junio de 2013, la Comisión llegó a la conclusión de que, en efecto, existía un alto nivel de dumping de los productores exportadores chinos, pero que bastaría con aplicar un nivel más bajo de derechos para eliminar el perjuicio sufrido por la industria de la UE. En consecuencia, impuso medidas provisionales en un nivel medio del 47 % (11 % en los dos primeros meses).

Mediante la Decisión de 2 de agosto de 2013, publicada en el Diario Oficial el 3 de agosto de 2013, la Comisión aceptó un compromiso ofrecido por un grupo de productores exportadores junto con la Cámara de Comercio china de Maquinaria y Equipos. Todas las importaciones no cubiertas por el compromiso estarán sujetas al derecho íntegro. La Comisión ha aceptado dicho compromiso relativo a la aplicación de derechos provisionales porque la evaluación realizada puso de manifiesto que elimina el efecto perjudicial del dumping por los motivos expuestos en la Decisión por la que se acepta el compromiso.

El Acuerdo de la Organización Mundial del Comercio no contempla el «dumping social». Por consiguiente, la Comisión Europea no puede ampararse en ninguna base jurídica del Acuerdo Antidumping para actuar contra un supuesto «dumping social».

El número de nuevas investigaciones antidumping y antisubvenciones iniciadas en la primera mitad de 2013 es, en efecto, inferior al del año anterior. Ello se debe a que el número de casos presentados por la industria de la Unión ha disminuido. La Comisión examina los casos una vez presentados y tiene la obligación de iniciar una investigación cuando se cumplen las condiciones jurídicas.

La experiencia nos enseña que el número de investigaciones iniciadas fluctúa, como puede observarse de la actividad desarrollada en los últimos diez años.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009964/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: China: Anti-dumping

The anti-dumping investigation into the Chinese manufacturing of photovoltaic panels ended on 6 June 2013 with the application of provisional duties on EU imports of Chinese panels. The levies should be imposed in two stages: the first (11.8%) on 6 June, and the second (47.6%) on 6 August.

On 3 August, however, the Commission reached an agreement with the Chinese Chamber of Commerce to adopt a consensus position, setting minimum prices for certain quotas. The deal appears to mean that 60% of Chinese solar panel exports to the EU will remain unchanged. In addition to the minimum price, the terms of the agreement include:

— monitoring by the Commission to ensure that the damage caused by Chinese policies disappears;

— general policy considerations may lead to the amendment thereof, including the stability of supplies.

Pro Sun, which prompted the Commission investigation, has expressed its dissatisfaction with the agreement reached between EU and China, as it believes that the dumping is continuing.

According to Commission figures, all investigations conducted this year have been in relation to China. However, it is cause for concern that 19 investigations were opened in 2012, whereas only 4 had been opened by June this year. If more investigations are not opened, it will mean a drop of around 475% compared with the previous year.

What does the Commission think about Pro Sun's opposition to the measures agreed between the EU and the Chinese Government? Is the Commission also investigating cases of social dumping? Why has there been such a large drop in investigations concerning breaches of competition law?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(12 November 2013)

In the Commission Regulation imposing provisional measures on 5 June 2013, the Commission concluded that there was indeed a high level of dumping by the Chinese exporting producers but that a lower level of duties was sufficient to elimnate the injury being suffered by the EU industry. As a consequence it imposed provisional measures at an average level of 47% (11% for the first 2 months).

The Commission has acceped an undertaking offered by a group of exporting producers, together with the Chinese Chamber of Commerce for Machinery and Equipment by decision of 2 August 2013, published in the Official Journal on 3 August 2013. All imports that are not covered by the undertaking will be subject to the full duty. The Commission has accepted that undertaking with regards to the application of provisional duties, because the assessment carried out showed that it removes the injurious effect of dumping for the reasons set out in the decision accepting the undertaking.

The World Trade Organisation Anti-dumping Agreement does not refer to 'social dumping'. The European Commission has therefore no legal basis in the WTO Anti-dumping Agreement for acting against any alleged 'social dumping'.

The number of new anti-dumping and anti-subsidy investigations initiated in the first half of 2013 is indeed lower than last year. This is due to the fact that the number of cases the Union industry has lodged has decreased. The Commission analyses them once they are lodged and is obliged to initiate an investigation should the legal conditions be met.

Experience shows that the number of investigations initiated fluctuates, as it can be observed over the activity of the last 10 years.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009965/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(6 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Patrimonio nacional

«Para hacer frente a sus déficits, España vende un cuarto de su patrimonio nacional, incluidas joyas naturales», afirmó recientemente el diario Le Monde ([1]), detallando el plan del Gobierno para vender 15 000 propiedades del Estado, entras las que destaca La Almoraina, «una pequeña joya natural única en Europa, de 14 000 hectáreas, de las que el 90 % pertenecen al Parque Natural de los Alcornocales, uno de los ejemplos más espectaculares de bosque mediterráneo primario». Añaden que «Para facilitar la venta de La Almoraina, cuyo precio de mercado actual rebasaría los 180 millones de euros, el Gobierno aprobó un plan de desarrollo para el lugar, incluyendo el permiso para crear dos campos de golf y la construcción de un hotel de cinco estrellas y un aeropuerto, condición sine qua non para atraer a los ricos clientes rusos o del Golfo acostumbrados a Marbella, el Saint-Tropez local».

Al mismo tiempo, el Primer Ministro de Finlandia, Jyrki Katainen, afirmó en declaraciones al semanario *Der Spiegel* que «A los países en dificultades, ahora mismo no les puede interesar vender participaciones estatales porque el precio será muy bajo. En lugar de ello, pueden usar ese patrimonio para garantizar sus bonos».

¿Se han llevado a cabo estas actuaciones bajo recomendación de la Comisión? ¿Son el medioambiente y la protección de nuestro patrimonio nacional elementos de menor prioridad que los objetivos de déficit o la recuperación de los mercados?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(25 de noviembre de 2013)

1. Tales actuaciones no han sido adoptadas a raíz de la Recomendación de la Comisión.

2. Un entorno macroeconómico estable y saneado permite asignar más recursos a la protección del medio ambiente y a la conservación del patrimonio cultural.

([1]) http://www.radiocable.com/monde-venta-joyas-naturales2437.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009965/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: National heritage

The newspaper *Le Monde* ([1]) recently reported that in order to address its deficits, Spain was selling a quarter of its national heritage, including some natural treasures. It detailed the Government's plan to sell 15 000 state-owned properties, most notably including La Almoraina, a small natural treasure which is one of a kind in Europe; it comprises 14 000 hectares, 90% of which belong to Los Alcornocales Natural Park, one of the most spectacular examples of primary Mediterranean forest. It went on to say that in order to facilitate the sale of La Almoraina, the current market price of which would exceed EUR 180 million, the Government had approved a development plan for the site, including permission to build two golf courses, a five-star hotel and an airport, *sine qua non*-to attract wealthy clients from Russia and the Gulf who are accustomed to Marbella, the local Saint-Tropez.

At the same time, the Finnish Prime Minister, Jyrki Katainen, has told *Der Spiegel* that: 'At the moment, it's probably not worth it for the ailing countries to sell state assets when prices are so low. Instead, they could use these holdings to secure loans.'

Have these actions been taken on the Commission's recommendation? Are the environment and the protection of our national heritage less important than deficit targets and market recovery?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(25 November 2013)

1. Such actions have not been taken on the Commission's recommendation.

2. A sound and stable macroeconomic context allows allocating more resources to environmental protection and the preservation of cultural heritage.

([1]) http://www.radiocable.com/monde-venta-joyas-naturales2437.html

ISSN 1977-1029 (ediție electronică)
ISSN 1830-3668 (ediție tipărită)

Oficiul pentru Publicații al Uniunii Europene
2985 Luxemburg
LUXEMBURG

RO